

## Chapter 2: Network Society: The Role of Social Media in Social Movements and Public Sphere Organization Formed in Social Media

It has been observed that with the Internet-based new media experience and social networks, public-private domain oppositions have eroded and that "private publicity" has evolved. Because, though social media has a sense of belonging to a public sphere, this feeling is lived in the private sphere and extends to the conversations take place in the private sphere. Both the print and visual press have taken advantage of the contribution of technology to communication, have had to adapt to technological developments and have entered the process of constant renewal. Internet is at the center of these technological developments. In this direction, newspapers and TV channels from traditional media tools, trying to adapt to changes in technology, primarily have created their own web sites on the online environment with the widespread use of the internet. Newspapers presented contents on paper, television channels daily news and broadcast streams are transmitted to these sites and make them publicly accessible. These obligations have gained new channels such as, newsgroups, e-newspapers and e-journals to audience-readers. In addition to that people have created web blogs where they can share their private life, private knowledge or thoughts related to life. Newsgroups are discussion areas where internet users from all over the world share news or articles. This discussion area is separated according to the subjects. There is no obligation to be a member of that group to read messages or news on any topic. Messages in the category of interest can be read and messages can be sent to that group. The stream over the newsgroups is uninspectable by no one. All messages are open to all internet users in the world. Electronic newspapers can be seen as an economic solution in terms of personnel use, paper, press and place. Journalists working for electronic journals sent the news they prepare to the journal's press pool and, if appropriate, they are published. The controllings are executed by the editorial department and editor. Moreover, instead of waiting for the press time, important and last-minute developments can be instantly published. It would be useful to separate electronic newspapers from each other. Under the efforts made to transform the newspapers that reach the reader through the traditional way of printing into an "electronic newspaper", the advantages such as storage,

archiving of news, re-use of this archiving could be seen. It is also aimed to accelerate the stages of news gathering, sending, processing (such as sorting and page editing), and to be able to enter the press later to provide news about the latest developments. Therefore, the "electronic newspaper" practice enhances the production speed and productivity of new media technologies in all stages of production, from news gathering to processing to print distribution. In addition to this, it aims to save the number of business entrepreneurs and the number of personnel employed with this ability. In this context, new media are used as a "tool" to reach the organizational flexibility necessary for the print media to adapt to the new communication environment.<sup>92</sup>

Electronic journals have the same economic characteristics as electronic newspapers. Especially when it is considered that printed journals' expenditures more than newspapers', publishing the journals electronically means that printing and working costs are reduced too much. The most striking difference between electronic journals and electronic newspapers is that published texts can easily be extended with a narrative expression, and long interviews can be published. Since as an obligation such as shortening the interviews to being ready for publication is removed, the editors do not have much work in this sense. In addition, the binding legal provisions of electronic journals are the same as electronic newspapers. A blog is a web-based publication where articles and comments are usually published in order from current to the past. Usually the name of the author and the time of post are specified at the end of each submission. According to the choice of the publisher, the readers can comment on the writings or articles. Interpretations are a crucial dynamic of blog culture, so communication between writers and readers is provided. Apart from this, it is also possible to specify other writings/texts about a particular text/writing by means of a backtracking mechanism.

The digital media, which are new communication technologies in the light of all of these, tend to leave traditional media tools behind as multiple form of communication. Because alternative media allows users to share their own ideas and opinions. The influence of information and communication technologies on the state-citizen relation and the political processes are defined by concepts such as tele-democracy, digital democ

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92 Törenli, Yeni Medya, Yeni İletişim Ortamı, P. 206.

racy, virtual democracy, e-democracy. Regardless of the name or scope of the concept, the common point in these ideas is the belief that various features of new technologies - communication, feedback - can positively affect democratic mechanisms.<sup>93</sup> Social media is useful for continuous updating and easy access through mobile technological devices. It is more ideal than any other online channels in terms of being open to everyone, using easily and expressing themselves freely. People are able to write their own thoughts, debate on various issues and present their ideas on the social media. Users can experience the real world in a virtual environment by sharing photos and videos.

Facebook is a virtual environment that is one of the social networks where people can spend time together, share emotions, thoughts, photos, videos and music with each other. The most important feature that distinguishes Facebook software from blogs or forums is that you have the option of being able to find private or public open shares at permission levels. The most important feature that distinguishes Facebook software from blogs or forums is that you have the option to be open to public or private. The number of Facebook users has exceeded 1 billion all over the world as of October 2012.<sup>94</sup> Also, Facebook users have different psychological reasons for choosing this network. According to the researches, it was found that the communication established in the online environment reduces the anxiety caused by face-to-face interaction, thus shy or lonely individuals prefer these environments to communicate.

Among others, Twitter is one of the most influential new media environments that link ordinary citizens with "popular, powerful and influential" figures. Twitter is similar to Facebook in terms of substructure, but with different content. While users on Facebook can create a sharing wall with their own information and shares, Twitter users' shares are limited to 140 characters and all shares are listed in a historically vertical order. On Twitter, users follow each other while add friends on Facebook. In order to see someone's profile on Facebook, you have to be friends with that person, on the contrary you can follow the person you want on Twitter and look at their share. The purpose of Twitter is to create a chat environment. Likewise, on the opening page of Twitter, the user meets the motto "Start

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93 *Ligieza*, Active or Passive Citizen: The Influence of New Media Over Local Communities' Participation, PP. 111-112.

94 Wikipedia / Facebook: <https://goo.gl/ni9Zsq>

a conversation, discover your interests and learn something mysterious". Facebook has a prominent and indispensable position in the networking community. Facebook is also playing an active role in shaping social life with relocation of communication to a virtual environment. As modern individuals equipped with technology in business and home environments, Facebook has become the most important part of everyday life. Videos and images, comments and links that shared on Facebook are increasingly playing a decisive role in the everyday life of the individual and bearing their activities from the virtual public sphere to their private spheres.

In our physical world when people come together in groups and for a specific purpose it is called a mass demonstration and constitute a crime, however, the internet has the freedom to come together in common ideas and purposes. That is why governments are immediately trying to limit the use of the Internet in the case of social movements or extraordinary situations. Likewise, we saw these prohibitions and restrictions in Syria. Another similar effort is experienced in Turkey. Filtering the Internet, fixed IP address for each person, recording the words that every citizen will write through the internet search engines are the precautions against a social movement that will come into existence in the future.

The Internet is an alternative media, and radical media according to mode of use. Downing describes alternative-radical media as alternative point of view in a small-scale againsts hegemonic politics, priorities and perspectives and the media with many different forms. Internet-based socialization platforms strengthen people's sense of unity. The integration of individuals into communities leads to the formation of power structures in society. The alternative media is a non-profit-making media that does not have extensive financial resources and its main objective is to be the voice of "others" against local or global powers' media. Downing defines radical media as a social movement media and has established a theoretical framework in relation to social movements.<sup>95</sup> The places where social movements such as Arab Spring are organized in social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. At this point, Facebook and Twitter are used as radical media tools within the context of all organizations.

