

The Differences of Gezi Parki Resistance in Turkish Social Movements

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Abstract

Gezi Parki Resistance is a unique case in Turkey as a grassroots movement that realized without the support of any institutional opposition. It indicates that Turkish movements become close to the new kind of social struggles that occur in the different places of the world. The aim of the paper is to analyze its movement aspect through changes in social movements. During 2000s in counter-globalization movement the demands became more plural; the differences raised and the grievances of the grass-root became more oriented with daily life. Gezi Parki can be seen as a big step to constitute a new politics for Turkish politics from bottom-to-top whereas other social movements tried to their own local level at different countries. The study has a framework on the growing importance of the political against politics and the constitutive role of social movements in political debates. It will be argued that in the case of Gezi Parki, Turkish people have created their own commons that means a search for new politics.

Keywords: Gezi Parki, Turkish Uprising 2013, Turkish Politics, New Social Movements.

Introduction

Gezi Parki is located in Taksim Square where the center of the city and one of the central parks that dwindle away of the biggest city of Turkey. This public place has become a symbol to protest the established political system of Turkey at summer 2013. The resistance is sparked against governmental decision and privatization of this public place. It is blown up at the end of May 2013 and continued during the summer and then spill over the other cities of Turkey. The uprising was firstly about cutting down the trees but then it is shifted to outrage the governmental inaccountability. Because of this shifting, Gezi Parki resistance turned a movement that demands wider changing in Turkish politics beyond the park issue.

After 2011 elections, in their third term, the ruling party and especially its unquestionable leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan began to intervene to daily-life in a conservative manner. So the grievances and complaints against the government gathered in Gezi Parki and turned a outrage. The brutal intervention of the police and the support of the officials to this intervention raised the outrage and united the opposition. The main of this article is to analyze the potential of the political dimensions of Gezi Parki resistance with its creation a new political approach. The paper will be focused on its social movement speciality and so the context of social movement approaches will be used in order to this aim. So the main point is not what happened in Gezi Parki but indeed what can be constituted with this movement. Because its shifting from a protest event to “an occupy movement” created a remarkable difference in the history of Turkish social struggles. The resistance has not limited with specific policies or demands but it has expanded to a wide framework that criticizes the quality of Turkish democracy and political process. So it will be compared with previous local Turkish movements in terms of their democratization effects and also as its current counterparts Occupy and Indignados movements. Because these demonstrations are the important cases on shifting of social movements through grass-root actions. Gezi Parki indicates this kind of shifting in Turkish movements.

Gezi Parki resistance is a unique case in Turkey as a grassroots movement that realized without the support of any institutional opposition. So it has some similarities but also differences with other global and local movements. Actually it can be underlined that a transformation in social movement actions in global level. It is about growing the importance of individual grievances which demand autonomy and democratization for ordinary people, not just as an organizational behaviour or institutional level. Social movements affect each other all over the world and the people who mobilize in these demonstrations learn from other experiments.

In last few years different places of the world increasingly witnessed the street riots, in Europe -especially at Greece and Spain- against anti-austerity policies, in Middle East against authoritarian regimes, in USA against privatization of public places and so on. The common perspective of all these movements was the focus on the democratization demands but it is a different perspective from liberal or representative democracy. The demand is the construct the grass-root democracy to make an effect on decision-making process.

Gezi Parki resistance indicates that Turkish movements become close to the new kind of social struggles that occur in the different places of the world. In globalization era, while the knowledge and experiences converge each other with growing communication possibilities, social movements also have a tendency to look like each other. This process means the articulation in a new framework of politics. New politics of social movements focus on the intervention of ordinary people who claim their own lives. These movements have a tendency to anarchist values that dissent with all kind of authorities. So hierarchical organizational and institutional bodies have been rethought by action of social movements. In such a perspective Gezi Parki resistance stands on ordinary people and specific demands on daily life. It was not related with removing the government and has not a class-based consciousness. And also it is not related with an organization or institution.

