What’s “New” in New New Social Movements: Case Study From Turkey

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“We are living in an era where the experience to possess an individual identity that one can discover and an individual destiny that one can materialize has greatly become a destructive political force” Theodore Rozark

Abstract

This century witnesses historical and conceptional transformations in new social movements. In this context, description of "new new" will be analyzed as a specific and distinctive concept, instead of explaining it, as only a concept of weak secondary usage in the absence of theoretical explanation.

2013 was not only a year abundant in terms of social movements in Turkey, but also a year which these movements gained a different dimension. In the academic literature in recent years, "new new" concept is used to identify social movements in Tunisia, Egypt, Spain, Arabian countries and the United States to explain the movements. In this context, it will be tried to explain why the definition of "new new" is needed. What's "new" in social movements in Turkey? It will be argued whether the experience of "Occupy Gezi" June 2013 could be evaluated with this concept, or not.

These emerging "new new social movements" differ from conventional and new social movements in ways of their elements, actors and specific levels. In this sense, the question, whether this is a paradigm shift, will be discussed. This situation confronts us with new questions to be answered. In this study, answers to following questions will be tried to explain, in the context of the developmental dynamics of social movements in Turkey. What are the conditions that transform social movements? How new technologies and new forms of organizations interact with these social movements?

Key Words: social movements, new new social movements, occupy gezi, new technologies, digital revolution

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Introduction

Social movements, which have lately been experienced in many countries of the world, do not have the objective of achieving certain results only in political system. Unlike its examples, which occurred in previous century, they are not interested in material things and demonstrate slight connection to class issues, interests and professional foundations, which are defined traditionally. In these movements, the main impetus is universal values. Good society and upholding an honorable life are emphasized. This traditional focus is achieved via cultural-historical codes rather than being structural-economic.

Cultural transformation, which has been happening today, shifts direction, objective, method and participant profiles of social movements. Social movements are shaped by a culture possessed by a society and also it changes culture of the society from which it arises. Here, it is possible to mention the existence of a multi-sided interaction. Culture is present in focal point of new social movements. While social movements seek an answer to problem, which has emerged along with a society’s own cultural, internal dynamics, with present culture, demand for change that it has proposed contradicts this present culture (D’Anjou and Male, 1998: 207).

In this study, meanings, elements, actors, instruments of social movements, which have emerged in our age, and their “novelty” with regard to their specific levels will be discussed. In this regard, the problematic whether a paradigm shift has appeared in new social movements will be addressed. Use of internet and social networks, which have become widespread along with developing digital communication technologies, have comprehensively transformed social movements. This transformation also changes thinking styles, behavioral forms and values of actors of social movements. This transformation experienced will be attempted to be explained through the Occupy Gezi that has occurred in Turkey.

New Social Movements

The concept of new social movements is generally used to refer to the ecologic movement, feminist movement, peace movements, anti-nuclear movements, minority movements and local autonomy movements, which emerged as of the end of 1960s. The reason why these social movements are described as new is to distinguish these movements from emergence and organization forms of classical workers’ movements (Pakulski, 2007: 34).

Social movements developed a definition of design and subject in the past which would radically re-install society. Mostly, this said design prevailed over subject. The first revolutionist movements in the modern world intended to establish an ultimate, egalitarian people’s authority and to eradicate privileges. However, today, no social movement seems to be committed to such a great design. For this reason, today, collective action needs a new definition of subject. This subject should not serve to an order, a group or to a political authority; it should fight against ruling authority (Tourine, 2000: 129). Today, this change in perspective somehow transformed social movements, which were some sort of religious, political and economic movements, to ethical movements. Resorting to moral values mentions
values, freedom, life design and respect for fundamental rights which could not be reduced to material or political gains (Tourine, 2000: 132).

These movements without a leader, which emerged spontaneously and have evolved within the process of protest, differ in terms of their actors, themes, values and forms of mobilization (Offe, 1999: 67-68).