Social media and its forms of communication are innovations brought about by being a network society. The step towards becoming a network

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95 Ceyhan, *An Alternative Status in Media: AHALI and Counter Public Sphere*, P. 6.

society is emanated from the desire for globalization and the desire for globalization to have a new world order. Network society theory is an approach that is put forward by Castells and expresses the shaping of new world order by networks, and today's network society is using widespread and intensive interaction and interaction system based on networks. Network society is a society where social morphology is superior to social action.<sup>96</sup> Manuel Castells calls the new type of society as "network society" which is emerged through technological paradigm by analyzing the economic, political and societal multi-faceted transformations created by the current information age on people and institutions. The milestone which will be used while explaining social media and network society will be globalization. Because globalization is a new economic structure that allows capital to be distributed and transcended beyond the border, whereas the network society is similar in quantity and, and in quality it is a completely different capital structure. And while globalization is a modern perspective, the network society has a post-modern point of view. It would be correct to state this with a simple example, marketing action on the global economic market is achieved by continuous circulation of individuals. While marketing action on the global economic market is provided by continuous circulation of individuals, "network marketing" brought by the network community is based on making profit from local marketers who are connected to each other under a small number of auditors, rather than circulating country-by-country marketers. The striking element here is that corporate organizations are freed from their geographical dependence in addition to freed from the traditional way. styles of. In other words, it is noticed that different parts can be easily distributed but still managed from a center. In particular, housewives and students participate in this marketing network, and in this way, companies reduce staff costs altogether. One of the most important factors in here is that the necessary information flow to the marketing network can be done simultaneously and at an incredible speed. Whereas in the other sale system, plenty of marketers have to work under the roof of the company. This is merely an example of transition from the globalization to the network society in terms of marketing. The more global the capital here, the more the labor is local. Nevertheless, since globalization can not be explained simply by cross-border travel and

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96 Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, P. 500.

getting rid of locality, it would be incomplete to reach a broad concept like network society with network marketing method. because nets constitute the new social morphology of our societies. The spread of the logic of creating networks also seriously changes the processes of production, experience, power and culture, and the consequences of these processes.<sup>97</sup> To explain globalization with the beginning of the spread of capitalism throughout the world as a system means to consider it as an economic structure as well as to take into account the cultural and political content of this structure.<sup>98</sup> According to Bauman, the most important technical factor that enables information to be carried is mobility, and it does not require the physical movement of a person apart from simple and non-tiring movements.<sup>99</sup> Bauman explains globalization through the rapid transfer of information, and the ability of a privileged person to travel. Mass communication, which has gained an international dimension with globalization along with the unlimited movement and circulation ability, involves the flow of people, symbols, meanings and myths apart from the products and services of the capital.<sup>100</sup> Thanks to the World Wide Network established by means of computers, it is not necessary for a person to move too much because information can reach a person much faster than traveling speed.<sup>101</sup> Bauman's thoughts overlap with McLuhan's expressions and have given a futuristic perspective to the subject with the concept of "Global Village". McLuhan's point of this formation with the "global village" is the globalization of information and information in a communicative sense.<sup>102</sup> Television, from the technological toolsi pav the way for globalization and has integrated communities in communication and cultural level through their subconscious or direct perceptible messages for many years. Since it is a one-way communication tool, viewers have only received messages that have arrived at them and have no area to provide feedback in the direction of the message. This also applies to the radio. Television integrates with day-to-day routines in the west. Television,

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97 *Castells*, The Rise of the Network Society, P. 500.

98 *Taylan and Arklan*, Media and Culture: Globalisation of Culture by means of Media, P. 68.

99 *Bauman*, Globalization: The Human Consequences, P. 14.

100 *Aytaş*, Küreselleşme Teknolojileri Üzerinde Mekansızlığın İnşası ve Nesnenin Dönüşümü, P. 5.

101 *Bauman*, Ibid, P. 15.

102 *Aytaş*, Ibid, P. 4.

which has an effective place in purchasing and painstaking attitudes, may also be authority in the decision-making process of the audience. In terms of globalization, television and radio are very important devices. The world with the new actor of globalization, the internet, has moved from being global to becoming a network society. The main difference that separates the Internet from television and radio is that communication is multifaceted. We have the possibility to report and to warn the unauthorized advertisement mail in our private e-mail address. However, on television we do not have a chance to say "I do not want to see this anymore" for an advertisement in front of us.

In the broadcast stream, you will not have a chance not to see it without changing the channel or switching off the TV. Especially since the 1990s, the internet has become popular not only in the field of communication technology but also in the center of academic and popular interest.<sup>103</sup> McLuhan has described electronic media as a kind of return to the collective ways of perceiving the world for the individualized human condition, and the world that becomes "Global Village" according to McLuhan will become a single consciousness. People of the Global Village, especially those outside the Western world, have been thrown into the world of news, imagination and imagery of electronic media since 1980, but contrary to the claims of global corporations, globalization and transformation have not made people a citizen of the world by going beyond political, economic, social and cultural differences.<sup>104</sup> The structure formed by connecting several computers together is called network. Computers connect to each other via cables or satellites. Within these networks there are probably millions of hosts named servers, and these hosts represent places where information is stored and open to the user. For example, the Wikipedia website, which is considered a virtual library, has a very wide range of servers, and those entering the Wikipedia website get their information through their hosts. This network system is generally called "internet". In this way, a large number of computers are connected to this network and they are provided to communicate with each other. In 1971, the first e-mail was sent. The English term "Internet", which began to be used in 1985, is an abbreviation for "Interconnected Networks" which means

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103 *Timisi*, Yeni İletişim Teknolojileri ve Demokrasi, P. 121.

104 *Çelik*, Social Changes in The Globalization of The Media and Consumer Control, P. 119.

"networks connected to each other". Being open system to the public has displaced the internet from being chat or personal communication environment. It has become an enormous repository of information that is shaped by encyclopaedic or personal experiences or become an area where companies sell and promote their products. Castells' "Network Society" theory offers new perspectives on the world's reconstruction within the framework of some of the world's networks built on the basis of advanced communication technologies. The concept of "Network Society" is a concept developed from the concept of "Information Society" by Manuel Castells and Castells defines the network as a series of knots linked to each other.<sup>105</sup> Each knot represents a different network, that is, a node represents a financial structure, while another node represents a cultural structure. The disciplines, which are different in meaning and in practice, are interconnected by an unlimited network structure. These nodes are: television systems, entertainment studios, computer graphics environments, news team, signaling-transmitting-receiving mobile devices in the global network of the new media, which is culturally expression in the Age of Information.

According to Manuel Castells, "A network society is a social structure made up of networks, more precisely of information networks".<sup>106</sup> The main argument of the theory is that in the organization of the processes of the basic structures of all areas of the society, we witness a shift from hierarchies to networks. Network society has the speed that will respond to the production methods of new technologies. Today's network society uses a system of interaction and communication based on networks in a widespread and intense way. There is such a rapid consumption in the face of rapid and mass production. Every produced meta or feeling is condemned to be consumed very quickly. Because of the rapidity of consumption, the characteristics of the network society's individuals have been quite different from those of their predecessors. When talking about the network society, social relations that actually operate on the basis of economy, politics and culture are pointed. The network of these relations has a dynamic structure that changing and transforming constantly, but it can also be referred to as the historical processes through which fundamental transfor

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105 *Castells*, The Rise of the Network Society, P. 501.

