



**Political Culture And Democratic Institutionalisation**

Siyasal Kültür ve Demokratik Kurumsallaşma

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**Makale Bilgisi/Article Information**

**Makale Türü / Article Type:** Araştırma Makale / Research Article

**Yayın Sezonu / Pub Date Season:** Yaz-Haziran/Summer-June

**Geliş/Received:** 21 Nisan/April 2024

**Kabul/Accepted:** 02 Haziran/June 2024

**Yayın/Published:** 30 Haziran/June 2024.

**Atıf/Cite As**

Aydın, Rıfat. "Political Culture And Democratic Institutionalisation". *Demokrasi Platformu Dergisi*, (2024), 13/40, 53-75.

**İntihal/Plagiarism**

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**Etik Beyan/Ethical Statement:** Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur/It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited (Rıfat Aydın)

**Finansal Destek / Grant Support:** Yazarlar bu çalışma için finansal destek almadıklarını beyan etmiştir. / The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.

**Yazar Katkıları / Author Contributions:** Rıfat Aydın % 100

**Web:** <https://www.demokrasiplatformu.com/dergi>

**E-mail to:** [demokrasiplatformudergisi@gmail.com](mailto:demokrasiplatformudergisi@gmail.com) **Publisher** Serkan Yorgancılar, Ankara-Türkiye.

**Abstract**

The ascendancy of liberalism in the economic system has been accompanied by the ascendance of democracy as the dominant paradigm for a vast array of systems and countries. This phenomenon is evident in numerous domains, extending from the political sphere to social life. In particular, Western democracies have exported their democratic systems to neighbouring countries, drawing on the historical doctrines they have put forward with the confidence afforded by their economic and social prosperity. In this context, democratic regimes were rapidly established across the globe in the post-World War II era. However, the outcomes of these democratic initiatives varied considerably from one country to another. Moreover, the authoritarian and fascist tendencies observed in some Western democracies prior to World War II led to a convergence of democratic debates with those concerning political culture. The relationship between political culture and democracy, as first elucidated by the works of Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, has demonstrated that the mere existence of democratic systems is insufficient for the healthy functioning of democracy. It has thus been recognised that a strong civic consciousness, or the presence of political culture and social capital, is a prerequisite for the establishment of a robust and effective democratic system. This study employs an academic framework to elucidate the concept of political culture and to examine its functional role in the institutionalisation of democratic structures. Methodologically, the study begins by elucidating the theoretical framework within the field. Subsequently, it examines the relationship between democratic systems worldwide and political culture. Finally, it analyses the impact of social capital and the relationship between citizenship culture and democracy from the perspective of political culture. The study concludes that there is a significant correlation between democracy and political culture. Furthermore, it identifies democratic institutions, civic culture and social capital as crucial elements in the development of a well-functioning democracy.

**Keywords:** Political Culture, Democracy, Social Structure and Social Capital.

**Öz**

Demokrasi kavramı liberalizmin ekonomik sistemdeki hegemonyasına paralel olarak günümüzde her türden sistem ve ülke için hâkim paradigma olarak siyasal alandan toplumsal yaşama uzanan genişçe bir alanda hayatı kuşatmıştır. Özellikle bu durumun ortaya çıkmasında Batı demokrasilerinin ekonomik ve sosyal refahlarının da verdiği öz güvenle ortaya koydukları tarihsel doktrinler etrafında demokratik sistemlerini çevre ülkelere ihraç etmesi de etkili olmuştur. Bu çerçevede II. Dünya Savaşı sonrası dönemde tüm Dünya’da demokratik rejimler hızla kurulmaya başlamıştır. Ancak bu demokrasi



teşebbüsleri her ülkede aynı sonuçları vermediği gibi, II. Dünya Savaşı öncesinde demokratik Batılı devletlerdeki otoriter/faşist eğilimler, demokrasi tartışmalarının siyasal kültür çalışmalarıyla kesişmesine sebep olmuştur. Gabriel Almond ve Sidney Verba'nın çalışmalarının öncülük ettiği siyasal kültür demokrasi ilişkisi, demokrasinin sağlıklı bir şekilde işlemleri için demokratik sistemlerin tek başına yeterli olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Böylece güçlü ve işlevsel bir demokratik sistem için siyasal kültür ve sosyal sermayenin, diğer bir ifadeyle güçlü bir yurttaşlık bilincinin varlığının gerekliliği anlaşılmıştır. Bu çerçevede çalışma; siyasal kültür kavramını akademik bir çerçevede açıklayarak bu kavramın demokratik yapıların kurumsallaşması açısından sahip olduğu işlevsel rolü incelemiştir. Yöntemsel olarak alandaki kuramsal çerçeveyi öncelikle açıklayan çalışma, ikinci aşamada dünyadaki demokratik sistemler ile siyasal kültür arasındaki ilişkiye odaklanmıştır. Son noktada ise sosyal sermayenin etkisi ile birlikte yurttaşlık kültürü demokrasi ilişkisi siyasal kültür perspektifinde ele alınmıştır. Bu inceleme sonunda, demokrasi ile siyasal kültür arasında önemli bir bağlantı olduğu ve güçlü bir demokrasi için demokratik kurumların, yurttaşlık kültürünün ve demokrasi kültürüne içkin bir sosyal sermayenin önemli etmenler olduğu değerlendirilmiştir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Siyasal Kültür, Demokrasi, Toplumsal Yapı ve Sosyal Sermaye.