This changing could be seen in Occupy and Indignados movements (Castenada, 2012; Dhaliwal, 2012; Lang and Lang/Levitsky, 2012; Pickerill and Krinsky, 2012) and also Arab uprisings (Filiu, 2011; Gelvin, 2012) that very close to Turkey. These movements had also created a new way of opposition that mobilize the people at public spaces. They create their own language, mostly in an ironic manner, and make new networks that not connected to each other before. So they do not use specific vocabulary of an organization and rank-file membership system to mobilize together. The given options to take political positions were rejected and they have tried to create a new one. Their plural and multi-cultural manner has a potential to create a newness to change the established system. This was an attempt to constitute a new common. Like current mobilizations, Gezi Parki resistance tried to create a new ground to constitute new political interactions.

So it can be stated that new social movements approach have been gaining a new vision since 2000s and Occupy Gezi Parki is a specific case about this changing for Turkish politics. This approach improves from the 1970s and differs the movements from class struggle and orthodox Marxist theory. This newness is a renewal of the civil society discourse and all established struggle means like political party and unions. Global civil society (Starr, 2005) that looks for a new common through anti-globalization movements and against neoliberal economic tendencies has been connecting each other in the specific case. This connection figure out a new political aspect that deal with daily life and direct action and it has began to change the democracy concept. While it has a liberal content based on representative and public-private border, the new democracy that is argued by social movements stand on direct speech by actions and public spaces (della Porta, 2005; Juris, 2008; Pleyers, 2010).

It can be argued that with the changing of the social movements the concept of “political” become more important than the concepts of politics and policies. Because the institutional and formal dimensions of the established process are criticized by the movements and these movements create new margins to make the border of politics. Counter-globalization struggle strengthened this approach with the wave that reaches new shores like Turkey. The people who occupy Gezi Parki constituted a new new situation for Turkish politics. So the main argument of the study is that the Gezi Parki resistance and related demonstrations were a big step to constitute a new politics for Turkish politics from bottom-to-top as other social movements tried to their own local level at different countries. The study has a framework on the growing importance of the political against politics and the constitutive role of social movements in politica debates. So the study will summarize the new concept of the social movements and also the process of Turkish politics and then it will be linked with the Gezi Parki protests.

1. The Constitutive Role of Social Movements

While social movements constitute a new political in their actions, we have to rethink about established concepts of the political (Ranciere, 2007). Gezi Parki resistance was an important case about this issue because it has indicated the limits of the civil society in terms of liberal theory. It was a new combination of public and private through life style and political struggles. And also it was a new way of look grass-roots movements in socialist approaches because of its shaking all well-known aspects of the social struggles.

Indeed, social movements are based on civil society in theoretical aspect but in a new era of the new century they forces all borders both practically and theoretically. The actions of social movements blur the private/public distinction and especially since 1968 the political debates are rooted from the daily-life concerns.

New social movements approach (Offe, 1985; Melucci, 1984; Crossley, 2002:149) has risen this kind of debate and they have criticized simultaneously modern thinking of liberal and socialist systems. Mostly they are read as cultural movements rather than political one (Scott, 1990:17-19) but indeed they changed the political concept as a whole.

Before 1968, especially on European side, the social movements were more oriented with the state and more radically they were inspired by the Marxist theory that focuses on the revolution. On the other hand, the American approaches on the movements are interested in collective behaviour and identity aspects. This approach analyzed the resources, political opportunities much more than the European side. While American scholars focuses on technical process like the specific affects of the movement on public policies European scholars give more attention to the political.

The movements of 1968 were a break for social movement approaches because it has made broaden the points that mobilize people. After the end of the Cold War civil society gained importance as the area of struggle and civil society organizations have become the bearer of this struggle. These institutions gained importance against the parties or unionist struggle as old-school organizations. In the context of political liberalization, organizational bodies are criticized and new kind of institutions opened much more places for different voices than the parties and the unions but their opposition capacity is limited and is stricted with their topics. The works of Alain Touraine offer an academic framework for shifting on changing role of the social movements that focus on political contradictions much more than the state (Cohen, 1996; Touraine, 2002). While movements are trying to change the politics, they are also changing the political. Because they criticize the roots of social relations. These critics can be stated as the beginings of the search of a new politics. In a different saying, the political constitutive role of the movements shapes the new politics.