106 *Castells*, Globalization and Identity in the Network Society: A Rejoinder to Calhoun, Lyon and Touraine, P. 108.



mations take place. From this point of view, the information is referring to a process in which the modern economy, politics, cultures and practices are reshaped and restructured through networks. In network society, individuals are connected to each other by networks. Trade, political propaganda, advertising, news and socialization can be provided through the Internet, as well as cultural and religious missionary work. Being a network society also leads to having a new culture on the local culture. The cultural structure in real life changes when it comes to virtual life, and a new form of culture emerges. For example, In the Turkish culture and in Islam, the feeling of privacy has developed very much and has been accepted as a rule by the society. According to this common rule, we do not put a photograph of a leash or a bikini drawn on the beach to the head corner of the room. However, we can use it as a profile photo in social media, for example on Facebook. Citizens of the network society have built a common culture and this new form of culture is far from local culture and it is a common culture of the global world and the networks world. Individuals from different social structures have had a common cultural language. It should be noted that the upper culture that is mentioned should not be confused with the upper culture which contrasts with the higher culture. This is because the upper-middle culture that contrasts with higher culture includes simpler and more banal public reading in terms of literary and other arts.<sup>107</sup>

The most primitive form of social media is "IRC" (Internet Relay Chat). Today, IRC is software that enables people to chat with other people by entering the various chat rooms via a computer with internet access. It was first initiated by Finnish Jarkko Oikarinen in 1988. It was effectively used for communication by the American army during the 1991 Gulf War.

In the face of continuous progress of technology with new discoveries, mankind reproduces its social, cultural and everyday experiences through technology. Some researchers describe social networks as web-based environments that promote mutual interaction among people, increase the sharing of individuals with common interests, and give everyone the chance to create their own personal profile and a list of friends they want to communicate with.

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107 Gans, Populer Culture and High Culture, p.116.

Social media is an electronic-digital communication environment created through web-based audio-visual storage based websites, blogs, podcasts, content networking sites and social networking sites.<sup>108</sup> Social media creates groups through the web and creates opportunities for social interaction and relation. Social media is created by the user via designing the web content. Users are active in the social media sites on the web and they have the control at certain times. In social networks, logic is to create a virtual "community" and by this way they can act with them, share ideas, produce new solutions, and so on. Tiryakioglu and Erzurum defined social networks as an online service in which communication and social relations can be established and personal information such as ideas, activities and interests can be shared on their own networks. Unlike passive audiences in the traditional media equation, social media users are able to produce content in an efficient way, share it with other users, and get feedback on shared content more efficiently and quickly. Social media serves to a specific community or interest, and also non-professionals can have active participation in media production, organization and management.<sup>109</sup> Boyd and Ellison refer to social networking sites as "web-based service sites which is for individuals to construct fully open or semi-open profiles in a restricted system, to make a list of users they share with and to allow them to review and compare the link lists created by themselves or others in the system".<sup>110</sup>

Networks, defined as social media, provide mutual communication between people and groups. In addition, political conversations and sharing also take place. Social media users have the opportunity to express their political thoughts freely and to share their writings and visuals in this direction with the political dialogue that occurs in social environment. Political dialogues in social media can sometimes turn into activist actions in the light of political developments of the period and virtual movements can emerge. Virtual or digital activism is one of the phenomena that points to the participatory democratic structure of social media. A strong democratic social movement is always the task of civil society processing in a

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108 *Yılmaz*, Recent Arguments on Use of Social Media: Relation Between "Privacy" and "Public Sphere" - Based on a Modeling With University Students, P. 247.

109 *Işık*, Sanaldan Sokaga Toplumsal Hareketler, P. 53.

110 *Köseoğlu*, Facebook as a Marketing Communication Medium: a Comparative Analysis of Advertising and Electronic Word of Mouth Messages, P. 75.

repressive political environment.<sup>111</sup> Social movements are regarded as a necessary and positive means of expressing the concerns of the participants and ensuring social change in a democratic society in which encourages mass participation in all social and political problems.<sup>112</sup> Various interest groups in society can concentrate and protest for one or more common problems, such as democracy problem. This is the common and legal right of the oppressed by same problem in society. At this point, the phenomenon underlying the definitions of public sphere and new social movements is similar. Just like the popular civil rebellions in Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Libya, which are called "Arab Spring" and led to regime change, people from all over the world in the 21st century recognize the concept of social movement as a loud call, a wide-fledged call for action against a wide range of problems and a power against oppressive states.<sup>113</sup> These are social movements called "new". It is seen that the most important feature that distinguishes the new social movements from their old ones is that they are not based on labor movement and social networks are used. New social movements are more democratic and open to participation for all with richer content and demands and independent from narrower economic interests.<sup>114</sup> Charles Tilly criticizes previous approaches to the theory of social movement to place individuals as the primary unit of social movements. Instead, he argued that the primary unit is interaction between individuals. The primary unit is the motivating and driving effect of the social media interaction between individuals by reducing the level of the previously mentioned macro social structure to the micro structure. Individuals are involved only in collective actions when they recognize the members in the community - the objective and psychological reasons that drive them to social movement. This change in public opinion, that is, the change of communication and action, was expressed in Habermas's "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere" and the development of communication technologies and the establishment of a social media-centric communication system have also led to a new transformation. At the beginning of this transformation there were three important

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111 Tilly, *Social Movements, 1768-2004*, P. 1.

112 Sen, *Social Movements and Media: The Representation of "Occupy Wall Street" Movement in The Media*, P. 138.

113 Tilly, *Ibid*, P. 3.

114 *Çetinkaya, Tarih ve Kuram Arasında Toplumsal Hareketler*, P. 35.

elements that caused social movements; social welfare level, economic welfare level and political welfare level. The balance of these three elements was an important influence in the beginning of the social movements. In addition to this, it was also necessary to find a person or a structure to initiate and direct the social movement. In the new social movements, the driving force is social media. The disturbance created by the imbalance of the three old elements is united with the driving force of the social media. Unlike the old social structures, social media not only integrates the whole world, but also creates big networks where the coordination of individuals or groups at low cost is fast and ideas are easily expressed to public. Emphasizing the relation between social movements and social change, Castells points out that social movements emerging in the face of urban and environmental problems will become one of the basic elements of social change in developed capitalist countries by presenting new cultural models.<sup>115</sup> At the basis of the new social movements, there are certain common points that are seen in Arab Spring, Taksim Gezi Park Resistance and Spain 15M Movement. Common points are to establish an organization for common demands against the targeted authorities, to establish associations have special goals, to organize public meetings, official demonstrations, guardings, and shows, to send a petition and make a statement to the media.<sup>116</sup> Today, we face a much more important common point: making use of internet networks to make calls and spread the social movement. In the hegemony of the traditional communication process and understanding, places where people can express themselves, their demands for change, their demands for rebellion against their surroundings, governments and the world are limited to streets and squares. This process ensures the development of Internet and communication technologies and the rapid spread of them, also the increase in the relationship between internet and democracy.<sup>117</sup> At this point, using internet technologies and especially social media effectively is the lifeblood of new social movements. New social movements, mainly by using the communicative

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115 *Yeniçıktı*, Communication Action and Facebook: The Power of Social Media on The Gezi Park Event, P. 272.

116 *Tilly*, Social Movements: 1768-2004, P. 4.

117 *Çaycı and Karagülle*, Organizational Forms Which Covaries With Mobile Communication Technologies: Social Movements Which are Organized in Networks, P. 6375.

field, have also shown that radical media can be used in a new way against the dominant media by using discourse and actions that affect social public opinion.<sup>118</sup> Especially social media has had an important role in new social movements. All the declaration, sharing and information about the social movement is spreading among the users in the form of snowballs and determining the form of organization. For example, the virtual environment was shown as the organizing place of Arab Spring. The information circulating among the users has moved from virtual public sphere to both real public sphere and private sphere. In particular, there has also been a mass audience who sitting only in front the computer and spreads online sharing of social media accounts to their own environment.

