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A relational approach to eventful protest and its challenges

Donatella della Porta and Kivanc Atak

Abstract
This chapter brings in a relational perspective to the structure and agency across the Gezi Park uprisings in Turkey. In order to understand the social and political dynamics that played out in the course of the mobilizations, we discuss and critically elaborate the relation of class, authoritarian rule, and contentious politics to the agency of the protests. Drawing on in-depth interviews with organizationally affiliated and unaffiliated protesters, protest event analysis, public surveys, and official documents, the chapter shows how public outrage at the government’s political encroachments into particular lifestyles, values, and orientations helped an ongoing urban resistance evolve into a mass rebellion. By focusing on the eventful characteristics of the protests, we also delve into the political subjectivities that have been activated, contested, transformed and in the making since the eruption of the uprisings.

Keywords: protest, uprising, relational approach, eventful, class, social movement, Gezi, Turkey

2.1 Introduction

If in addition to institutional expressions of political power we observe the evolution of popular movements, one of the most significant phenomena of recent years has been the birth of social protests and demands concerned with urban and environmental questions. Through these different ways, the city and its problems appear to have increasing importance in the practice of power. This relationship also develops in an opposite way, in that political power, the state being its concentrated expression, increasingly shapes the city (Castells, 1978: 167).

The popular uprisings that broke out in Turkey in the early days of summer 2013 showed, in line with the quote from Manuel Castells, how an urban question can turn into a battlefield between a coercive state and the social
forces that resist its power. According to the Turkish National Police, around
3.6 million citizens participated in 5,232 protest events from the end of
May until the first week of September 2013. On the city level, others assess,
one and a half million took to the streets in Istanbul – 16 percent of the
population over eighteen years old – and half a million in Izmir – 18 per-
cent of the population over eighteen years old (SAMER, 2013). The protests
also offered insight into the mobilizing potential of contemporary urban
and environmental contestations. Needless to say, an ongoing struggle
against the demolition of the Gezi Park in Istanbul evolved into an anti-
authoritarian mass rebellion that became much more comprehensive than
the initial cause embraced by a handful of urban activists. However, this
does not overshadow the centrality of the protests’ urban origins, which
were concentrated on the preservation of a public space.

In this chapter we will discuss the Gezi Park uprisings through a rela-
tional approach which allows the bridging of context and agency within
a conception of protest as eventful. The idea of transformative “events”
goes back to William H. Sewell's (1996) proposition of “eventful temporal-
ity” as an alternative to the teleological and experimental temporalities,
two dominant paradigms in historical sociology. Della Porta (2008) took
Sewell’s conceptualization and suggested that certain protests bear eventful
characteristics and have the potential to transform structures and collective
identities. Protest events can be seen as critical junctures and, as such, as
forms of change endowed with some specific characteristics (della Porta,
2016). As Kenneth Roberts (2015) noted, “critical junctures are not periods
of ‘normal politics’ when institutional continuity or incremental change
can be taken for granted. They are periods of crisis or strain that existing
policies and institutions are ill-suited to resolve.” In fact, he stated, they
produce changes described as abrupt, discontinuous, and path dependent:

Changes are abrupt because critical junctures contain decisive “choice
points” when major reforms are debated, policy choices are made, and in-
stitutions are created, reconfigured, or displaced. They are discontinuous
because they diverge sharply from baseline trajectories of institutional
continuity or incremental adaptation; in short, they represent a signifi-
cant break with established patterns. Finally, change is path dependent
because it creates new political alignments and institutional legacies that
shape and constrain subsequent political development (Roberts, 2015).

Although critical junctures are rooted within structures, they are also open-
ended. In this vision, critical junctures are structurally underdetermined.
Critical junctures are characterized by high levels of uncertainty and political contingency. During these periods of crisis, “the range of plausible choices available to powerful political actors expands substantially” (Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007: 343). Consolidation phases then become founding moments in which institutional and normative codes are set, with long-lasting effects. Different degrees and forms of contention could develop from specific processes that originate in transition phases. In this vision, in fact, “instead of connecting initial conditions to outcomes, events carry the potential to transform the X-Y relation, neutralizing the reversing effects that initial conditions would have otherwise produced” (Collier and Mazzuca, 2008: 485).