During 2000s in counter-globalization movement the demands became more plural; the differences raised and the grievances of the grass-root became more oriented with daily life. With the effects of financial globalism the economics turned the one of the main topic of the movements again but now it has collaborated with daily life rather than grand theories like Marxism. Anarchist inspirations in this process leded the grass-root movements and the sporadic movements, direct actions, spontanenous mobilizations are became more popular. Against the vertical hierarchy of the institutions, manifestations or expertized leaders, the people mobilized through more practical reasons. It was the root of a new kind public relations and the liberal civil society concept also criticized by the people who want to make affect on decisin making process directly. Movements turned a mean to speak directly in the open space rather than the representative way. A process of converge of the movements from different regions and ares created a new body claeed Social Forums and tihs body was a symbol of creating a new civil society that based on the demands of the grass-root movements. Donetalla della Porta and her crew studied on Social Forum's and their political implications on European level with the projects like DEMOS (della Porta, 2005). Their workings underlined that European activists are opposite of the neoliberal values of European Union but also they struggle for another Europe that base on social justice.

The struggle to constitute the common on civil society go beyond the local issues and the debates are connected and globalized. These discussions became concrete in Social Forums since 2001. In begining they are called anti-globalization struggle because of the opposition the global financial bodies like G8 or WTO but they have created their own global ground while searching connection between the different opposition movements. So civil society is rethought by these movements' efforts. Movement has a constituent power to rearrange civil society values. Because established civil society is constituted by the corporation with international companies and the state. The border of society in oppositional way is limited to NGOs and other civil society organizations. Social Forums and counter-globalization movements tried to break this limited or established manner in a way of creative direct actions and make a network around these actions (Juris, 2008).

Indeed, with anti-globalization movements and especially in the Social Forum process, the grassroot movements and horizontal hierarchy against vertical one are gaining importance. The importance of daily life on mobilization has been increasing since anti-globalization debate. Old-fashion opposition that needs party and union can't mobilize the new generations and middle-class grievances. So a new set of concepts and a new look to social struggle is needed. Anti-globalization and then counter-globalization moements that seek to create another world wtih global civilsociety could not affected to old-school Turkish struggles in first decade of 2000s.

But different movements like Occupy, Indignados, Greek anti-austerity riots and Arab uprisings begin to affect Turkey without a doubt. Because in this process the keywords and concepts that use in analyzing social movements began to change in social media and academic world. Turkey had missed the opportunity of 1968 on emancipation but now it is catching the discourse of 2000s on social movements. The Gezi Parki reflected this situation for Turkish movements.

2. A Framework for the Decade of Turkish Politics

In general the political tendencies in Turkey are rooted around the Kemalist tradition. The move closer or break away with the Kemalism determines the main debates. The state is supreme concept and the reason of the state that shaped by the Kemalist discourse was always ruling (Çelik, 2000). Especially after 12 September 1980 military coup the Kemalist rules has been combined with a conservative-statist discourse and all-time state of emergency policies. Since 2002 AKP¹ (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/Justice and Development Party) government has created a break up in Kemalist authoritarian establishment to “exit from 12 September” regime. This was a chance of “normalizing period” for democracy with descending affects of the military in Turkish politics (İnsel, 2003). But keeping electoral success in a decade, the party turned its conservative roots and began to create its own authoritarian order in a framework of conservative policies.

The social democratic party CHP (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi-Republican People Party) that constitutive of the establishment is in crisis with their own Kemalist values. Its democratic and nationalist tendencies have an inner on-going debate. The legitimacy crisis of the constitutive values affects its electoral success and also its leadership race. The Far-nationalist on right wing and its opposite side the Kurds have their own parties that have the basic vote-potential. Their own mass support is stable accordingly. However, the most affective oppositon to AKP is made by Kurdish movement with their engagement to PKK, the armed Kurdish power. One of the big debates after late 1980s was the Kurdish issue in Turkey. This debate has also identified the all left-wing opposition during the years. Legal and armed Kurdish movement created a framework to the debates in liberal, leftist and other versions of political arena. All critics and demonstrations are labelled as terrorist or supporter of PKK, the opposition oportunites became very restricted during 1990s.