Social movements are strengthened by common action to achieve the goal, and the formed common identity helps to mobilize other individuals of the community who are outside the movement. The most prominent aspect of a social movement is the dominance of non-formal forms of open organizations in the first place. New social movements first emerged in the late 1960s as the student movement in western Europe and North America due to the slowing of parliamentary opposition. In the first months of 2011, after public movements, which started in the Middle East and North Africa, used social media tools as an organizing and communication tools, social movements were defined as "social media revolution" and lead to increase in the debate about the importance and effect of social media.<sup>119</sup> In the developing countries in the 1990s, new social movements took place with the acceleration of anti-globalization movements. Political new social movements act as opposition to the power. These movements reported their opposition to the mistakes in the public sphere from their alternative media tools that they established over time because of their underrepresentation in the mainstream media.

As Habermas refers to the concept of public sphere: the public sphere, where the participants can concentrate, debate, think, critique, organize, and act in ways that they can freely express their thoughts and ideas; it is possible to say that the social media used by large masses in the whole world can be transformed into the public sphere due to freedom sphere that social media has. In addition to the conceptualization of Habermas, the fact that there is no geographical coordinate of the public sphere from

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118 Çoban, *Toplumsal Hareketler ve Radikal Medya*, P. 55.

119 Babacan, *Haslak, and Hira*, Arab Spring and the Social Media, P. 77.

Arendt's point of view also supports this thesis. Hannah Arendt's thoughts on political action and the public sphere provide some clues as to the process of acting as a recovery of a situation in the form of a spatial distribution. The action that takes place in this process always requires a sense of unity among the actors.<sup>120</sup> At this point, social media responds to a sense of unity. From new communication technologies, social media has led to the change of social organization concepts such as community and society which are based on criteria such as human will and common space, and has caused to reconsideration of social units.<sup>121</sup> Because, people who are not physically able to get together can have the opportunity to get closer and dialogue through social media. The fact that time is lost its significance in the communication process and communication can be realized in every environment, increases the diversity of the mass that the individual interacts with. Also, the problems underlying the organization change with reaching to the global dimension of the participant. According to Habermas, old labor-based movements leave their place to societal-based global movements. Within the new period, the individuals organized through networks gather in the framework of issues such as quality of life, environmental movements, human rights, internet freedom, violence against women, democratic participation.

First of all, it should be noted that the networks referred to as social media have facilitated organization and have introduced a new kind of activism. These people, who can be expressed as virtual activists, carry the actions taken in the real environment to the virtual environment with the help of the social media and the networks around it. Sometimes this process is reversed by them. An important fact should not be overlooked in this regard, not social media or other virtual networks but virtual activist that launch the activist movements that are fired in virtual environments and took place in real environments. Social media, and especially Facebook, serves as a springboard for the protesters and an exercise area for youth who politically inexperienced but with internet mind.<sup>122</sup> The use of social media as a tool for action and communication by the social movements that appear in our country and in various regions of the world makes us need to understand the importance and effectiveness of social

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120 *Gerbaudo*, *Tweets and the Streets*, PP. 38-39.

121 *Haberli*, *Virtual Communities as a New Form of Organization*, P. 121.

122 *Gerbaudo*, *Tweets and the Streets*, P. 48.

media.<sup>123</sup> Arab Spring, one of the greatest social movements of the 21st century - the most important is the Egyptian Revolution, also called the January 25 Movement - (December 2010 Tunisia, Algeria, January 2011 Lebanon, Jordan, Mauritania, Sudan, Oman, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Djibouti, Morocco, February 2011 Iraq, Bahrain, Iran, Libya, Kuwait, Western Sahara).<sup>124</sup> Again in May 2011 the 15M Movement started in Spain, the September 2011 Wall Street events, and Taksim Gezi Park events that started in Turkey in June 2013 are organized activist actions through social media. Such new social movements and social media are important in terms of enabling the representation, right seeking and organization of some communities that are marginalized and alienated by power, dominant discourse and system. Social media takes its power from the masses and openness to the user. Moreover, in the face of all these events, social media has made it possible for participants to announce what is happening and reach the necessary information. The main reason behind the use of social media as tool for information flow during Taksim Gezi Park Resistance is that the mainstream media sometimes serve events from a government perspective and sometimes be indifferent to events. In all these activist actions, the events taking place in the streets were shared instantly on Twitter and supported with photos and videos via Facebook. With the use of new communication technologies in the creation of radical media, local movements have organized international solidarity through a global network, and these organizations have served as an example by establishing reference points for the next activist actions.<sup>125</sup> Especially when you look at 2011, the dates of the activist actions organized in social media and took place in the real environment are very close to each other. Thousands of high-school students who participated in the CHE (the council of higher education) events in Turkey were able to protest by walking in the streets, although they were composed of individuals who came together in virtual environments and saw each other for the first time. It is possible to say that social media and other online media point to a new field in the name of socialization. When this area is considered with economic, political, cultural and social aspects, it is clearly seen that the field penetrates into every phase of our lives. Facebook, blog pages, social

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123 *Babacan, Haslak and Hira, Arab Spring and the Social Media*, P. 73

124 Arab Spring / Wikipedia: <https://goo.gl/WfWgzT>

125 *Karagöz, Toplumsal Hareketler ve Dijital Aktivizm Hareketleri*, P. 143.

networking sites provide to emphasize individuality by bringing the private sphere to the public sphere thanks to digital technology. It can be argued that the new media tools, which also provide the opportunity to organize in new ways, have relocated discussions about the distinctions between the public and the private sphere to a new platform.

From the examples in the world, when it is considered that social movements in Tunisia, Spain or America, and Taksim Gezi Park in Turkey the claim that social media indicated an important point in the context of new media is inarguable. However, what kind of influence it has on the point of taking action in socialization process is being discussed today. To say that all these "revolutionary" movements have taken place thanks to social media has played a big role in new technologies and includes an exaggerated style. To say that all these "revolutionary" movements are realized through social media aggrandizes the role of new technologies and contains an exaggerated claims. As a matter of fact, Paolo Gerbaudo explains the Tunisian, Spanish and American movements in his book entitled *Tweets and Streets* (2012) and states that social media has an important role in creating a sense of unity and coordinating people but also indicates that the revolutions become fact when people stand up from their computers and go out into the streets. Recep Tayyip Erdogan's definition of social networks as a field for criminals, punkers, and deviants and Hüsni Mubarak's internet closure, the authoritarian response of Erdogan and Mubarak-like politicians, in the last instance, is an indirect acknowledgment that social networking sites are important for today's protest movements. Participants in the M15 Movement, which began on May 15, 2011, in Spain, identified themselves with the tools of communication and social media became a collective part of the movement.<sup>126</sup> In general, at the core of the public sphere which is formed in the social media is the virtual protest experiences of virtual activists. This applies both to the public sphere formed by the cyber-space, and also to the public sphere formed by the cyber-space and take place in the real space. Users have become political subjects with all the activist practices. They have shown consistency

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126 *Gravante and Poma*, *New Media and Empowerment in the Indignados' Movement*, P. 26.



in decentralized and horizontal organizations by choosing to combine social media with traditional communication mechanisms (such as whispering newspapers and social relations), taking into account the inability of everyone to reach the internet and social media in the May 15th camps established by the 15M Movement.<sup>127</sup> This situation happened in the same way in Taksim Gezi Part events. Not just those who can only be online, but just about everyone who has something to say in the real public sphere and who has a reaction to the government's decisions participated to the events. This is the reflection of the social movements happened in many parts of the world in Turkey. Social movements, for many reasons, are a reaction against the oppression of societies by their own governments and take place many parts of the world.<sup>128</sup> Online people turn social media into a channel to publish news about events and information about instant events. People who came together by organizing online groups for the same purpose and created an environment that speeds up their actions in social media.