### **Introduction**

The multidimensional and variable nature of the political sphere, coupled with the individual and social issues emerging within democratic systems, has increased academic interest in cultural studies since the 1950s. In this context, the studies of political culture first developed by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, have provided a significant perspective for understanding the social and political aspects of their time and the years that followed. Political culture studies have played an instrumental role in understanding the unique characteristics, traditions, behavioral patterns, and practices of societies within political structures. Almond and Verba, who directly included the impact of political culture and civic consciousness on the functioning of political systems or constitutional texts within the democratic system, articulated democracy in cultural terms.

The emergence of democracy as the dominant political system worldwide has led to disappointments in many countries. In particular, democracies in developing countries have often been disrupted by military coups or social movements, or democratic regimes have transformed into elected authoritarian regimes. The characteristics of political cultural structures provide important clues to understand

the fragility emerging in democracies. It is crucial for the establishment and institutionalization of democracy that the political cultural structure is compatible with this institutionalization capacity. For example, compared to European countries such as Spain and Portugal, which became democracies in almost similar periods, democracy experiences in the Balkans or South America did not yield the same results. One of the main factors contributing to this differentiation is the political culture characteristics of these countries. This study explains how political culture has emerged as a factor in the institutionalization of democracy. However, the study carefully avoids cultural relativism and adopts a cultural approach within the boundaries of political science and sociology rather than an anthropological cultural approach.

Despite the widespread perception of democracy as the optimal political and social system, there has been a notable decline in trust in democratic institutions in numerous developed countries in recent times. This trust problem poses a significant obstacle to the institutionalization of democracy. Within this framework, this study explains political culture and the related concepts of social capital, trust, and social change, and analyzes the relationship between these phenomena and democracy. In the last quarter century, the concept of social capital has played a key role in the functioning of democracy. Although the broad use of the concept is reserved, social capital is discussed in the context of the relationship between democracy and political culture, particularly within the civic culture of a robust and strong interactional network in individual and social relations at the point of institutionalization of democracy. The study evaluates the relationship between democracy, political culture, and social capital in terms of democratic institutionalization and stability.

The objective of this study is to elucidate the theoretical aspects of the subject matter by presenting the works of prominent academics who have made significant contributions to pioneering studies in this field. In the second stage, the role played by political culture, social capital and democratic institutions in the functioning of democracy, especially in developed country democracies, is analysed. With regard to the democratic experiences of the countries in question, it has been determined that democracy has a better chance of survival at the point where social capital intersects with democratic culture. In this context, the main thesis of the study is to demonstrate the effect of these elements on the functional survival of democracy.

## 1. Political Culture



Political systems are factual structures that affect individual behavior as much as administrative and structural processes. While the impact of these structures influences political institutions in one way, it also reshapes political behaviors in another. Understanding the relationship between political structure and political behavior is only possible by examining the political culture of society. In this respect, political culture is essentially a re-expression of an idea that has its roots in the past. From Plato to the present day, many philosophers have put forward political cultural analyses under the different conceptualisations. However, although the importance of values and beliefs that shape the behaviour of a society or a group and even ensure the continuity of the political system has been accepted, many intellectuals have not considered concepts such as values and beliefs as a part of political culture. The relation between political structure and behaviour has been tried to be explained by the concept of culture in general, just like the German philosopher Herder (Heywood, 2007:290). By the twentieth century, political culture started to be included in the literature as a determining element of the political system. G. Almond was the first to use the concept of "political culture" in his 1956 study (Almond, 1956:391-393). In the 1960s, the concept was used by political scientists such as Samuel Beer, Sidney Verba, Lucien W. Pye, Seymour M. Lipset, and Robert Dahl and became an important phenomenon in political science (Gibbins, 1989:3-4).

Pye and Verba define political culture as "the beliefs, values, symbols, and the whole embodied in these values in which political actions take place" (Pye and Verba, 1965:513). According to Pye, political culture is a set of attitudes, beliefs, and emotions that give order and meaning to the political process, regulate the behavior of individuals within the political system, and provide basic thoughts and rules (Pye, 1966:104). Çam, who sees culture as the adoption of the political system and social objects by the individual, expresses the relationship between the political system and political culture as follows: "The political system, like every social system, consists of political structure and political culture. While the political structure, consisting of political institutions, gains meaning through political culture, political culture molds individuals in terms of their actions, beliefs, and attitudes towards the political system" (Çam, 2005:200). According to G.M. Roskin, political culture "refers to the psychology of a society in relation to politics. In this respect, political culture indicate significant changes from one society to another because this psychology is a reflection of the values that find expression in different symbols in each society" (Roskin, 2014:10). According to S. Watts, political culture is "the political beliefs and values that citizens have about the processes and systems that determine the ruler-governed

relationship between the people and the power" (Sayarı and Bilgin, 2015:104). In 1966, Almond and Powell, in their book *Comparative Politics*, explained political culture as "a broad area that includes political change, support for the system, relations between society and the state, relations between power and pressure groups, actions, and attitudes" (Gökçe, 2016:169).