AKP had had an outcome of Islamic movement that have a background during 1970s and but they are the modernist version against its traditional leaders called “just order” (Hale and Özbudun, 2010; Boyraz, 2011). AKP is a renewal of the discourse with openness to West and free-market economy and also it made a moderate opposition against their own tradition’s older rulers. The leader of AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdogan has a huge impact on the crowds and his charismatic leadership has been renewed the elderly vision of the Islamic discourse with a restart in a unity. His reformist and moderate Islamic speeches affected the people who want to follow another leader except Atatürk image that construct by the CHP values.

After 2002, AKP has not lost any elections and raised its voters during this period. This was the first time after 1950-1960 era of DP (Democrat Party, its leader Adnan Menderes) ruling. Turkey had become a part of the free-market economies and liberal democracies on that period. Unbowed AKP established its hegemony like DP in a discourse of democratization that focus on struggle with implicit military affect on elected power. Indeed AKP was a kind of solid coalition or in Gramscian term “historical bloc” that come together against legal ideology of Kemalism. So the liberals and some leftists supported the struggle of AKP with the establishment. On the other hand, the consolidation of neoliberal ideas in economic dimension continued during the ten years. The privatizations of huge public factories, banks and institutions have been spurred. The reforms in education and health system make the private sector more affective in the process. Also the constitution of 1982 shifted to more liberal condition with lots of changing in constitutional provisions in integrating process and with support of the EU.

While the ruler party was getting powerful in an economic and political dimensions their democratization discourse begin to reach its limits. The conservative impulse of the government became clearer especially in cultural dimension. The speeches of Erdogan about how many children you must have, restratining of alcohol usage in public, the pressure on opposition journalists and academics turned the government’s vision into conservative from the liberal.

¹ The formers and then supporters are called the party as AK Parti, it means Clean (or White) Party and they do not use the “AKP” abbreviation.

Unquestionable attitude of representative of party and unaccountable policies of the government have been began to question by public opinion. For example on urban transformation and priorities of construction industries and impetuous shopping mall constructions on public spaces have been raised the tension against to the government. Grievance against the government could not be reflected by the opposition parties enough. Indeed Turkish opposition movement are generally attached with an union or political party like a youth organization or related NGOs during the second half of 20th century. Because of stigmatization of grass-root movements as rebellion to establishment or terrorist, the oppositional politics are grounded on a legal organization base. Before 1980 military coup these movements are led by a revolutionary perspective that tries to radicalize of right of organisation given by 1961 Constitution. This perspective is not driven a European approach but Turkish leftist was under effect of Soviet and Maoist revolutions because of sociological base of Turkey. There were dozens of the approaches of revolutions that is in disagreement like begin to struggle from the city or from the rural, or the role of workers or peasants or the affect of legal politics or violent so on. After the 1980, the well-attended or broad participation demonstrations are limited only unique day like May1 and could not affect the policies directly. After the rush affect of military coup on leftist world-view and indeed revolutionary one, the debate of 1990s were civil society concept and the rising of the NGOs to improve of democratic level of the country. Instable of multi-party coalition period of late 1990s is ended by AKP government.

There were not comprehensive institutions to make criticism against government, except some human rights NGOs. So after ten years of AKP ruling, there is an absence of comprehensive actor against AKP or CHP and other parties in the assembly. Additional to this institutional dimension, because of the weakness of the grassroots movement or riots, Turkish politics has not witnessed wide-range or frequent revolt activities. Collective behaviour displaying are very rarely and new social movement approach almost never occurred in Turkey.

But in a few years, especially against the economic policies of AKP has began to protest from the grass-root activities. One of them was the workers of Tekel factory during 77-days against dismissal procedure. Their persistent demonstrations in the street of Ankara were also against their union leadership that does not want to be disagreement with government. The workers have forced the union to the demonstrations. And also the protest against hydroelectric plants in natural environmental spaces raised the reactions in countryside of Turkey. The rural people were on guard duty against woodcutting in these protests. This was an explicit vision of the conservative-liberal AKP that understand democracy in a limited approach.