A. *Virtual Public Sphere and Socialization of Social Media*

The mobilization of information to the internet, the formation of chat environment where we call social media, the expanse of information and the creation of discussion areas in the social media provide the ground for the formation of a new kind of virtual (cyber, digital) public sphere. According to Robins-Webster, the information plays a central role in transporting the political debate takes place in public sphere into a democratic process.<sup>129</sup> In the twenty-first century, the internet is the fastest-spreading and constantly renewing tool of information. Even the number and diversity of news of channels trying to broadcast are insufficient against the internet. That is why the internet and the information it carries are fundamental for democratization. Primarily, along with Internet technology, the boundaries of public debate and expression have expanded. The boundaries of the in-

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127 *Gravante and Poma*, Ibid, P. 28.

128 *Clark*, Social Movement and Social Media: A qualitative study of Occupy Wall Street, P. 2.

129 *Aydođan*, İkinci Medya Caginda Gozetim Ile Kamusal Alan Paradoksunda Internet, P. 6.

fluence of a verbal or debate in the virtual environment have extended beyond the nation-states to an extension including the entire humanity. The Internet is facing the masses as the widest scale of socialization. According to some people, besides the "electronic democracy" environment, the internet has a very important aspect, an activist aspect, above all, even though it represents a cold sociality and an emotional freezing area against its same advantages. In this sense, the internet, which has the power to organize public demands and transform it into an effective public pressure, has a significant influence on the pro-active orientation of the people, which means has an influence on claiming rights for the demands. The Internet offers the opportunity to carry out the principles of "interaction" and "division of responsibility" that one of the most influential dynamics of alternative publishing.<sup>130</sup>

McLuhan's point of this formation with the "Global Village" is the globalization of information and knowledge in a communicative sense. According to Larrain, this can be defined as "processes that operate on a global scale and transcend boundaries, bringing societies and institutions together in new time-space compositions and connect the world together within reality and experience".<sup>131</sup> Virtual public sphere, like the real public sphere, means to publicly owned (ie public) and open to public use. In addition, the present status of the public sphere, independent of the imposition of the state and market conditions, is of vital importance at the level of macro and micro politics as a cultural and political field in which an enlightened debate improves democratic processes. The fact that such dynamics are also available in the virtual public sphere can be seen Taksim Gezi Park Resistance, Spain 15M Movement, the Arab Spring and in other protests take place in the real environment organized through social media. It is useful to note that the prerequisite to be able to access the virtual public sphere is to have access to the internet, that is having a computer or smart mobile device and internet connection with it. This seems to be the property owner which is the precondition for entering the public sphere in Ancient Greece, as indicated in Arendt's theory. A virtual public sphere is a legitimization area where citizens can discuss, criticize the power, can access the necessary information. Politicians, not just citizens, benefit

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130 *Köse*, Küresel "Akıntıya Karşı" Sivil Arayışlar Alternatif Medya, P. 271.

131 *Aytaş*, Küreselleşme Teknolojileri Üzerinde Mekansızlığın İnşası ve Nesnenin Dönüşümü, P. 4.

from this area. They accept the principle of legitimization of the virtual public space by making propaganda for themselves and their party through their social media accounts. It also shows up as a scene where politics gains visibility. The virtual public sphere is an area of the visibility of civil society through social media, blogs, personal web pages. The virtual public sphere, like the real public sphere, is a region in which the state is less active and citizens are more active.

The word "sphere" in the real public sphere does not exactly point to a particular area or place. Likewise, the "sphere" in the virtual public sphere does not point to a specific area or place or geographical coordinate. However, while the real public sphere basically points to a distant place from the individual's sphere (abstractly), connected to social media the virtual public sphere and the private sphere are almost intertwined. Hereby, it is observed that a re-expansion of the real public sphere definitions, especially with social media, is actualized. Also, it can be seen that social media users share even the food they eat with their friends as news.

By the concept of 'the public sphere' as we have seen on the previous pages, we mean, firstly, an area in the social life where something similar to the public opinion can be created<sup>132</sup> Access to this area is guaranteed by all participants. This also applies to the virtual public sphere. However, it can be prohibited to enter the virtual public sphere by laws and court decisions. However, it cannot be prohibited to enter to a street by any law or court decision, that is, it is easier to implement the dominions in the virtual public sphere that cannot be implemented to the real public sphere. Authoritarian political systems try to manipulate the virtual public sphere like the public sphere as well by the court decisions prohibiting access to various sites and blogs and closing social media accounts of people.

Time and space have been surpassed in cyberspace. An article written at any point in the world can reach the user at another point with an incredible speed and be answered by interpreting. This is a summary of a multifaced transformation. Surpassing time and space in cyberspace is a new parameter of the human condition. This freedom of movement in cyberspace and the virtuality of the space almost completely overlaps with the public sphere models. Public sphere's pluralism, objective relations, action, speech etc. features also constitute the transformational dynamics

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132 *Habermas*, *The Public Sphere*, P. 198.

of the new social structure. Nevertheless, although bodies are not essential in cyberspace, cyberspace has certain and indispensable importance in the life of the bodies.<sup>133</sup> The bodies are linked to each other by nets and information.

Bauman notes that the Internet has created a new controlling environment and takes advantage of a surveillance approach called "Synopticon". Synopticon is an up-to-date version of relocated Panopticon to the cyberspace. Mark Poster, in his essay on the electronic database, suggests that "our bodies are drawn into networks, databases, information corridors," so that our bodies are connected, so to say, informatically, and none of these places of information storage is no more a shelter where we can protest or escape from observation.<sup>134</sup> Synopticon, such as Panopticon derived from it, defines an observation mechanism that is used to preclude flight and to prevent free and random movement. If the cyber public sphere is an area where the users (cyber public opinion) can freely roam and participate, it can be also seen as an area where the control mechanisms (which can be called the state) are in this circulation to control the every possible sharings. The state has absolute control and restrictions on this area in the crisis period. Those who share the antithetical things are either blacklisted or judged by the appropriate constitutional elements.

The virtual public sphere is an area that belongs to the public and is open to everyone's use, supports democratic processes as independent of the imposition of the state and market conditions in its current status. As a cultural, social and political field in which an enlightened debate is experienced, is of great importance at the level of macro and micro politics. Also, it is a field where mixed social values have a common identity and can produce politics, socialization and cultural activity, criticize and organize demonstrations. This area is an important place to open the debate on the democratization process, political enforcement, or management mistakes of democracy. Controversies, especially in the context of social media transparency and publicity conditions, have an important role in the regulation of political life by creating public opinion. While Negt and Kluge's public sphere belongs to the working class, and Habermas's public sphere representatives are the bourgeois class, the virtual public sphere does not make these distinctions. In other words, the virtual public sphere

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133 *Bauman*, *Globalization: The Human Consequences*, P. 20.