**Characteristics of New Social Movements**

The distinguishing feature of social movements of the 21st century in terms of their social-structural composition is that their actors and supporters are highly educated individuals with financial security that command to technological developments and that can express themselves through communication networks (Offe, 1999: 69).

Actors of these movements do not depend on old political codes (rightist-leftist, liberal-conservative and etc.) or socio-economical codes (working class-middle class, poor-rich, rural-urban and etc.) while defining themselves. However, this situation that is defined as novel does not indicate that social basis of these movements is not shaped in terms of class and ideology (Offe, 1999: 66).

New social movements find their social base in new middle class. According to A. Giddens, an important feature of this “class” is that “it is aware of its class” but it does not possess any “class consciousness”. This group displays tendency to establish sound alliances with other groups and segments in a society. According to Offe, these groups are elements of marginalized groups or groups without any asset (unemployed, students, housewives, retirees and etc.) and also elements of old middle class.

According to Theodore Rozark, “we are living in an era where the experience to possess an individual identity that one can discover and an individual destiny that one can materialize has greatly become a destructive political force” (Giddens, 2010: 261). In this sense, it would not be inaccurate to say that the main role of new movements is to configure identity. The process of identity configuration also put forwards that identity itself is an important sphere of political struggle. What is clear at this point is that identity configuration processes shape a series of new social movements and also are shaped by these movements (Langman, 2013: 512-513).

Impetus of social movements in modern times has been the ideal of equality. Actors, who would like to take their place in today’s social scene, do not accept the model that they are presented and they bring their demands for self-identification and recognition by others to the forefront. This process for individuals to seek an identity has led to rise of policies of differentiation. These policies claim that everybody should be identified with their own unique identity in addition to universality claims that emphasize equality. Being same in universal dimension, which is emphasized with policies of equality, is to possess the same rights and exemptions. However, the thing that is stressed with policies of differentiation is recognition of unique identities of individuals or groups and their distinctiveness from others (Cayir, 1999: 32-33).
It can be argued that the one thing that has changed the least in terms of contemporary social movements compared to old movements is values of these movements. Because, demands and moral principles such as individual freedom, equality, participation, peace and solidaristic social mobilization are not new phenomena. For instance, individual freedom is not a new value in any way. The thing that is new is the doubt on that this freedom will increase or decrease individual freedoms by market mechanism, democratic mass policies and communication institutions. In other words, the problem is not values but the way how these values are put into practice. Thus, rise of new movements manifests themselves as an outcome of internal contradiction in system of values of modern culture and its discrepancies rather than result of a conflict between “dominant” and some “new” values (Offe, 1999: 76-77).

Organizational hierarchy of new social movements is weak and unofficial. In this regard, individual autonomy is a primary component in structure of new movements. New social movements have horizontal mobilization and accordingly democratic organizational scheme instead of vertical hierarchical structure seen in old social movements. A leader is accepted with his democratic attitude that ensures coordination and encourages participation rather than his charismatic or “savior” character. Individual remains in central position rather than a group or a community (Tatar, 2013: 13). New social movements have emerged as activist unities based on principle of voluntarism with a right of equal ruling rather than a leadership understanding or unification under the leadership of a hero.

New social movements utilize developments in communication technologies to its fullest. One of the most significant attributes of these movements is that they form their own communication networks by using contemporary communication technologies. Use of mobile networks such as internet and social media has provided unbelievable opportunities and resources of access to social movements. Worldwide spread of these movements via use of communication devices has led to some changes in social forms of movement (Tilly, 2008: 137).

**Is there a Paradigm Shift?**

New social movement theoreticians emphasize that modern societies have moved away from instrumental problems of industrial society and they now focus on life problems in post-industrial era (Coskun, 2006: 69). Discussions in this field are generally made through the argument that now, class-based movements are over. According to these theoreticians, class structure of contemporary societies changed and new middle class has predominantly replaced the old class (working class). In relation to this change, new social movements based on cultural identities have replaced old social movements based on class and class identity in our day. Theoreticians, who lay an emphasis on liberation of individuals with new social movements, which rise over cultural identities, advocate that societies will be democratized and develop in this way (Erbas and Coskun, 2007: 6).