Once changes are produced via critical junctures, these have enduring effects on the relations that are established in new assets (or new regimes). We might therefore expect transition paths to constrain consolidation processes, as “what has happened at an earlier point in time will affect the possible outcomes of a sequence of events occurring at a later point in time” (Sewell, 1996: 263). So, once a particular outcome happens to occur, self-reproducing mechanisms tend to cause “the outcome to endure across time, even long after its original purposes have ceased to exist” (Mahoney and Schensul, 2006: 456). It has in fact been observed that transformations stabilize as “[o]nce a process (e.g. a revolution) has occurred and acquired a name, both the name and the one or more representations of the process become available as signals, models, threats and/or aspirations for later actors” (Tilly, 2006: 421). After a critical juncture, changes over time become difficult (Mahoney and Schensul, 2006: 462) – unless there is a new rupture or disruptive event. Although critical junctures are usually considered within models of punctuated equilibriums as reactions to shocks that bring the system towards a new equilibrium (Pierson, 2000), the degree of stability also (re)creates changes. This perspective can contribute to ongoing and future debates on whether new subjectivities were formed throughout Gezi and to what extent, in terms of collective identities, one can refer to a rupture with the past.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, we delve into the social bases of the uprisings with reference to the concept of class. In our discussion, we challenge alternative class theses on Gezi which variably highlight the middle class, the working class, or the multi-class currents of the protests. Drawing on earlier theoretical premises on class and its role in social movements, we suggest instead that Gezi can hardly be considered as a class rebellion per se but rather it is one that – among other dimensions such as lifestyles, values, and orientation as well as status – involves class politics

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as well. In the broader context of contentious politics, we also demonstrate that even if it came as a surprise, Gezi did not arise from nowhere. In other words, it built on an existing and relatively noisy protest environment which, in addition to the remarkable participation of first-time protesters, contributed to the diverse and large-scale nature of the mobilizations as the usual suspects of contentious politics in Turkey. Second, we look at the authoritarian context that was thriving in the run-up to the mass protests. We suggest that rather than functioning as a single causal mechanism, the multifaceted authoritarianism of the Erdoğan government cemented the growth of public outrage, which came to explode at a particular moment in time. Last, we take into account the rare and extraordinary character of Gezi as an event and explore its potentially transformative effects on political subjectivities. With empirical insight from our findings, we trace some indicators of new subjectivities in the making on an individual level. In addition, we also have sufficient grounds to expect that a social transformation at the level of collective identities has been taking place.

The empirical material we use in our chapter comes from several sources. We rely first of all on in-depth interviews with protest participants. The interviews were conducted with activists from a diversity of organizations who were selected based on organizational form and political orientation. We also refer to results from an original protest event dataset, which we compiled from the online news archive of Anadolu Agency (the official press agency that was established in 1920, with local offices in 69 out of 81 provinces) covering the period from 2011 to the end of 2013. Last but not least, we consulted public surveys by private research enterprises, official documents, and articles from the news media.

2.2 The question of class: Gezi beyond class revolt

Differently from the mass protests in 2011, which have been defined as moved by the losers in countries most hit by the austerity crisis, the protests in 2013 were often interpreted as “middle-class” phenomena. Several analyses have pointed to the remarkable presence and pivotal role of highly educated and young middle-class professionals in the mobilizations (Özel, 2014). This view has been contested in the scholarly literature, however, as advocates of the proletarianization thesis have pointed at the growing precariousness of employment in professional/creative jobs (Ercan and Oğuz, 2015) or underscored the somewhat anti-bourgeoisie or even anti-capitalist character of the uprisings (Boratav, 2013). Still a third interpretation presents
Gezi as a multi-class phenomenon, pointing at the presence of all classes, roughly in proportion to their size in the population (Yörük and Yüksel, 2014). The working classes, predominant in the population at large, were in fact numerically superior to the participants from other classes, yet protesters came from the middle classes as well.

In particular, the notion of class conceptualized in these writings either draws heavily on the demographic profile of the protesters derived from occupational categories or, as in the case of the proletarianization thesis, is extrapolated from broader socio-economic processes whose empirical link to Gezi remains unfocused. Overall, while not denying the existence of class politics in the mobilizations, we suggest that Gezi cannot be considered as a class rebellion as such.

At a broader level, the occupational distribution of the protesters beyond Gezi Park and Taksim resembles the figures in the general population (Figure 2.1). The results of a survey conducted in Istanbul and Izmir suggest that people from middle-class occupations and the petty bourgeoisie were slightly overrepresented among the protesters in comparison with the ratio of these strata in the entire sample. Furthermore, protesters with a working-class background were represented at more or less the same level as the working-class respondents in the whole sample, whereas the category of precarious workers was underrepresented in the protests by a small margin (SAMER, 2013). In fact, participants inside Gezi Park were overwhelmingly young and highly educated. Among those who were employed, many worked...
in clerical and administrative jobs as well as professional occupations (KONDA, 2014).