134 *Bauman*, *Ibid*, P. 50.

provides equality in terms of current statutes. Representatives of certain layers of society are stripped of these statues as they enter the virtual public sphere. While opinion leaders and celebrities in the society enter into a dialogue with the individuals in their own statute in real life, they enter into a dialogue with people in different statute and exposed to criticism when they connect to the virtual public sphere. This means that the virtual public sphere can exclude the statute identities of real life. The virtual public sphere can exist without needing a democratic environment, and it is possible to establish it in governments where democracy does not exist or is supposed to exist because the virtual public sphere has its own autonomous democracy. Virtual identities provided by the Internet, VPN (Virtual Private Network) and IP (Internet Protocol) diverters are used as tools in the virtual public sphere. This software provides access to internet sites and social media networks that are prohibited from being accessed by the government. Democracy is needed when virtual actions, that are started in order to democratic demand for rights or similar demands on the internet, are moved to real environment. Otherwise, there may be faced with the intervention of the security forces of the state. Taksim Gezi Park or other social-media-supported social movements have brought the virtual public sphere to physical spheres with openness to democratization, publicity, openness to criticism, and locomotive power. In particular, the "wall" system which is a Facebook-shared structure, Twitter's tag (hashtag) and trend topic feature and the use of blogs manifesto-like enable people outside the local to follow events, developments, to participate online in social movements and to congregate announcements and masses. Today, access to digital devices and internet protocols is not expensive. The fact at the core of the subject is that individuals can express themselves, criticize, disseminate information through electronic devices and internet technology and congregate in physical spaces via these opportunities. The ability of traditional mass media to relocate the public sphere experience to the private sphere and to keep it alive and be discussed in the private sphere reveals the importance of mass media devices in terms of socialization at first glance. According to Mills, who put forward the idea of "cultural reflection" in this regard, mass media act as a mirror on the experiences of modern societies. At this point, information flows in a wide circle from social life to mass media and from mass media to social life is provided. The political context of the mass media also means that mass media in this circle generate the control over the social life. The politicization of the mass media and the act based on the received information without generating thought has been accepted as a critical factor in transforming the pub-

lic society into a mass society. While working on the effects of mass media, Berelson has focused on what kind of influence which tool has on what type of people. Especially since the second half of the 20th century, studies have progressed over the micro-scale impact instead of macro-scale impact studies of Mills and Berelson. When examined, because of the diversity of mass media- including the quantitative multiplicity of television and radio channels- and effects of different political structures, diversification and dissociation in the context of socialization can be seen. The uses and gratifications approach, which is one of the current research methods in this field, investigates the objective relationship between the contents of the messages given by the mass media and the satisfaction arising from the intrinsic motivation of the individual. Or, it can be thought as choosing among the messages given according to the psychological and the theatrical gratification of the individual. While choosing the message that will lead to gratification from the structure existing in the traditional mass media which mostly move in one direction from the public sphere to the private sphere, the individual mostly make contact with the groups of friends he has formed from his / her social and political environment and is satisfied with the messages received from these groups in the social media experiences. While traditional mass media have the power to create a model of socialization according to the desired structure through pre-planned messages, social media has the power to destroy this model's power. Social media users can establish their own socializing and socialization environment. While things take place in the public sphere are able to enter the private sphere with social media just as they are in the traditional mass media, information can flow as social forum characteristic from the private sphere to the private sphere through social media and this situation cannot be observed in the traditional mass media. Nonetheless, if the profiles created by social media users are open to every user, there is also an information flow from the private sphere to the (virtual) public sphere. This versatile flowchart allows for the transfer of information from the virtual sphere to the real arena by sharing, discussing and acting on the information through social media without exposure to the limited and biased information flow of traditional mass media in any societal event. The most important point here is the fact that the received information is thought as reliable as if it were the firsthand by users because of the discussion with and sharing to large friend groups. One of the most important points is whether the information to be paid attention is confidential. But

the biggest mistake is that even if the information received is disinformation, if it is shared by another close friend, it will be accepted correctly and instantly served to other groups of friends.

*B. Public Sphere Function of Social Media*

Traditional media tools and online publishing (which has an identification tag) depend on constitutionally specific provisions. The news made in these mediums can be censored and imposed a broadcast ban on. Sometimes it may be exposed to editorial censor as a political strategy, even if it does not constitute an illegal problem. Yet, as in the definition of Habermas, the public sphere has defined as an area without any restriction in which individuals freely converse and criticize issues related to the state on an equal basis and publicly accessible, that is freedom to congregate, organize, express and publish opinions are guaranteed in this area.<sup>135</sup> In the context of the transformation of the technological substructure, it is clear that when socialization is taken into account in relation to time and space, the definition of publicity needs to be expanded to include technology. In the 21st century, both the private and public spheres lost their spatial dimension. The new areas created by the public opinion in return for the lost are confronted as virtual environments. The roles in the public and private sphere are left to virtual identities. As the technology of traditional media tools have evolved and a new device has replaced by the previous one, the role of information technology has changed throughout its history. At the point reached today, as mentioned earlier, the roles have left their place with virtual identities. Whilst the capitalist corporations, the effect of state and the power of mass media are increasing, gradually they degenerate, which Habermas described as re-feudalism. In this new case, public opinion polls or media experts' opinions are taking the place of the previous communication type which is a rational sermon among free-will individuals, at this point the rise of new media technologies, in Habermas's expressions, are creating possibilities for a new golden age of the public sphere.

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135 *Onat, Kamusal Alan Ve Sınırları*, P. 12.

On the other side, according to Arendt, the public sphere is the field of visibility and everyone in this area has the right to speak liberally and express himself. However, when the virtual domain is examined it is clear that the principle of visibility is distant from the physical context, but the right to participate and the right to self-expression are at the initiative of the individual. Social media symbolize a common world at this point. According to Geray, although the view that new communication technologies create a different type of freedom from traditional means of communication is accepted from a liberal approach, critical approach is intensively discussing the possibilities and limitations of these technologies to create a new sovereignty, power sphere and functioning.<sup>136</sup>

It is not possible to observe the direct and indirect influence of the traditional media in a transparent manner, mostly in a direct political process. Social media, however, gain transparency through the freely made sharings by every user. The attempts of censorship for social media in the periods of intense activist movements by government constitute a serious threat to the media. The state authority on the press can be seen in constitutional provisions and press articles.

Radio and Television High Council (RTHC/RTUK), which emerged as a control mechanism, also emerges as the authority of the state over the press with the will of constitution and press law. According to the 26th article of the constitution, everyone has the right to express and spread his/her thoughts and opinions either individually or collectively by means of words, writing, painting or other tools. This liberty includes the freedom to receive or impart information or ideas without the interference of official authorities. The provision of this paragraph does not preclude to link of radio, television, cinema or similar broadcasts to the authorization system.<sup>137</sup> With the regulation of this article dated 03.02.2001, the use of these freedoms, national security, public order, public security, the basic qualities of the Republic and protection of the indivisible integrity of the state and the nation, the prevention of crimes, punishment of the criminals, for the purpose of preventing the disclosure of information, the reputation or rights of others, the protection of private and family life or professional secrets prescribed by law or the fulfillment of the judicial task, can be re

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136 *Yılmaz*, Recent Arguments on Use of Social Media: Relation Between "Privacy" and "Public Sphere" - Based on a Modeling With University Students, P. 252.