New social movement theories were classified by many intellectuals with various forms and criteria. For instance, Buechler’s classification on New Social Movement theories groups these theories into two as “cultural” and “political” versions (Coskun, 2006: 70).
Cultural version assumes a more radical rupture among the past and the present social types and movement forms. Accordingly, the one that defines social basis of social movements is not the phenomenon of class but different values such as culture and identity. According to the ones who defend this view, a rupture is the case between the old and new movements rather than a continuity. This approach is advocated by thinkers such as Melluci, Touraine, Habermas, Pakulski and Castells. Unlike old policies which focused on economic and political problems in clashes and movements observed in a society, a new identity politics is the case which is based on equality, differentiation, participation and identity construction (Cayir, 1999: 27). In this sense, the concept of “programmed society” used by Touraine and Castells’ concept of “network society” emphasize an experienced rupture and discontinuity (Touraine, 2011: 143; Castells, 2013: 190). According to Touraine, “social actors now talk on their behalf instead of on behalf of history and desire their own freedoms and the right of being themselves without getting crushed by government, violence and propaganda instruments rather than desiring to govern the direction of “things” (Touraine, 1999: 47).

According to Laclau and Mouffe, a mass culture emerged, which has a homogenizing content, along with development of mass communication devices and this created new forms of allegiance. Thus, new movements emerged as an expression of resistance against commodification, bureaucratization and homogenization of social life (Erbas and Coskun, 2007: 10). These movements do not have any objective like seizing the power. Rather, they voice certain cultural demands such as eliminating inequalities and autonomy in civil society. In this sense, these movements question new allegiance forms stated above and this is what gives them the attribute of being novel.

Castells focused on impact of capitalist dynamics on urban transformations and urban social movements in this process. He regards cities as a consequence and a social product of clashes between social interests and values. According to Castells, social movements started to rise as a result of dialectical competitions of state, which desired to re-organize urban social life, and other political forces. Another theoretician, Melucci, sees new social movements as a network of social relationships where collective identity is constructed via dialogue with and struggles against different groups (Melluci, 1999: 92-93). To summarize, new social movements:

- Socio-economic structures of their actors and their characters exceed established class boundaries.
- Their ideological framework is drawn with pluralistic, pragmatist and participatory values.
- Create new identities or reveal the oppressed ones.
- Develop new movement forms by articulating anti-violence and civil disobedience behaviors.
- Present alternatives to individuals regarding participation to decision-making process.

Cultural version explains the relationship between old and new social movements with rupture theory. On the contrary, political version establishes strong connections between emergence of new social movements and advanced capitalism and defines social basis of
these movements with the class concept. Calhoun and Offe come at the forefront among the ones who advocate this view that is called as continuity theory. Calhoun approached conceptualization of new social movements in a critical way in his article title “New Social Movements of the Beginning of the 19th Century”. He claimed that movements which were executed regularly towards religious revival along with ethnic minority, women and workers’ rights also emphasized autonomy and identity demands and stated that propagation of social movements was peculiar to modernity and it did not require a special explanation (Tilly, 2004: 117-118).

According to Offe, values such as individual freedom, equality, participation, peace and solidaristic social organization that have been voiced by new social movements are not “new” at all. These values and ethical norms were inherited from progressive actions of bourgeoisie and working class. Thus, these movements do neither have an “anti-modernist” nor a “post-materialist” character. They should mostly be regarded as a modern critique of modernization. In this sense, rise of new movements seems like an outcome of inner contradiction of modern cultural values and their discrepancies rather than clash of “dominant” and some “new” values (Offe, 1999: 75).

Given two different abovementioned approaches, it is seen that the concept of new social movements pushes explanatory capacities of old theoretical perspectives. In this sense, the concept of new social movements is a double-edged sword (Johnston, Larana and Gusfrield; 1999: 134). Considering characteristics of new social movements, their connection with the past is not completely broken. However, it is also possible to mention a discontinuity and a rapture between every movement and the past albeit this varies for each movement.