Considering that people took to the streets in almost every province and in numerous neighborhoods, however – not to mention that the protests lasted for several weeks – observations confined to the spatial boundaries of Gezi Park and Taksim Square might produce a limited, if not biased, understanding of the social origins of the protests. As an activist observed:

[[I]f you look at who was on the barricades in Nisantasi, obviously those were people who live or work there. But it is also true that when the protests started to decline, it was those people who withdrew from the streets in the first place. Their withdrawal and the concomitant decline of the mobilizations frustrated many others. But my observation concerns the very center of Istanbul. On the periphery, however, people’s social profile was different. The socially marginalized, Alevi and Kurds were in the forefronts of the protests. In Taksim, it looked like as if some groups came there to represent the marginalized, such as the Alevi organizations or even the DHKP-C² (Interview TK6).

In addition, there seems to be a discernible pattern if one thinks of the victims of police repression. With some bitterness, another interviewee noted,

Life is particularly precious for the middle classes. They know well what time to protest, what time to back away. But when we consider those who lost their lives in the course of Gezi events, we realize that they mostly resided in poor neighborhoods or came from Alevi communities; namely those people who sacrificed themselves without having second thoughts or resorting to some sort of realpolitik. In my opinion, this is a question of class. It explains why casualties occurred in places like Adana, Eskişehir but not in and around the Gezi Park (Interview TK2).

If the Gezi Park uprising was spearheaded by young protesters with relatively high cultural capital at the heart of Istanbul, mobilization rapidly grew into a socially and spatially much more diverse popular rebellion. This would

1 An upper-class neighborhood near Taksim.
2 Acronym for Devrimci Halk Kurtuluş Partisi-Cephesi [Revolutionary Party-Front for People’s Emancipation], a leftist underground organization that dates back to the 1970s and is officially on the list of terrorist organizations in Turkey.
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not mean, however, that Gezi can be pictured as an outright class revolt. First, it is dubious that the young and educated middle-class initiators of the mobilizations acted as “organic intellectuals” in the Gramscian sense. These participants, if anything, instead played the role of traditional intellectuals providing resources, knowledge, and skills to the protests rather than deliberately pursuing class interests or uniformly making class-based claims (on middle class as intellectuals, see Bagguley, 1992). Second, class politics in a mass movement such as Gezi is not directly a derivative of market categories of social stratification to which individual protesters belong, as earlier discussions emphasized that “class is not reducible to occupation” (Abercrombie and Urry, 1983: 10). In our effort to “forsake the essentialism” in the analyses of class (or class politics), we would agree with a relational perspective that suggests that class “lies neither in structures nor in agency alone but in their relationship as it is historically produced, reproduced, and transformed” (Wacquant, 1991: 51).

As elsewhere, neoliberal policies in Turkey have been threatening the middle classes – among others – and imposing precarious conditions, particularly upon their “work situation,” which Lockwood (1958) once defined as one of the three pillars of class. This process dates back to the Özal governments in the 1980s and lingered well into the 2000s by virtue of large-scale privatizations, the extension of subcontracting, and labor flexibility. Such developments affected first and foremost young people, including those who achieved (or were achieving) high educational levels. Indeed, “[t]heir schools are training them to become a component of qualified elements in the supply of workforce in the near future” or unemployed (Boratav, 2013). Along these lines, some critiques of the middle-class thesis on Gezi point at the proletarianization in the service sector including sales clerks or secretaries, and for independent professional groups such as doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects, and so forth (Erçan and Oğuz, 2015). Socio-economic transformations driven by market fundamentalism, it is claimed, are reflected in the motivations of the Gezi Park protesters, who not only stigmatized precariousness and unemployment but also wanted to promote creativity. As an activist claimed:

If we graduate from the Urbanism Institute, we would like to work on urban restructuring. We would like to demonstrate that we are able to define and implement land use plans that are in line with the creation of democratic urban spaces and environmental protection. But the precariousness of employment and the fact that we cannot express our creativity in our work practices resulted in our search for autonomous
Social transformations are particularly relevant as implications of urban renewal and environmental policies that can “no longer be seen only as ‘middle-class issues’ within a post-materialist framework, in the sense of a frivolous concern on the part of people who suffer from no ‘real’ economic or social constraints” (Karakayali and Yaka, 2014). Obviously, the uprisings emerged from an ongoing struggle against the demolition of Gezi Park as part of the transformation of Taksim. Therefore, the protests called for a right to the city and a contestation of the growing investment of profits in urban projects, or what Lovering and Türkmen (2011) called “bulldozer neoliberalism.” Gezi came to represent a culminating point of the commodification of once open spaces, with shopping malls creating “enclosures by destroying what is left of the so-called city center and eating away at what is left of the so-called countryside” (Eken, 2014).