G.M. Patrick categorized the theoretical definitions of political culture around four main axes: objective conceptualization, subjective-psychological conceptualization, empirical conceptualization, and internal conceptualization. According to the approach that deals with the concept in its objective dimension (represented by D. Easton), political culture consists of behavioral patterns, rules, and beliefs that are independent and superior to the individuals in society and keep them together. The subjective-psychological conceptualization (represented by G. Almond, B. Powell, and S. Verba), on the other hand, defines political culture according to the attitudes and tendencies of individuals in society towards political life. Those who approach the concept empirically (represented by L. W. Pye), on the other hand, recognize that each political culture has its own characteristics and therefore examine political culture with more specific and unique data such as the traditions of that society, the spirit of the public sphere, the bonds of citizenship, the influence of the leader. The internal conceptualization of political culture (represented by R. R. Fagen and R. C. Tucker), on the other hand, examines the relationship between the individual's behaviors and his/her mental structure in the context of both concrete behaviors and the psychological factors that guide these behaviors (Sarıbay, 2000:64-66).

Almond, who used the concept for the first time, defined political culture by classifying it in different ways: (a) Political culture is the common set of subjective orientations and values towards politics in a national society or subset of national societies; (b) Political culture has cognitive, affective, and evaluative-judgmental characteristics; (c) The content of political culture is the product of experiences resulting from childhood socialization, education, media influence, and the fulfillment of administrative, social, and economic tasks; (d) Political culture is the main factor affecting administrative structures, policy-making processes, and their performance. Therefore, the field of study of political culture is concerned with questions such as individuals' knowledge of politics, the form of individual-community relations, the structure of community-specific hierarchies, who or whom gets what, when, where, and how, and what political roles individuals are allowed to



play (Almond and Verba, 1989:14). Based on this, it is possible to define the field of study of political culture as (i) the impact of beliefs, ideas, and values on political power, (ii) the meaning of social existence, (iii) social priorities, and (iv) actual policies (Öğün and Sarıbay, 2007:77-78).

Almond and Verba, who broke away from the traditional methods of Western political sociology, analyzed culture with a psychological approach while determining the components of democratic political culture (Çam, 2005: 200). In their book *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, in which they created political culture typologies based on the factors shaping the political attitudes of individuals, they mentioned three dimensions of political culture that shape the individual's attitude towards political objects: cognitive, emotional, and judgmental factors. These factors represent three different aspects of political culture. In this respect, the three aspects of political culture can be defined as the recognition aspect (cognitive), which consists of knowledge about the political system; the emotional aspect (affective), which is based on a personal attachment to leaders and institutions; and the judgmental aspect (judgmental), which includes the value judgments made on political events (Almond and Verba, 1989:15-17). If we take a closer look at these three factors, the cognitive dimension refers to individuals' knowledge about the political system that surrounds them. Individuals know who plays political roles, the contents and stances of political parties. The individual's knowledge of the political system constitutes the knowing, perceiving, and believing dimension of political culture. The emotional dimension refers to the personal attitude of individuals towards political institutions and political leaders. Beyond the stage of knowing and recognizing, the individual can emotionally perceive the political structure, events, and people around him/her. An individual's joy, fear, or discontent in the face of an event may make him/her hate a leader or love another leader. This perception of the individual towards the political structure and actors constitutes the emotional dimension of political culture. The value-judgmental dimension includes the judgments and values that the individual has about the system. The individual can construct new political phenomena by referring to this previously acquired hierarchy of values (Almond and Verba, 1989:15).

Based on the three factors described above, Almond and Verba argue that there are three different types of political culture: local culture, dependency (nationality) culture, and participatory culture. In local culture, citizens are almost unaware of the existence of a central government. The culture of subsidiarity is rarely found in

developed democracies, but its traces can be found in isolated communities in the countryside or in the rapidly growing number of poor neighborhoods in the inner cities where the state does not make its presence felt in people's lives. In a culture of subservience, citizens do not see themselves as a participatory element in the political process but as subjects of the state, just like the people living under dictatorship. In participatory culture, on the other hand, citizens believe that they can both contribute to the system and be influenced by it. Therefore, it is assumed that people with a participatory attitude are exemplary citizens of a stable democracy (Hague and Harrop, 2004:89-90).