A New Social Movement Model: Occupy Gezi

The financial crisis, which has shook foundations of global capitalism since 2008, has led to questioning of wealth in Europe and the USA. It threatened governments, countries and major corporations with collapse and caused serious dwindling of welfare state on which social stability is based. Social inequality, which has intensified everywhere, became a non-bearable situation for many people who have shortage of hope and trust. Political legitimacy crises have been experienced in many countries due to deep distrust felt towards political institutions who govern societies (Castells, 2013: 189). However, social movements are not only born from poverty and political hopelessness. Looking from this perspective, social movements of the 21st century have certain common attributes albeit displaying distinct causes of emergence.

Castells explains this situation through the concept of “network society”. In internet age, social movements experience transformation thanks to interaction-based, multi-faceted and horizontal communication networks within the context of wireless communication. In this century, social transformation occurs as a result of actions of individuals who form networks through communication networks (Castells, 2013: 191). The thing that distinguishes these movements, which have arisen world over, from previous versions is that society has an autonomous ability in terms of establishing communication and self-organization (Castells, 2013: 304).
These movements, which have emerged with participation of individuals who seek new forms of co-existence in a crisis-ridden world, will shape societies of the 21st century. Social movements, which have been experienced in different countries of the world such as Tunisia, Iceland, Egypt (Tahrir), Arabic countries (Arab Spring), Spain (the Indignados), the USA (Occupy Wall Street) and Turkey (Occupy Gezi), are messengers of a new era (Castells, 2013: 18).

No matter reasons behind their emergence such as financial crisis, repression by authoritarian regimes or protection of green as in Turkey, all of these movements are actions of dignity for people who would like to exist with their own identities. Occupy Gezi in Turkey is such an action of dignity and it has occurred in a period when new social transformation forms have started to rise.

Occupy Gezi in Taksim began as a protest of a small group of people who resisted against construction of a mall with an appearance of Military Barracks by destruction of Taksim Gezi Park within the framework of pedestrianization project albeit no permission of zoning. After entering of construction equipments into the park on 27 May 2013, this news quickly spread via social media. As a result, people who gathered in park and attempted to stop operations were subject to violence of police. Afterwards, a group consisting of about 100 people who were included in Taksim Solidarity, which consisted of various components and was an initiative of civil society, began to camp and keep guard in park (Isik, 2013: 22). The breaking point was harsh interference of police against resisters who were keeping guard in the park around 5 a.m. in the morning on May, 30th. And suddenly, masses began to gather in Taksim Gezi Park. Resistance of a small group who resisted ripping off trees shortly initiated a nation-wide resistance and a rebellion with democratic content. Protests turned into anti-governmental demonstrations after disproportional police violence and the prime minister’s insistent remarks on construction. This democratic rebellion and resistance is the greatest social movement of recent years experienced in our country. Occupy Gezi began spontaneously as a process and masses created spheres of freedom where there were no police for two weeks (Orkunoglu, 2013, www.sendika.org).

This resistance movement, which spread nation-wide and found comprehensive coverage in international area, lasted about three weeks. It became subject for discussions regarding its emergence as of the first day it began, profile of participants, its goals and ability to organize. Occupy Gezi carries all characteristics that are attributed to new social movements such as non-organization, not being an opposition in a typical sense, horizontal relationships instead of vertical hierarchy, concrete demands instead of great ideologies, individuals instead of groups, individual freedom demands instead of social demands and so on (Kosar, 2013: 4). Nonetheless, its situation of being “new” draws attention in terms of participants’ profile and forms of organization and action. Questions that need to be asked at this stage can be sorted as follows: “What is “new” in Occupy Gezi?” and “can definition of neo-new social movements be applied to this movement?”
Occupy Gezi: Is it a Class-based Rebellion or a Supra-Class Movement?