3. From Resistance to Constitutive the New in Gezi Parki

Actually the uprisings of ordinary citizens are the growing trend around the world. The effect of movements is related with this issue. The much more attendance of ordinary citizens makes more powerful the movement. This is shown in Indignados, Occupy movements and also it is the main point of the Arab uprisings. In 2000s the grand theories, old-fashion institutions and rank-and-file organizations could not express or represent of the crowds. These efforts are some kind of prefiguration for social change in order to make a new political and cultural space. Hardt and Negri's "multitude" concept can reflect this kind of crowds that seek a new politics in the new century. Especially in their "Declaration" (2012) they expressed these kinds of movements to constitute a new common. It is an ongoing debate in the theory especially in post-structuralist and post-marxists to create a new politics. Social movements can be underlined on this process and the movements will a constitutive role in the making of new politics with their inclusive aspects. In the case of Gezi Parki, Turkish people, in the absence of leading institutional support, have created their own commons.

Gezi Parki resistance occurred in Taksim Square at Istanbul where one of the most popular open areas at the biggest city of Turkey can be understand in this framework. The government tried to turn this public space to private sector usage in urban transformation project. A few young environmentalist began to keep guard for the trees in the park. But with a harsh intervention in an early morning young activist are taken out the Park and their tents are burned. This intervention created a big anger and via twitter and facebook a big crowd protested the intervention to the Park. Brutal police intervention have gone on to the people but the crowd also has continued to increase. The protest turned an occupation of Park. The barricades against police set up and the people create a new life space –like free-of-charge kitchen, library, discussion places, medical help etc.- in the park.

It is well-known that public spaces of the city represent the common values of the people and these areas are a communicative and political interaction grounds (Harvey, 2003). In Gezi Parki, to use their right, against the environmental rearrange plan of the government, the people occupied this park in a peaceful way.

But the police intervention was very mercilessly and explicitly against human rights and in fact it was a mirror of the rejection of accountability of the ruling elite. And then a resistance is created by the people who are exposed to brutality of the government. The ties between the people were symbolized in this open space. This space was the ground of the search for the new thing.

Erdogan's speech against the movement and labeling the activists as "çapulcu" (looters) raised the anger and also solidarity of activists. This solidarity has not an old-school identity like nationalist or revolutionist or Kemalist. The resistance created a solidarity that has brought together people from a broad political spectrum. The protests spanned to the other cities and anti-AKP discourse shifted people to an activist in the street. As indicated before, Turkish people have not tended to the demonstrations and street riots but they were in street during the days and this was a kind of explosion against government. These can be commented as the transition of "passive network to active network" in the context of Asef Bayat (2010). "Street as a public space has intrinsic feature that makes it possible for people to become mobilized through establishing passive networks" (Bayat, 2010:63). In the interventions of conservative government to social and public life of the ordinary people are seen as the threats for them. So the passive network in the line of anti-AKP "turn into an active communication and cooperation" and these people attempt to exit from the repressive social and economic arrangements, seeking alternative and more familiar, or informal, institutions and relations in social spaces to growth of subjectivities (Bayat,2010: 64).

In Gezi Park resistance, the different lines of oppositions have brought together against privatization of open spaces of the city (ROAR collective, 2013). The actions spilled over the other cities. They raised their voices in the open areas of the city because the other places where they can talk like media or other public space means have controlled by the government. They wanted to act like not just a consumer in the market but political decision-makers over the cities. Indeed it was a demand of real democracy like Indignados or Occupy movements. It was not a socialist manner protest. The all socialist group came behind of the crowd while theory says different. It can be said that anarchist tendencies led all process and the core of the connection was the leaderless and anti-vanguardist way of political. It was a prefigurative way to create "future urban commons" (Karaman, 2013). So the Gezi resistance turned into a movement that seeks to construct newness.