Almond and Verba analyzed five countries (USA, UK, Germany, Italy, and Mexico) and found that the main differences of the three types of political culture according to countries are as follows: Local (narrow group/community) culture: Exhibits a low level of consciousness, knowledge, and participation in governance. It is generally observed in Third World or rural societies. The level of education is insufficient, economic development is low, and communication networks are weak. Also in some developed societies, parochial society characteristics can be observed in certain regions or groups. In Almond and Verba's study, the closest example to parochial culture was Mexico. Nationality (subject) culture: Individuals are aware of the existence of government and what it does, but participation in politics is low. Subject culture is mainly found in non-democratic societies that emphasize the power of the state rather than the rights and duties of citizens. In this context, Italy and West Germany are considered in this group. Participatory culture: Citizens are knowledgeable about politics, attach importance to politics, and have a high rate of political participation because they feel themselves competent and knowledgeable. The UK and the USA represent the closest examples of this culture. However, there is a different danger here: the discontent that may arise as a result of the failure to meet the excessive demands produced by excessive participation may cause democratic fractures (Almond and Verba, 1989:15-22). Almond and Verba's study, therefore, argues that a civic culture that blends all three types is the most appropriate political culture for an ideal democracy. The authors argue that the ideal conditions for democracy are created when dependent and parochial attitudes stabilize an essentially participatory culture (Newton and Deth, 2014:176).

## 2. Social Capital and Civic Culture





Although Almond and Verba's study of political culture continued to be influential until the seventies, it began to lose its influence, especially with the global changes (economic fluctuations, the rise of populism and environmentalist movements) (Newton and Deth, 2014:176). In this period, within the scope of post-materialism, discussion old arguments have started to be questioned in every field. In this respect, recent studies have focused on issues such as political trust and political participation rather than political culture. Although the ideal of democracy is widely accepted, the significant decrease in trust in democratic institutions in democratically developed countries in recent years is one of the main reasons for this tendency. This is because citizens are now more sceptical and critical about the functioning of democratic institutions.

Ronald Inglehart, in a study conducted in six countries (England, France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands) on the increasing student movements all over the world in the 1970s, found that the younger generation had different demands and aspirations compared to the generation over the age of 35 and that distrust in political institutions had increased. This difference has not only changed the expectations from the political sphere but also the perception and function of democracy (Dalton and Welzel, 2014:7-9). In this framework, Inglehart reached two main conclusions in the light of the developments in the last thirty years: a) the rapid economic development in the last century has met the basic material needs of most people in the West, and as a result, there has been a shift from material concerns (food, health, etc.) to post-material concerns (civil liberties, environment, women's rights, etc.). This has profoundly changed the political culture and built a more questioning and less belonging society, with a particular emphasis on criticism; b) but this change is rather slow because the first agents of this change are the educated young and wealthy generations. Therefore, although this transition is rather quiet and slow, in the long run it completely changes the political culture (Inglehart, 1988:1223-1228).

Another contribution to the studies of Almond and Verba in political culture came from Robert Putnam. According to Putnam, political culture studies categorize a whole country in the same way with a very general approach. However, a country has differences and sub-cultures within itself. For example, in Almond and Verba's study, Italy was in the group showing the characteristics of subject political culture, while Putnam attempted a more diverse analysis by dividing Italy into regions in his 1993 study. In this context, Putnam observed that the north of Italy was more organized and more participatory and successful in policy-making, while the south

was less successful in achieving this. Putnam explains this situation with the effect of political culture and sees the social capital that the north has in Italy compared to the south as the reason for this result. Putnam answers the question of why social capital is more developed in one region than in another from a historical perspective. According to him, this difference has been shaped by historical processes (socio-economic superiority of the north over the south throughout history) (Hague and Harrop, 2004:91-92). According to Putnam, there is a close relationship between social movements and social capital, and in fact, it is the strength and structure of this relationship that enables the formation of civic culture (Gökçe, 2016:174).

The definition of social capital has an appearance that varies in accordance with the way it is used. For this reason, the concept of social capital is used in many fields of social sciences from economics to political science. The concept of social capital has its roots in the philosophical thought of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although social capital is not mentioned conceptually in the works of thinkers of this period, especially Tocqueville, Durkheim, and Weber, it is seen that an approach that covers the meaning of the concept used contemporary is discussed (Aydemir, 2011:25). Lyda J. Hanifan was the first to use the concept in 1916. According to Hanifan, as in the construction of an economic structure, a capital is necessary in the establishment of a community or society. However, this capital is not limited to economic-based concrete indicators (such as real estate, property, money). Social capital is a set of meaningful values that includes non-material values on a wide plane ranging from family to education, and which are reflected in daily life. The concept of social capital, which centers the practices of living together and mutual empathy within the framework of social interaction, is based on the idea of human capital that became widespread in the 1960s. According to this approach, the cultural skills and values system acquired by individuals, as well as the social capital they acquire socio-economically, is an important factor for the existence of a stable system in terms of social integration (Koç, 2019:341).