Numerous discussions are the case on class character, appearance, reasons and possible outcomes of Occupy Gezi. These discussions are performed around questions whether this resistance “is a class-based resistance or a riot of new middle-class?” This question will be attempted to be answered by taking into account characteristics of participants.

According to Boratav, majority of Occupy Gezi participants have some common social attributes. However, one should go out of the “middle class” label in order to understand these commonalities. For once, majority of people who participated in resistance actions consisted of university or high school students. For them, it is meaningless to make “middle-class” identification. However, it should be said that objective positions of students belong to potential workers class in broadest sense. Their schools educate them to be elements of supply for qualified workforce in near future. Furthermore, capitalism promises them unemployment. On the other hand, the ones who work in service sector and called white-collar are per se present in working class in today’s conditions. Independent, professional groups who are generally lumped into the block of “middle classes” such as doctors, lawyers, consultants, engineers, architects and financial advisors carry similarities to working class but class differences prevail in terms of relations of production (Boratav, 2013, www.sendika.org).

Boratav answers the question “is there a class-based resistance in Occupy Gezi” with that “it is a matured class rebellion”. According to him, “highly-qualified and educated workers along with their class companions (students) in the future with participation of professionals as well resist against attempt of snatching bourgeoisie and political authority identified with bourgeoisie to seize giant urban unearned incomes”.

Ozugurlu emphasizes that it is not possible to regard a giant people’s riot, which proceeds with multiple codes and symbols putting references on life style in today’s conditions where capital as a social relationship has directly and deeply permeated into daily life, as “not belonging to a class”. According to him, “enrichment” of paid workers and turning into middle-classes are a direct product of welfare regime. Neo-liberal stage of capitalism re-proletarinized “middle-classes”, whose majority is constituted by professional occupational groups, in recent years. In addition, government’s policies towards integration into neo-liberal, global order also bring along impoverishment and non-safety. It is no surprise that young, educated and qualified urbanites, who perceive government’s imposition of its own world view on society and political system as a clear and direct violation of rights, participated in this resistance with demands on equality and freedom. Occupy Gezi generated a strong response to capital model in the form of strengthening of the executive and to solution of bourgeoisie (Ozugurlu, 2013, www.sendika.org).
According to another view, this resistance has important differences compared to previous ones and does not demonstrate a classical working class rebellion image. Addressing this resistance as a “middle-class” rebellion is a superficial approach. An important dimension of this resistance is related to “middle classes” (small bourgeoisie in classical sense). However, these “middle classes” which lead this rebellion are losing middle classes in other words proletarized middle classes. These social sections which lead this resistance actually reflect reactions of a social segment which has just started to be included in working class. Occupy Gezi was shaped as a liberation struggle against a regime that gained a dictatorial character by blending class and identity-centered concerns. This liberation struggle took supports of very broad, very different sections which feel themselves under political, social and economic oppression. In short, the problem carries a thoroughly proletariat-centered class character and it can never be treated as a static “middle-class” reaction (Burkev, 2013, www.sendika.org).

In addition to the ones who interpret social basis of resistance as class-based, there are also people who define this movement as a movement with multiple components and structure. For instance, Löwy approaches the term “middle class” with suspicion. According to him, groups which have appeared within this resistance such as students, technicians, employees in service sector and so on are affiliated to working class. With a widespread and effective meaning of proletariat, these people are the ones who live by selling their own labor for a fee. Majority of people in all modern societies lies within working class. Of course, motivations of actors of these movements are very multiple and diverse. Their main component is youth; however there is also support by many different social groups. The important point is the existence of common rage felt towards the system, government and its representatives (Löwy, 2013, www.sendika.org).

Kaptanoglu argues that it is difficult to interpret Occupy Gezi, which is a movement that rises over cultural identities, with a class-based perspective. In addition, Yildirim defined this movement as an example of a new-generation social struggle. Priority of masses with young people leading, who do not have any common will but know what they want, is their life styles and daily lives. Therefore, Occupy Gezi is different from class-based social movements in the past (Kosar, 2013: 3).