So this resistance was a kind of opposition movement of 2000s that create an "unity in diversity" (Roos, 2013). This was an echo of the anti-globalization movement and actually these kind of movements occurred around the world. There was not an institutional support, a common manifestation or leading party but instead of these aspects the shared beliefs and a common "no" against the government mobilized the ordinary people. The thought on the opposition to policies of the government on daily-life has united the masses. This unexpected action is affected by the counter-globalization movement's opposition style which does not match with the 1990's institutional civil society activities. Instead of its formal and rank-and-file procedure, the new movements of 2000s revitalized the 68-spirit with new communication means. It is related with to disconnect with the establishment of the institutional politics that make a formal frame to the civil society. And also it was an effort about changing civil society's border that lined by the government and the state. So it can be said that it was not understood in the liberal theory. And also it was not a classical socialist vanguardist way. Its demands of political liberalization are closure to anarchist tendencies that goes beyond of liberal and socialist approaches.

The resistance has underlined a new democratic perspective. As the latest work of David Harvey (2012) and Manuel Castells (2012) shows, the liberal democracy is criticized by the actions on the streets of the cities and with Hardt and Negri's term (2004) the multitude draw a new common. These efforts mean that the people want back to right to govern directly. The limits of representative democracy begin here. In 2000s the elections can not only mean for the democratic debates. The masses are always threatening objects for liberals and conservatives and they try to control them with several ways but in a new century these ways can not be accepted easily by the people who globalize the opposition movements through communication. They create a new public and common on the same time in the street and the internet. The opposition web wraps all the sides of the life both cultural and economical.

In Occupy Gezi movement, the lost of activists were born in 1990s; so they had grown up AKP era and not related with old opposition movements. They were not member of party or union. Especially, the young generation that born after 1980 had called as "apolitic" or "not interested in politics" by old people. But they showed a new kind of politics with resisting to the police and make a new opposition line. This opposition is not conceptualized with old politics but the movement has their own one. "This is just beginning, keep struggle" was one of the main slogans of the protests.

And also “this was not about for trees, don’t you understand” was one of the key slogans that bring together the people. Lots of the ironic slogans criticized the all well-known and taken granted thing in social life. They show the search for a new way of politics that different from the old with the way of social movement actions. This is the constitutive aspect of the social movements in political.

The reaction of the people as a grass-root uprising means the claim of being actor of their own life and being heard their own words on the process of decision-making process. Against the forgotten of this main democratic value the direct actions of the movements remember the establishments the power the crowds. Social movements are moving closer to framework of anarchism that focuses on direct action practises. Gezi Parki was an extraordinary experiment for Turkey this kind of a direct action dimension. It was the biggest movement since 1980 military coup and the first big reaction the new generation that born after this coup. This civil, grass-root and urban movement is a cross-road for Turkish politics.

Turkish government tried to label as unimportant and called everyone in he resistance as “looter” in a typical conservative impulse in first sight. But the protests have expanded and especially 5 activists are killed by the police interventions the range began to more organize. Indeed Kurdish movement as one of the biggest and the most organized opposition groups in Turkey could not attend the actions directly because of going on the deliberation process with the government to unarm the rebellions of PKK. But the political representatives supported the actions in their speeches. And also one of the key activists who lead the first moments of the Gezi Parki protest was Sırrı Süreyya Önder who was not Kurd ethnically but elected as a member in Kurdish political party, BDP. Ongoing days, the government accelerated their democratic policy changing to not conflict with Kurdish movement. The effect of Gezi Parki actions are undoubtful strong element of the efforts of the government because they are needed to make a liberal make-up their conservative politics after summer 2013.

To sum up, Gezi Parki resistance is a part of wave of protest that occurred in a global perspective and symbolize the changing manner of the social movements. This new politics depends on the demands of grass-root mobilization that mostly disorganize crowds and also their direct actions on public spaces of the cities rearrange the commonality of the society. Gezi Parki and the related activism in Turkey during the summer 2013 were against the conservative government, firstly its environmental policies but the protests have gone beyond this specific issue and much more pressure of the government on daily-life that totalize all differences in their conservative cultural box. In general social movements take more political position rather than 90s’ movements that act in formal procedure. Turkish movements and civil society debates are also affected by this global tendency and old-school politics are criticizing by the social movements’ comprehensive and horizontal organization style. Gezi Parki resistance is the first example in Turkey in this context. It has expanded the political debates to new areas, changed the literature of established vocabulary and created new boundaries for the political.