137 *Article 26 of the Turkish Constitution.*



stricted with these goals.<sup>138</sup> This article is expressed as freedom of expression and spreading in the constitutional. As thought and opinion can be expressed freely, certain restrictions are imposed on this liberty. 27th article, which immediately follows the 26th article, is considered as freedom of science and art.

Article 27 of the Constitution reads as follows; "Everyone has the right to freedom of learning and teaching, explaining and spreading science and arts and all kinds of research in these fields. The right to spread cannot be used to ensure that the provisions of Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Constitution are amended. The provision of this Article shall not prevent the entry and distribution of foreign publications into the country by law".<sup>139</sup> This article is under the title of freedom of science and arts in our constitution. In Article 28 of the Constitution, the press is not able to censor. Establishing a printing house or press cannot be tied to obtaining permission and depositing financial guarantees. The State shall take measures to ensure freedom of the press and information. In the limitation of freedom of the press, the provisions of Articles 26 and 27 of the Constitution shall apply.<sup>140</sup>

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138 *Legislation Information System*, P. 135

139 *Article 27 of the Turkish Constitution*: ARTICLE 27- Everyone has the right to study and teach, express, and disseminate science and the arts, and to carry out research in these fields freely. The right to disseminate shall not be exercised for the purpose of changing the provisions of articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Constitution. The provision of this article shall not preclude regulation by law of the entry and distribution of foreign publications in the country.

140 *Article 28 of the Turkish Constitution*. ARTICLE 28- The press is free, and shall not be censored. The establishment of a printing house shall not be subject to prior permission or the deposit of a financial guarantee. (Repealed on October 3, 2001; Act No. 4709)

The State shall take the necessary measures to ensure freedom of the press and information. In the limitation of freedom of the press, the provisions of articles 26 and 27 of the Constitution shall apply.

Anyone who writes any news or articles which threaten the internal or external security of the State or the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation, which tend to incite offence, riot or insurrection, or which refer to classified state secrets or has them printed, and anyone who prints or transmits such news or articles to others for the purposes above, shall be held responsible under the law relevant to these offences. Distribution may be prevented as a precautionary measure by the decision of a judge, or in case delay is deemed prejudicial, by the competent authority explicitly designated by law. The authority preventing the distribution shall notify a competent judge of its decision within twenty-four

This article mentions that the press is free and that it can broadcast uncensored, and also it is mentioned that measures will be taken when it is deemed necessary. The precautions to be taken are not explicitly stated. It is a news ban of the Istanbul State Security Court after the attacks of the synagogues and HSBC in 2003, one of the defeats of freedom of the press and information.

Another article that restricts freedom of the press is article 30 of the Press Legislation No. 5680. According to this article, it is forbidden to publish the preliminary investigations before the decision of non-prosecution is made before the readings of the demands and claims of criminal proceedings, decisions and all kinds of documents and documents in public hearing. It is also forbidden to publish a judge's decision and the judgment, proceedings of the court in favorable or unfavorable terms.<sup>141</sup>

Penalties such as warning, correction, suspension of broadcasting, closing, monetary penalties or suspension of publishing are determined according to the degree of publication or infringement made by Article 33, which is one of the binding provisions of Radio and Television High

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hours at the latest. The order preventing distribution shall become null and void unless upheld by a competent judge within forty-eight hours at the latest.

No ban shall be placed on the reporting of events, except by the decision of judge issued within the limits specified by law, to ensure proper functioning of the judiciary.

Periodical and non-periodical publications may be seized by a decision of a judge in cases of ongoing investigation or prosecution of crimes specified by law; or by order of the competent authority explicitly designated by law, in situations where delay may constitute a prejudice with respect to the protection of the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation, national security, public order or public morals and for the prevention of crime. The competent authority issuing the order to seize shall notify a competent judge of its decision within twenty-four hours at the latest; the order to seize shall become null and void unless upheld by a judge within forty-eight hours at the latest.

General provisions shall apply when seizing and confiscating periodicals and non-periodicals for reasons of criminal investigation and prosecution.

Periodicals published in Turkey may be temporarily suspended by court ruling if found to contain material which contravenes the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation, the fundamental principles of the Republic, national security and public morals. Any publication which clearly bears the characteristics of being a continuation of a suspended periodical is prohibited; and shall be seized by decision of a judge.

141 *Text approved by the Justice Commission.*

Council. Furthermore, according to Article 25 of the Radio and Television Legislation of Turkey, the Prime Minister or the minister appointed by him/her shall have the right to remove a news or publication in the case of national security (Law No. 3984 on Establishment of Radio and Television Enterprises and Publications).

Alternative media will provide critical media content and destroy the ideological character of the capitalist media, making it possible to recognize emancipatory potential.<sup>142</sup> Despite all censorship and broadcasting bans, social media from alternative media tools is freer. Shared content only concerns the sharer. The banned broadcasting or new for traditional media can spread on Facebook and Twitter. Publishing a banned new can take only minutes to spread among millions of users. Especially with the trending topic of Twitter, the publication of banned new is spreading rapidly among users as well as interpreted by users. While this is the case, traditional media tools are increasing the direction to the news, especially in terms of censorship and publication prohibition.

Social networks have created a different world and lifestyle within themselves. Users express themselves with their profiles, with the content they share and the groups they belong to. Users create the public sphere with information that they reach and publish. Social media is shaped by the emergence of a new public sphere based on the claims that the plane of these new relations, organized on the basis of feedback, dialogue and interaction, is supported by intensive information flow.<sup>143</sup> It is based on the notion of the public sphere to establish a relationship between governance and management by emphasizing the flow of information. In the previous chapters, public sphere was expressed as common areas such as parks, coffee houses, squares by Habermas's expression, and Agora by the expression of Arendt where the public opinion was formed. However, everyone can be involved in molding public opinion debate. The public sphere emerges as a domain of emancipation, self-expression and the other's perception of the other.<sup>144</sup> In this context, the public opinion formed by groups and individual share in social media supports the public opinion in real life. The most obvious example of this can be seen in Facebook

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142 *Işık*, *Sanaldan Sokaga Toplumsal Hareketler*, P. 52.

143 *Yılmaz*, *Recent Arguments on Use of Social Media: Relation Between "Privacy" and "Public Sphere"* - Based on a Modeling With University Students, P 256.

144 *Yılmaz*, *Ibid*, P. 249.

groups where people are invited to protest actions in real places and notices on the pages of these groups. As a result, social media play a more integrative role between civil society and the political sphere than traditional media tools do. Traditional media, between the political sphere and civil society, has been at the center in molding public opinion about the social issues as a means of both communication and a translation of politics into the language of the people. Nonetheless, the role of the unity of the civil and political arena will be Internet. Because, traditional media tools, under the conditions of democracy, transmit information mainly from political field to civil society, whereas the direction of communication is reversed in social media. With this bi-directional flow, users can visually support their own ideas and criticisms and move them to the public sphere and then to the real public sphere. In addition, social media give rise to the high level of participation in terms of the direction of communication. Participation and pluralism are among the most important elements of democracy and are closely related to a series of processes connected communication and an access to social decision-making processes.<sup>145</sup> Therefore, if the alternative media are provided for ordinary people to broadcast their voices, the media's liberatory social influences can be mentioned.<sup>146</sup> Social decision-making processes are fast and effective with the groups established on Facebook and with tweets on Twitter. . The most obvious example of this can be seen in Taksim Gezi Park Resistance in Turkey in 2013 or in the activities of the M15 Movement in Spain in 2011.