According to another view, the ones who mostly participated in Occupy Gezi are wage-earners and students among whom white collars constitute majority. Body of these participants is highly-educated, specialized, professional and urbanized white-collars, who are formally employed, in other words “new middle class” (CHP, 2014: 11).

According to a research which was carried out for the purpose of understanding profile and motivations of participants while Occupy Gezi was going on, about 64% of people who have supported these protests were between 19 and 30 years old, thereby majority of supporters were young masses. 53.7% of this mass stated that they have never participated in a mass demonstration previously by going out to the street. 70% of protest supporters argued that they did not feel close to a political party. This data guides us for understanding political profile of participants (Bilgic and Kafkasli, 2013: 7).
In short, many thinkers emphasize that fight for nature and fight against capitalism cannot be independently handled. However, considering different components and action types, Occupy Gezi is a multi-layered, major social movement which was achieved in multiple places. The point on which different approaches agree regarding social basis of this movement is that this movement is an important step taken towards emancipatory, participatory and pluralistic democracy struggle in this country.

**A Digital Revolution?**

While opportunities that contemporary technology presents to communication environment go beyond imagination, they also transform way of thinking, behavioral norm and traditions of individuals. Today, mass and private communication opportunities develop both topics and action repertoires of many formations including social movement in particular. At this point, use of internet particularly has a considerable contribution.

Social network sites have become life environments which connect all aspects of people’s lives. This tendency, which has spread through the whole society, transforms culture of sharing and also exceeds phenomenon of time and space. Today, there is a world which forms constant networks in all aspects of human life. In this world, network-forming social movements evolve with constant interaction of many individuals (Castells, 2013: 200).

Practice and organization of contemporary social movements considerably rest on digital communication. Digital social networks installed on internet and wireless networks are determinant on mobilization, organization, idea generation, coordination and decision-making (Castells, 2013: 198). Thus, from now on a leader, a command and a control center or a vertical organization is not needed for providing information or instruction.

Evaluating in terms of Occupy Gezi, it is observed that important dynamics are encountered regarding organizing through social networks. Internet and especially social media platforms display their existence as an indispensable communication and interaction environment for protestors in different cities in all Turkey. Individuals reached numerous people in a short time via networks that they set up over the internet without any time and space restriction; they shared their own ideas and created public opinion on a certain issue (Turner, 2013: 378). Individuals who gathered around a certain objective first looked out for their park and then spontaneously flowed into public spheres with impacts of networks hitting the whole country. Social networks connected different segments of society who could not be able to participate in government due to hegemonic discourse of present political authority, to voice themselves and their problems (Turner, 2013: 378).

Social media sit at the center of movement as a sole and unconditional alternative against silence of mainstream media. Very creative slogans were produced by sharing simultaneous multiple medias and texts through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tumblr. Individuals whose right to information has been violated by the country’s media created a pool of information and shortly updated data banks by assuming citizen journalism.
In addition to all this functionality, social media has played a significant role in keeping soul of resistance and movement alive. The users, who were exposed to excessive violence, were injured, taken into custody and lost their relatives, transformed social media a machine of irony against fear and collapse on the one hand and expertly utilized humor symbolically overthrowing the government in confrontation that they experienced with the government on the other hand. Overthrowing of symbols and terms of the government, present social codes, institutions and names played a considerably important role for “overcoming threshold of fear” even in the darkest times (www.alternatifbilisim.org).

It is a known fact that young people constituted majority of Occupy Gezi participants. Banko and Babaoglu use the concept of “digital citizen” for this young generation and define them as people who follow developments and the world via the screen of smart mobile devices instead of television. People who are in this group between 19 and 30 years old are called as “the generations Y and Z”. The generation Y is a group with television in each home when they were born and which uses mobile phones in their youth. The generation Z is a born-digital citizen; in other words it consists of the ones who do not remember a world without internet (Banko and Babaoglu, 2013, 8-9).