The first to conceptualise social capital in its contemporary form was the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu explained the social processes of social structure with the concepts of habitus, field, and capital. In this respect, Bourdieu's approach to social capital is closely related to these concepts. According to this approach, individuals exist with different social capital accumulations in different social areas within the social structure. Society has a diversity in this sense and individuals move in the social sphere in roles and forms appropriate to their capital



(Bourdieu, 2002:81). In contrast to Marxist theory, Bourdieu used the concept of capital in the analysis of social structure. Emphasizing the determining roles of lower and upper structural conditions, the sociologist emphasized that social capital is at the basis of class conflicts and social inequalities. However, this cultural and social inequality is also based on the economy (Aydemir, 2011:44). James S. Coleman, who does not read the concept through class distinctions, argued that social capital does not belong to a single class. According to Coleman, who is based on the individual, individuals are rational beings regardless of their social class. In this respect, social capital plays an instrumental role in ensuring co-operation and interaction between individuals. Coleman depicts the family as a natural social capital institution and considers other institutions (school, army or religious places) as important structures at this point. Coleman argues that the relatively dense and strong ties in these institutions are more important than weak ties, and addresses the construction of social capital within the framework of the individual's relationship with these theories (Field, 2008:28-30). Considering society as an area where actors interact, Coleman sees the essence of social capital in social relations.

Putnam, who analyzes social capital in the context of civic culture in terms of social integration, regards it as a social fabric based on trust formed by active and public-spirited citizens. In this respect, Putnam argues that civic culture refers not only to the participation of individuals in social networks, but also to the ability of individuals to exist effectively in these networks with full confidence, and that in a country where insecurity is effective, civic culture will also be low (Putnam, 1995:664-665). In this framework, social trust is an important dynamic that increases the effectiveness of society by facilitating coordinated activities. It is not easy for a country consisting of people who do not trust each other to build a sound culture of democracy. In this context, Putnam called a society that functions on the basis of trust a civic community. In this structure, associations and solidarity structures are highly developed and there are equal rights and obligations, trust, solidarity, solidarity and tolerance among citizens. According to Putnam, organizational performance is at a high level in societies with developed social capital. Because social capital encourages voluntary co-operation. On the basis of this cooperation lies a sense of trust. This social trust is measured by the existence of norms established in the society and the level of networks of civic engagement. In other words, the denser the networks of civic engagement, the more citizens adopt cooperation for the common good (Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti, 1993:86-89).

Similarly, Francis Fukuyama emphasizes that societies rich in social capital and with high levels of trust are more successful in economic institutionalization and development. In the context of social capital, a sense of trust requires a sense of community and the habit of working together instead of prioritizing personal interests, and the existence of a high level of trust facilitates the achievement of public affairs (Fukuyama, 2005:41). Again, Alex de Tocqueville, in his book *Democracy in America*, written in 1831, gave extensive coverage to the phenomenon of trust, one of the most important sources of social capital. According to Tocqueville, "Most Americans believe that the man who protects his own interests will reach what is just and good. They all have a lively belief that man can be perfected. Therefore, the respect people have for each other's rights and interests and the basic trust that everyone else will show this respect is the most fundamental factor that determines and keeps alive social capital in America" (Tocqueville, 1994:84).

Tolerance and trust are indispensable elements of a democratic political culture. The acceptance and respect of different identities and lifestyles by everyone is of great importance for the establishment of democracy on a solid foundation. Social trust and tolerance are closely related to social stability and democratic institutionalization in a country. Intolerance causes people to distrust each other in social life and negatively affects the healthy functioning of democracy. In societies composed of individuals who are far from showing tolerance towards each other, it is difficult for democracies to be established, and even if they are established, it is difficult for them to be long-lasting or consolidated (Ercins, 2012:93). In this context, the construction of a democratic system is directly related to the development of social capital, a sense of trust, and a culture of tolerance. Each type of culture merges with a specific political structure. The problem of the compatibility of political culture and political structure is important for political development. For example, local culture corresponds to a decentralized traditional political structure, whereas dependency culture corresponds to an authoritarian government where centralization is dominant. Participatory culture, on the other hand, needs a political climate with a strong democratic tradition. Therefore, if the political culture in a society is not in harmony with the system of government, which is an element of the political structure, the political system in that country will be disorganized and full of crises.

### 3. Political Culture and Democracy



The concept of democracy is currently a highly popular one, having been adopted by numerous forms of government. However, the form that it has taken in the present day has been shaped by a lengthy historical process. However, despite the popularity and deep-rooted history of democracy, people have lived under the rule of empires, kingdoms, and fiefdoms for about two thousand years. In the second half of the 21st century, the democratic method of governance, which was interrupted and not preferred for a long time, has gained extraordinary and unprecedented popularity worldwide. Being democratic has gained not only administrative but also cultural importance and has become a necessity for being a respected country in modern society.