Any public opinion formed by organizing through social media can not be moved to the real public sphere. One of the main reasons for this is that the virtual public sphere that is formed is only aimed at raising awareness of followers and participants. This can often be seen in virtual groups created for animal rights. The aim here is only to raise awareness and draw attention. Another reason is that followers and members consist of passive activists. In this case everything that is shared and reacted remains in writing and visuals. Anti-globalization virtual activist actions are also made by participating from the virtual environment and boycott calls are made to the companies which are on the globalization side. While petitions are

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145 *Ligieza*, Active or Passive Citizen: The Influence of New Media Over Local Communities' Participation, P. 109.

146 *Işık*, Sanaldan Sokaga Toplumsal Hareketler, P. 52.

acted over the Internet and are part of the virtual public sphere, they are moved to the real public sphere only through signatures sent to the competent authorities. The best example of this is change.org. Here, every user has the right to collect signatures for an application that they see incorrect. When the number of signatures reaches a sufficient number, the signatures are forwarded to the competent authorities of the state and the process of seeking the rights starts. The best example of this is change.org. Here, every user has the right to collect signatures for an implementation that they see incorrect. When the number of signatures reaches a sufficient number, the signatures are forwarded to the competent authorities of the state and the process of claiming the rights starts.

### *C. Evolution of Mass Media Towards Social Media*

The political and cultural media productions that are living in the media public sphere and the media contents which are presented ready for the consumption of the society lead to profound effects on the participants. From this, it should be said that the anticipations of the counter-public spheres are totally transferred directly to the information in the public

domain and not reproduced. Because counter-publicists who are aware of the responsibility for the realization of mass media completely refuse reproduction. The Internet transforms public opinion into public pressure by organizing public demands. Thus, it plays an important role in the proactive orientation of the people, in the struggle for their demands.<sup>147</sup> Where there is no democratization responsibility in the media public space, new media searches are made and communication is tried to be multifaced at this point. In other words, the need to change the traditional mass media with new ones in order to transform into a form where democratic participation possible.

The public sphere is based on the thought, the existence of face-to-face interaction in written and shared physical space, and the development of electronic mass media tools has also been transformed. Along with the end of the 20th century, developments in information and communication

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147 *Köse*, Küresel "Akıntıya Karşı" Sivil Arayışlar Alternatif Medya, P. 271.

technologies have led to changes in society at macro level and changes in the institutional structure of the media at micro level. There is an important contribution to raising the level of democratic participation of the Internet because it is thought that developments and changes in the public arena affect democratic values and elements very closely. Along with Internet technology, the boundaries of public debate and expression have expanded first. The boundaries of the influence of a verbal or debate in the virtual environment have extended beyond the nation-states to a time span of all mankind.<sup>148</sup> Traditional mass media have left their power to create publicity to the applications of the Internet, which are new media tools. The internet and its related social media, electronic journals and newspapers, websites that address specific groups, web-based encyclopedias, information dissemination and information access are more effective than traditional media. In this sense, traditional media do their own web adaptations to increase accessibility to them. According to Negroponte; "CNN, a television channel that can be watched in many parts of the world, and America Today's newest form of technology, along with America Today's leading newspaper, will reach more people."<sup>149</sup>

Social media, Internet-mediated information and information technology, along with the development of newspaper, radio and television features. It is even a structure that combines more in its own technological context. This change has been realized by the widespread use of audiovisual media tools. Likewise, since 2000, with the development of internet technologies and the addition of social media to the technologies that allow users to chat over the internet, a new stage of public sphere thinking has entered. Social media has provided a versatile communication environment that traditional mass media can not give to users as a social sharing and social environment, at least as much as the use of television as a base. Parallel to the public opinion created by the traditional mass media, a public opinion was formed in the social media and each individual was able to share his or her voice in this public opinion. At this point, the social media's role in creating public opinion is important because participation, one of the principles of democratic life, is more functional and successful in the social media than in the traditional media.

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148 Köse, Küresel "Akıntıya Karşı" Sivil Arayışlar Alternatif Medya, P. 271.

149 Negroponte, Tomorrow of Technology. This article has been decoded from the tape record of the Guru conference Gegroponte attended as speaker.

*D. Social Media Apolitics Who Create Virtual Public Sphere and Y Generation*

Y generation youth is a society that is away from politics, dislike the bureaucracy, based on rapid consumption and shaping their lives with technology. Y generation, that is those born between 1980-1999<sup>150</sup>, are in a voluntary relationship with technology and consumption, and have acquired multiple identities, especially through specializations in the use of the Internet.<sup>151</sup> Their proximity to technology shows that almost all of them have a habit of accessing information quickly and easily via the Internet. One of the most striking features of the generation is the technological life thanks to social media is very good use. The virtual world of the Internet is replacing the real world perception and is the first generation to open the door to the world of consumption by creating a break in the world of production based world because people lead them to establish themselves and their relations through the symbols of this virtual world.<sup>152</sup> Their internet and social media life and other features provide the most important advantage is that they are conscious consumers. This consumption is valid for many cases, from the purchased goods to the service. In the global world, growing with television and game consoles youth is emerging as a new prototype of a new human protagonist of "insatiable, irresponsible, individualistic, cyber world" as a result of rapid consumption.

Marketers have faced an active mass of consumers who know and claim their rights when necessary since Y generation can follow all kinds of information and applications with mobile communication tools.<sup>153</sup> There is an important point here, as well as for the conscious consumers, for the expectations of goods or services that meet the quality and presentation, as well as for the political attitudes to meet expectations. It is also possible to see this in street actions in various countries as a result of the government's wrong politics.

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150 The issue of which date X generation covers is arguable in the literature.

151 *Altuntuğ*, *The Consumption Phenomenon from Generation to Generation and The Consumer Profile of Future*, P. 206.

152 *Altuntuğ*, *Ibid*, P. 206.

153 *Altuntuğ*, *Ibid*, P. 208.

Y generation, entrepreneur, impatient, individualistic, focusing on the result, with high ego and self-confidence, who wants everything immediately and consumes immediately and does not want to pay a price, speed freak and who does not like bureaucracy and seriousness.<sup>154</sup> On the other hand; they are flexible, highly adaptive, well educated, have social status, and very fearless in many ways.<sup>155</sup> Y generation youngsters oppose the postmodernist paradigm, the rule of mind and the only truth. Accordingly, they have benefited from the voicing of differences and the globalization of an unlimited understanding of consumption based on this, and they have turned to different, private and personal consumption. Y generation is a generation that consider individual welfare instead of possibilities, focus on consumption, have desire to consume almost everything and are lack of empathy and have high level of ego. This generation unfortunately does not act as an actor of their own life, but prefer to talk instead of reading, watching instead of learning, holding on to life through parents.

Although they have been seen as apolitical in their definitions, this does not mean that they have no expectations from the politicians and the government itself. Because this generation is devoted to welfare and freedom. Restrictions and prohibitions related to the internet, environmental damage done by the state, reactions to their interventions in their sexual lives can be seen both in the Taksim Gezi Park Resistance and the 15-M Movement. Because according to Kuyucu; Y generation know they own rights, question authority and deal with the concept of justice.<sup>156</sup>

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154 *Altuntuğ*, The Consumption Phenomenon from Generation to Generation and The Consumer Profile of Future, P. 206.

155 *Kuyucu*, Y Generation and Facebook: A Research on The Use Habits of Facebook of Y Generation, P. 59.

156 *Kuyucu*, Ibid, P. 59.