This generation, which spends almost all their times in internet and social media online and offline, perceives the world from a different window. Shares of this generation, which commands unique language of the digital world, code and symbols it uses, through social networks ensured meeting of masses that do not know each other. These steps that started with pioneering youngs of internet generation first spread to all young people, then to families and ultimately to the whole country (Banko and Babaoglu, 2013, 8-9).

The report submitted by Social Media and Political Participation Lab at New York University is important in terms of understanding what kind of an impact use of internet and social media has had on emergence and spreading of Occupy Gezi.

Figure 1: Number of mentions of the top 3 hashtags in the first 18 hours

![Figure 1](http://smapp.nyu.edu/reports/turkey_data_report.pdf)
According to this report published by the University, 2 million tweets were tweeted related to demonstrations between 4 p.m. and midnight on Friday, May 31. While #direngeziparki held the first place with 950 thousand tweets among hashtags, #occupygezi (170 thousand tweets) and #geziparki (50 thousand tweets) followed. While it is stated in this report that 3 thousand tweets continued to be posted every minute even after midnight, it was argued that 88% of posted tweets were Turkish. In the report, which reminds that these figures emerged in places where demonstrations were hold even though 3G connection was lost or weak, it was also stated that business offices around removed their wireless modem passwords. It was also highlighted in the report that this concentration stemmed from lack of media’s covering these events (Aydemir, 2013, www.kigem.com).

Shares, which began as of 31 May, increasingly lasted throughout the week. Social media played an important role in protests continuing to spread in Istanbul and other cities. According to the report, looking at tweets posted in the first three days, still the most popular hashtag is #direngeziparki and it has reached 1.8 million (SmaPP Data Report, 2013: 2-3).

**Figure 2:** Number of mentions of the top 3 hashtags in the first 3 days

![Number of mentions of the top 3 hashtags in the first 3 days](http://smapp.nyu.edu/reports/turkey_data_report.pdf), Copyright 2013 by New York University, Reprinted with permission.

As understood from the graph above, a significant decline cannot be observed regarding concentration of tweets posted albeit three days have passed since the beginning of protests. On the other hand, an increase has been observed in ratio of #occupygezi hashtag and English tweets. Looking at this data, it can be said that protestors’ attempts to create international awareness and international interest have increased (SmaPP Data Report, 2013: 4).
As understood from these graphs, social networks like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Tumblr have played considerably important role on emergence of Occupy Gezi and its spread both domestically and internationally. On the other hand, it created a excluding effect on the ones who do not use internet and social networks. However, still, internet and social networks organized protestors to support and participate in this resistance in the absence of media and became the center of this movement. Without requiring a formal organizational structure, it ensured coordination among participants. Attention of international society was drawn and its support was received through social media that was present at the heart of Gezi.

**Instead of Conclusion...**

What happened in Turkey in terms of Occupy Gezi is not a protest against financial crisis and saving policies as in other European countries. It is a criticism brought against a model of economic growth which has destroyed nature and culture of Turkey for the sake of capital accumulation. This movement goes beyond condemning capitalism and places humane values over productive logic. It brought the value of preserving nature and quality of life to forefront by criticizing urban development model that put its stamp on available economic strategies in Turkey. This movement noted a caution regarding not falling for development model that pushes humanity to a possible destruction (Castells, 2013: 303).

Possibilities presented by digital communication technologies have been comprehensively transforming new social movements. Albeit there are different approaches in this issue, it would not be inaccurate to say that use of internet and social networks has revolutionized the world in social, cultural and cognitive senses. The ones who are excluded
from political processes and decision-making mechanisms are able to obtain participatory and transparent democracy through this instrument.

This said new environment, which created an idiosyncratic cultural world, became an impetus behind emergence of new social and individual forms of relationship and new identities as well as formation of a new cultural environment. On the other hand, people who participate in social movements connect to the ones who use internet and social networks like themselves in a tighter way. Furthermore, it would not be inaccurate to argue that internet and social networks have become a new sphere of realization for social movements. For this reason, social networks are a new phenomenon of social movements.
References