The history of democracy has had its ups and downs, especially in the last two centuries. According to Huntington, the first wave of democracy began in the USA in the 1820s with the significant extension of the right to vote and continued until 1926. The first wave of democracy was followed by a wave in the opposite direction starting with Mussolini's coming to power in 1922, as a result of which the number of democracies in the world dropped to twelve by 1942. The Allied victory in the Second World War stimulated a second wave of democracies, and the number of democracies in the world rose again to thirty-six in 1962. However, this was followed by a second, less effective reverse wave, and this time the number of democracies fell to thirty. This reverse wave lasted until the mid-1970s. According to Huntington, there has been a third wave of democracy in the world for the last thirty years. This wave, which started with the return of Greece, Portugal, and Spain to democracy in the 1970s, gained speed and prevalence with the collapse of the Soviet Union and most of the other communist systems in 1989 (Beriş, 2015:197). Today, although democracy maintains its appeal on a global scale, it cannot be guaranteed that a new reverse wave will not be partially effective again. Because democracy is a fragile regime; its establishment and maintenance depend on many factors (Erdoğan, 2011:103-104).

The etymological origin of the concept of democracy is a concept that emerged in Antiquity. Democracy is formed by the combination of the Greek words "demos," which means "people, mass of people or full citizenship," and "kratein," which means sovereignty or exercise of power. In this sense, democracy means the rule of the people or the power of the people (Sartori, 1996:8-9). The lexical meaning of the concept of democracy is clear and understandable. Nevertheless, democracy, which Lincoln defines as "government of the people by the people for the people," needs to be realistically organized and made more clear and understandable. Because

Lincoln's definition is insufficient in defining democracy in its full sense, it causes uncertainties. For example, when we consider the public element in democracy, "the public includes all adult male and female citizens in today's Western constitutional states" (Schmidt, 2001:17).

In a democratic state, the principle of sovereignty is vested in the people. It is therefore presumed that the populace has the prerogative to establish the overarching structure of legislation, regulations, and policies, provided that certain constraints are observed. Consequently, political democracy as a form of regime is founded on the notion of popular sovereignty and institutionalised in the rights of citizens (Keyman, 2008:149-150). Democracy is a form of government in which the people are both rulers and ruled. The people who express their will with their vote are the rulers, the will of the sovereign person is the sovereign power itself. The laws that determine the right to vote are the basic laws of this form of government. According to Montesquieu, the people, who are the owners of sovereign power, should do the things they can accomplish themselves, but the things they cannot accomplish should be left to their representatives (Göze, 2011:195).

However, in modern democratic society, power, law, and knowledge are faced with a radical indeterminacy. This is a consequence of the democratic revolution that led to the abolition of the power embodied in the person of the King and linked to a transcendent authority (Mouffe, 2002:14). In liberal democracies, this transcendent authority was replaced by an abstract concept of popular sovereignty. In this context, democracy, in its most general definition, is a theory that defends the popular origin of power and bases power on the people (Çam, 2005:387). What is important in this system is the concept of sovereignty of the people. However, the point of sovereignty of the people is also quite controversial. In particular, the fact that the understanding of liberal democracy has moved away from a pluralistic outlook due to increasing population and scale problems has brought other theories of democracy to the agenda. The main two of these are deliberative democracy proposed by Habermas and radical democracy proposed by Laclau and Mouffe.

Deliberative democracy, as a theory based on the values of individual freedom, political equality and political representation and adopting the principle of the rule of law, presents itself as an alternative to liberal democracy. However, this new understanding of democracy also endeavors to develop a new understanding of the state, civil society, and economy by finding solutions to the problems that cause the



crisis of legitimacy experienced by liberal democracy. In order to achieve this, what is required to be done by the deliberative understanding is to establish a new balance not between the state powers but between the different bases of the social structure. This is attempted to be made possible through the political participation and communicative action proposals offered by deliberative democracy (Coşkun, 2007:36). Habermas claims that communicative reason will solve the problems posed by instrumental reason to a great extent and emphasizes that democracy will bring all social blocks closer to the system within this communication.

Radical democracy, on the other hand, unlike liberal and deliberative democracy, asserts that pluralism will find meaning not through uniformization through consensus, but through the recognition of antagonistic relations. According to Mouffe, a democratic society can only be realized if it prepares a ground for conflicting interests and conflicting values. However, according to Mouffe, the important thing is not to eliminate these antagonisms (conflicts) through reconciliation, but on the contrary to bring the existence of these conflicts to politics. Drawing attention to the importance of the us/them distinction, Mouffe argues that today's understanding of Liberal Democracy, in a sense, identifies differences through consensus, which shows how alien liberal democracy is to the nature of politics. Similarly, according to Mouffe, the deliberative democracy model makes the same mistake and reconciles differences instead of recognizing the us/them distinction (Kanatlı, 2014:117-119).

