

Armağan Öztürk | Murat Satici [eds.]

Living Together

Discourses on Citizenship in Turkey



Nomos

Politics, Society and Culture in Turkey
Politik, Gesellschaft und Kultur in der Türkei

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Introduction

Today, modern politics is evaluated in many ways. Conceptions of political action, legitimacy, freedom, equality, homogeneity, nationalism, and democracy of modern politics have been criticized for being in a crisis. Through critiques of discrimination, capitalist and liberal authoritarianism, electoral autocracy and majority despotism, modernity and its historical, political, and philosophical effects and consequences have been closely associated with these conceptions. These contemporary grounds of the critique of modern politics have also populated debates concerning today's questions of democracy, political participation, public sphere, pluralism, gender, ecology, and freedom, to name a few.

It should not be forgotten that the problems of living together necessitate overcoming the misperception of politics as only an act between individuals, nations, institutions, and political ideologies. Indeed, the problem of living together is a matter of living with the others, with the state and institutions, animals and nature, art and cultures. This political dimension is also manifest in every element of practical life, thus making it necessary to take into consideration gender, disability rights, nature and ecology, animals, social media, cultural, computational and artistic freedom issues in the practice and politics of living together. Therefore, living together does not signify merely the inter-human sphere. Bearing this in mind, in this book, there are 13 chapters focusing on various dimensions of living together.

The first chapter is Fatih Çağatay Cengiz's study titled "Conflicting Democracies: Representation, Ballot Box and Empowerment" in which he looks at the literature on modern/representative democracy and argues that such democracy is bereft of ethical values. After this theoretical introduction, he then concentrates on a specific case study from Turkey. His chapter argues that governments' selective focus on the supremacy of the ballot box over economic and social freedoms has degraded the quality of democracy, even though it does not contradict the general assumptions of modern/representative democracy.

The second chapter titled "State, Civil Society, and Nationalism in Turkey: A Critical Approach" looks into the ways nationalism plays out in modern Turkey in relation to living together. Kerem Özbey determines that there are two nationalisms when it comes to coexistence in Turkey: Kemalism and Islamic Conservatism. Focusing on the similar and different

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aspects of the said nationalisms and offering an alternative solution towards coexistence in Turkey constitute another aim of this study. It also offers a different vision of nationalism for coexistence by carrying out a critical evaluation of these different manifestations of nationalisms, which have emerged as an extension of the modernization process in Turkey.

The third chapter moves from real politics to social life. Hatice Karakuş Öztürk's study titled "Ageism in Turkish Family Structure and Its Reflections in Language" concentrates on ageism. It depends on the analysis of the expressions used within Turkish family structure to define the elders, especially in urban life. The terms which express elder discrimination have been obtained by using different channels.

The fourth chapter by Papatya Alkan Genca is called "The Right Body: Disability, Social Space, and Discourse". It focuses on two main issues in relation to disability and occupying social space: the right body and regulating social space and social discourse. Moreover, the article talks about spina bifida as a specific example of disability and how its representative NGO (Türkiye Spina Bifida Derneği) operates in Turkey.

Özlem Denli's chapter titled "Carl Schmitt and Plurality: Avid Certainty or Redemption Through Ambiguity?" traces Schmitt's ideas on plurality in relation to contrasting yet adjacent concepts such as identity and unity, as well in relation to his understanding of representation. Denli does not aim at an exhaustive canvassing of Schmitt's work but rather deals with Schmitt's concept of the political due to its pivotal position for understanding his theory in general, and the intricate interrelationships between other conceptual pillars of his work.

M. Ertan Kardeş's chapter titled "Disoriented Wars as a Limit Problem of Political Philosophy" demonstrates the importance of the conception of "Disoriented Wars" in terms of political philosophy. According to Kardeş, political philosophy reveals that beyond the description of today's wars, the logic of wars is capable of transforming them politically, socially, and intellectually. He contends that thinking about the phenomenon of war and its transformation is a primary task of contemporary political philosophy.

Süha Atatüre's chapter titled "To Understand How to Live Together in Our World Peacefully in the 21st Century," asks whether human beings can live together peacefully in the 21st century. Can they be the main actors of living in peace with their new understanding and structure? Can the United Nations, which constitutes the superstructure in the global age, and the democratic state constituting the infrastructure, be seen as two essential components? In this article, Atatüre tries to find answers to these questions within the context of living together.

In the next chapter titled “Development of EU Citizenship in European Integration” Kutay Aytuğ examines the concept of EU Citizenship, which is an essential tool for European Integration and construction of a collective European identity. His chapter first gives a summary to draw a conceptual framework about citizenship and EU Citizenship. Then, it evaluates the concept of EU Citizenship in the European integration process, followed by some suggestions to further strengthen the idea of EU Citizenship.

Murat Satici embarks upon a philosophical discussion of living together in his chapter titled “Rethinking Democracy and Living Together”. He touches upon the definitions of contemporary democracy stemming from the critique of the modern paradigm and influencing debates on the pluralist democracy. As such, he maps out a basis for the conceptualization of today’s problems of living together.

Armağan Öztürk asks essential questions in his chapter titled “Publicity and Public Sphere”: Can democracy exist without the existence of the public sphere? What are the factors that hinder participating in the public sphere and limit publicity in today’s world? According to Öztürk, the answer to these two questions are at the heart of all kinds of discussions on democracy. He assumes that rethinking publicity also has such a meaning of thinking to limit liberalism and capitalism.

Murat Göç’s chapter titled “Homophobia and Queer Movement: A Political History of Subversion and Oppression” seeks to explore the reasons for such a heightened tone of homophobia and the intolerance and hatred against queer people in world politics. The discussion has been extended into an investigation of the true nature of “alleged threat” of homosexuality as well as the potential and capacity of queer politics to ensure a peaceful and harmonious social, cultural, and political ethos.

Betül Bülbül Oğuz’s chapter titled “Living Together in the Tower of Babel” contends that *living together* or *co-existing* has conceptual areas within which “language” or “meaning” would be situated as the subject, regardless of context. In this chapter, signs belonging to the world of the internet, which can be resembled to pictographs that have been used since the beginning of writing, are examined. The main question of the study is, to what extent is it possible to communicate with people from different geographies and cultures, without knowing their language and without directly using linguistic signs.

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We hope that all of these thought-provoking and original chapters will make a valuable contribution to the effort of questioning today's living together problem.

Murat Satıcı & Armağan Öztürk

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