4. Similarities and Differences with Occupy Movement²

Occupy movements have a new type of the anarchist attitude. Because these movements emerge outside of the old concepts like leadership, vanguard party or class consciousness. They also were against the representative bodies. They were grass-root actions that have their own autonomy. People represented themselves in the open and public space. They have spoken for their own name. All efforts of these movements were based on trying to find the new political debates and bodies. These functions can be seen partly in Gezi Parki. Turkish leftist organizations could not lead this movement, and so it was a full grass-root uprising. With the inspiration of Occupy movement that is a resistance the privatization of the public spaces, Gezi Parki resistance took the “occupy” label because people occupied against the government decision for the park and then it has spread to whole Taksim Square. So these movements are the latest versions of the new social movement approach that focuses on horizontal and bottom-to-top bodies. Because the main points of them are the making the differences on daily-life of people beyond the taking the power with a revolution. Both Occupy movements and Gezi Parki resistance tried to stop and change the run of daily-life and to create a break and to constitute possibilities of new common. This means to go the outside of the liberal democracy and return of the roots of the democracy as a public power. In Hardt and Negri’s (2004) term, it can be an “exodus” that is an escape line to outside of the established system.

There were also some differences with Occupy movement. One of them is the expectations of the activists from the authorities.

² Also Tahrir moment and so-called Arab Spring is also compared with Gezi Parki: Al-Saleh and Arefin (2013).

The Occupiers were the dissent with all system in US or UK but in Turkey –indeed in the beginning of the protest- it was limited with AKP policies and especially against the unaccountable power of Prime Minister Erdogan. Erdogan government organized a meeting immediately against Gezi Parki effects on public opinion to give answer the claim makings and so Gezi Parki movement is taken seriously by the government. So in the context of contentious politics of Tilly and Tarrow (2007:4-5), the Occupy Gezi “sustained claim making, using repeated performances that advertise that claim, based on organization, networks, traditions and solidarities that sustain these activities”. It could not changed the government but as a social movement campaigning “challenged to power holders in the name of a population living under the jurisdiction of those power holders.” Because of contentious politics’ focusing on the government and policies, the case of Gezi Parki much more focused on the daily life. So beyond the contentious politics approach it has similar with Occupy movement’s anarchist tendency and a new type of the new social movements that combine the cultural and economic debates.

And also US or UK movements have a somehow relationship with alterglobalization movements during the 2000s but in Turkey this kind of movements could not create a reflection properly. It was the first time that a Turkish movement linked with other movements in the global level. Turkish activist have learned from the alterglobalization movements but have gone beyond well-known actions and create a new movement language and repertoire themselves.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, it can be stated that Gezi Parki resistance was an extra-ordinary event in Turkish social struggles. It symbolizes a shifting point in Turkish movement traditions. And also in a global level it is related with other movement experiments. It is an articulation with Occupy movements with some aspects. Generally these experiences indicated that social movement approaches must be more daily life oriented and grass-root movements will constitute a new type of political that affects the institutional politics and representative democracy. In Turkish politics, social movements have not been huge impact on political debates or could not lead them. But since 2010 the policies of AKP government shifted more conservative line and the increasing attentions led the grassroots movements in absence of an effective opposition line. With Gezi Parki resistance, the voice of ordinary people who demand much more democracy became visible.

This movement indicates changing mobilization manner in Turkey that organize from top-to-bottom and expand the issues and the participative people. So it can be said that Turkish struggles converge to global opposition movements with Gezi Parki experiment. This changing also will affect Turkish politics as a whole, and both oppositions and governments will be careful about demands of the grassroots movements. Because liberal and representative democracies are under pressure of the social movements to change established political borders and Turkey can not be outside of this wave. The popular demands of democracy to effect decision making process and the critics of the privatization of public life under neoliberal values are raised by the social movements and these efforts try to constitute a new politics with pressure on liberal democratic system. Gezi Parki have turned a social movement to expand these demands while its criticizing whole Turkish democracy beyond the critics to the ruling party.

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