For a democratic system to truly exist, there must be a political structure that allows the free expression of political preferences based on fundamental freedoms such as freedom of association and freedom of information in order to realize free competition between leaders. It is a prerequisite that democratic systems are equipped with these opportunities as competition systems. This competition includes the validation of the leaders' claims to govern the country at regular intervals and through non-coercive means. In this respect, a democratic system does so without excluding any effective political office from the contest and without prohibiting any member of the political community from expressing his or her preference through norms whose enforcement depends on the use of force. In other words, the existence of rules on paper alone is not sufficient for the existence of democracy in a country (Beriş, 2015:181-184). The existence of a political structure that will transform these rules into a functional product and a political culture that will support this structure in terms of democracy are essential for a healthy democratic system.

Liberal democracy is based on a synthesis of liberalism, based on the doctrine of limited state and natural rights, and representative democracy, based on the principle of determination of power through free elections. This understanding of democracy is based on the capitalist economic system and the separation of state and civil society. The most fundamental feature of the system is its emphasis on autonomous civil society, individual freedoms, and civil rights (Manfred, 2002:166). This emphasis is extremely important in liberal democracies in limiting the government and preventing it from turning into despotism. Another fundamental principle in limiting power is the rule of law. However, these principles should be supported by the principles of separation of powers and pluralism. This is the only way to prevent the monopolization of power and to ensure that different social groups in society have a share in power. To complement these principles, a competitive party system, tolerance of opposition, freedom of association and freedom of expression are among the constitutive elements of the system (Lijphart, 2008:161-162).

As mentioned above, democracy has the opportunity to function more easily in an environment where civic culture prevails. Therefore, special efforts and arrangements are required for the functioning, stability and consolidation of democracy in different environments. Because if a political culture makes it difficult for democracy to stabilize and consolidate, then we cannot claim that democracy will not be consolidated in such an environment. However, it is necessary to distinguish between environments in which democracy emerges in a certain structure and in a historical process with its own regime characteristics, and environments in which democracy can be established at the end of great efforts. For example, in the UK, the USA, and Switzerland, democracy emerged spontaneously, through the evolution of the political system, whereas in Germany, Italy, and Japan, democracy was established in an artificial environment as a result of special efforts after World War II and stabilized over time (Kalaycıoğlu, 2008:250-251).

Authoritarian regimes trying to build democratic regimes, especially after the 1990s, have become imperfect or incomplete as a result of factors such as skepticism and weakness of the culture of participation in the political culture they inherited. Incomplete or imperfect democracies are observed in democracies where there are serious injustices in free electoral competition, civil society is insufficient, and freedom of speech and freedom of information are limited (Newton and Deth, 2014: 60-61). Again, in terms of the impact of political culture on democracy, the "culture of





obedience" that Mexico inherited from its pre-democratic period is an important example. In Mexico, individuals grow up with a socialization based on obedience to the father figure and authority starting from their childhood. This situation negatively affects the upbringing of individuals with a democratic culture. Thus, even in a democratic regime, individuals can easily accept the authority of political leaders and cannot influence politics as passive citizens, which prevents the institutionalization and stabilization of democracy (Hague and Harrop, 2004:95-97).

Another important issue in the consolidation of democracy is related to the understanding of majoritarian- pluralist democracy. According to Arend Lijphart, although the majoritarian democracy model works in more or less homogeneous societies, it creates serious dangers in societies that are divided in terms of ethnicity, religion, language, culture, ideology and where each group has its own party, interest group and means of communication. This is because in divided societies, the majoritarian understanding of democracy may shift towards the despotism of the majority, and groups that are permanently excluded from power and subjected to discrimination will lose their loyalty and trust in the regime. For such divided societies, a pluralist model of democracy, which emphasizes compromise rather than conflict, inclusion rather than exclusion, would be much more appropriate. For this reason, Lijphart states that the majoritarian model would be more suitable for homogeneous societies and the pluralist model would be more suitable for heterogeneous societies (Lijphart, 2006:26).

Similar to Lijphart, Robert A. Dahl draws attention to the drawbacks of majoritarian democracy. According to Dahl, the healthy functioning of majoritarian democracy depends on the existence of three special conditions. The first condition is that the society is homogeneous. The second condition is that minorities are not ossified. The third condition is that minority groups should have solid guarantees for the protection of their rights (Dahl, 1996:203-204). According to Dahl's analysis, the majoritarian democracy model can function as a healthy democracy model without turning into a despotism of the majority only if these conditions are met. However, Dahl states that in most countries where the majoritarian democracy model is practiced, these conditions are not present and therefore minority groups resist majority democracy. According to Dahl, for democracy to function properly, majoritarianism needs to be limited. At this point, two basic principles emerge. These are the principles of popular control and political equality (Beetham, 2006:7). According to Dahl, a democratic government is a government that can respond to the

demands of its citizens without discriminating between them and does not put pressure on its citizens in these processes. The main goal here is to ensure the equality of all citizens in the face of opportunities. This is based on three basic conditions; 1- determination of preferences 2- existence of individual and social preferences without interference by the government or its close parties 3- equal evaluation of each preference by the government. Moreover, the existence of this equality must be guaranteed by basic liberal democratic principles (freedom of expression, free elections, free press, etc.). According to Dahl, only with a structure that functions in this way can the active participation of all citizens in political processes be ensured, except for political elites and representatives of political institutions (Perez, 2008:27).

Maintaining the existence of democracy and ensuring democratic institutionalization has generally been an issue evaluated and implemented along with historical development. The development of democracy has often been discussed together with historical development. However, over time, the idea in modernization theories that economic development would inevitably lead to democracy began to be questioned. Seymour M. Lipset, while acknowledging the importance of the economy for democracy, emphasized the need to increase the distribution of citizens' thoughts and values, the distribution of citizens in other general political systems, and the need to meet their needs (Newton and Deth, 2014:56). In other words, the existence of democracy is as important as the material interests of citizens and their ideals. At this point, according to Putnam, the main element of democratic institutionalization is participation in public affairs, political freedoms, belief in freedoms and the co-existence of a dynamic civil society (Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti, 1993:10-12). Guillermo O'Donnell stated that economic development in Latin America feeds authoritarianism, not democracy, and argued that economic development alone is not sufficient for democracy (Sayarı and Bilgin, 2015:88).

The culture of political opposition and compromise is one of the most important elements for democracies. According to Lijphart, every actor in the political system must cooperate with each other, otherwise conflict and authoritarianism are inevitable (Keman, 2002:13). Effective governments emerge even during coalition periods, especially in countries such as England and Germany, where the parliamentary system is successfully implemented and where citizenship culture is developed. However, in countries such as Italy, Turkey and Spain, where civic culture is less developed, unsuccessful coalitions undermine the stability of the government



and make the parliamentary system problematic in these countries. One of the main reasons for this differentiation is the lack of opposition culture and compromise culture. Another issue that feeds the deficiency in the culture of compromise lies in the relationship established between democratic regimes and political stability. Because the relationship between the concepts of democracy and stability has two different sides. The first is the relationship between stability in government and order and democracy in politics. In fact, democracies may not always be able to provide the political stability found in authoritarian regimes. Intra-party conflicts, coalition searches, and the existence of socially organized structures may hinder political stability. However, making political stability the most important issue in democracies is contrary to the principles of the democratic system. Because, unlike authoritarian regimes, democracies have a very participatory political structure where every voice (every actor sharing the public space) is heard. The second relationship is the problem of the stability or durability of democracy. This stability is not related to whether a country is democratic or not, but rather to the harmony of political culture, political structure, and other factors with democracy (Sayari and Bilgin, 2015:63). According to Almond and Verba, the stability of the political system depends on the existence of compatibility between the political system and the social structure. If the difference between these two is large, the system will not function well and will be dragged into crises and may even be in danger of total collapse. Therefore, constructing democratic systems in harmony with political culture is essential for a stable and solid democratic government.

### **Conclusion**

Modern democratic systems are in many respects more difficult to operate and maintain compared to authoritarian regimes. Therefore, the institutionalization of democratic systems requires, first of all, a political structure compatible with the elements of political culture. At this point, there is a serious relation between political culture and democracy, and the more directly proportional this connection is, the higher the institutionalization of democracy. While accepting the importance of political culture, developments in the world have shown us that citizenship culture, social capital, and subcultures being compatible with the system are important elements for the institutionalization of democracy. In other words, democracies gain a pluralistic and inclusive appearance in systems where every social segment can express itself, is integrated into the system as citizens, and interaction channels become effective on a communicative basis between the citizen and the state. Inter-

individual and social trust relationships need the support of social capital stock operating through norms and social networks. In this respect, the sense of trust and stability provided on common minimum values is vital for the creation of an environment of negotiation and compromise that is essential for democracies.

In this respect, in order for democracy to be maintained in a solid and stable manner, these new facts should be handled carefully and included in the political system. Because only a community of citizens with strong social capital, a strengthened sense of trust between society and the state, and democracies whose political and cultural patterns are compatible with the political system will continue on their way in a more solid way. Political structures that do not take into account social trust, the power of social capital, and new social movements will remain incomplete democracies with authoritarian tendencies. Expecting only economic development and democratic standards to rise would be a deceptive and incomplete approach in this context. Although economic development is a factor that nourishes these elements, it alone does not have the founding power of these elements, and as cultural processes, the superstructure has at least as much effect on these elements as the infrastructure. Therefore, the democracy-economic development dichotomy will be a reductionist approach that is far from explaining many different elements.

In the contemporary era, the increasing influence of information from social relations to the political sphere has led to a heightened level of scrutiny being applied to democracy. In the digital domain of politics, the development of civic consciousness has facilitated a perspective that transcends national boundaries through the formation of a cyber consciousness. In this regard, the continuity of democracy in a robust manner and in favour of freedoms has become a challenging goal to protect or establish within the context of the nation-state practice. The fundamental dynamics of political culture are inevitably influenced by these new trends. Consequently, it is crucial to organise democratic institutions in accordance with these new phenomena to ensure the continuity of democracy with all its possibilities.

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