With their insistence on reclaiming spaces, the protests targeted a central aspect of urban development in general. This focus had taken particular prominence in Turkey, where investment in urban programs had been impressive, the state taking a leading role in renewal projects but also strongly supported by an emerging capitalist class. Resistance came from those who defended use value over exchange value (Atay, 2013; Göle, 2013). These programs at times involve massive destruction-construction, resting on a policy of displacement of the socially disadvantaged, often portrayed as the troublemakers by the law-and-order regime. In the 1960s and 1970s, clientelist policies spread in response to urban social movements claiming for collective consumption, followed by new entrepreneurialism promoting participatory governance and a re-regulation of property markets. Recently, this entrepreneurial logic acquired an authoritarian character lacking democratic control. The anti-democratic politics of urban development went as far as to exempt the state giant Housing Development Administration (TOKI) from judicial oversight.

Under these circumstances, the transformation of cities into gigantic construction sites yielded contradictory outcomes, most notably in Istanbul. The proliferation of ostensibly affordable housing opportunities for the worse-off strata came along with their expulsion from the center and involuntary resettlement in the peripheries of the city, which is not necessarily favorable in terms of economic compensations offered to the displaced people. By the same token, urban neoliberalism – which goes hand in hand with TOKI’s omnipotence – also gave rise to gated
communities for the rich to voluntarily segregate themselves from the dusts and dangers of the downtown. As a result, voluntary and involuntary detachment from the city has contrastingly led to reproduction of poverty on the one side, and the securitized insulation of the propertied class on the other (Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008). Urban renewal was also stressed by activists, who noted:

Next to E-5 highway in Davutpaşa, there is a sixty-hectare area they are going to ruin. As an excuse, they put forward the bad condition of buildings and scare people saying, “Would it be better that in the event of an earthquake people would die under concrete?” And then they spend 40 billion TL for the construction of highways. What a contradiction! So you collect 40 billion TL to take precautions for earthquake, then you offer people 60 m² housing (reduced from their original 100 m²) and ask them to pay 50 thousand TL in addition. [...] The housing you offer already costs 50 thousand TL anyways. [...] Why do you downsize people’s houses and why do you take their money then? You even construct an additional fifteen floors! This is exactly how capitalism transforms people’s lives into rents. [...] This is what urban renewal is about. That is why struggling against this process is very much justified. This struggle started way before Gezi and even dates back to the 70s. [...] Gezi became the peak point of all these long-lasting struggles (Interview TK8).

To paraphrase, the Gezi Park mobilizations were intertwined with ongoing urban struggles on the neighborhood level as well as targeting mega projects such as the construction of a third bridge over the Bosphorus, a new airport, and a canal to artificially connect the Black Sea and the Marmara Sea – all carrying heavy costs for the environment. In this context, the project for the reorganization of Taksim was criticized for its content as well as procedurally, given the lack of consultation with professional organizations and the citizens. The project became a symbol of authoritarian urban management and protests that started in Taksim contended for the reappropriation of a public space – the last piece of green land that survived past encroachments in the area.

Gezi as a popular uprising that was born out of an ongoing urban resistance certainly harbored elements of class politics. But as it was unforeseen even by the very actors of the resistance since its beginning, the uprisings

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3 Davutpaşa is an industrial neighborhood in the Esenler district of Istanbul with a dense, working-class population.
evolved into a broader social phenomenon that transcended the boundaries of an urban movement and its class-based foundations. As we have noted, Gezi turned into a public stage joined by a wide range of groups, organizations, and unaffiliated individuals who were to varying degrees and for various reasons discontented with the government and the political order in general. This composite discontent cannot be grasped only by reference to class. The same conclusion also applies to the proletarianization thesis. The erosion of social rights and of the economic rewards of education as well as the precarious nature of employment might have activated class motives for protest, as in the case of the graduate from the Urbanism Institute quoted above. Yet it would be far-fetched to generalize such motives to the entire course of the Gezi Park mobilizations. Articulations that are not compellingly related to class – such as those concerned with lifestyles, values, and orientations, or what Bryan S. Turner (1988) referred to as “status politics” – existed side by side with the class roots of the resentment of some, if not all, protesters. What brought them together in a surprising fashion was an anti-authoritarian stance against the government, and Erdoğan in particular.

Protest events in context

Figure 2.2 maps the geographical distribution of the Gezi Park protests at the provincial level. As protests took place in all but one (Bayburt – in eastern Black Sea region) province, the figure does not claim to represent the whole picture. Yet it still portrays the diffuse character of the mobilizations, which spread well beyond Istanbul. Obviously, protests were concentrated in more populated provinces in the west, but population size is by no means the only factor associated with protest magnitude.

Figure 2.3 focuses on the provincial borders of Istanbul. It presents the districts where the Gezi Park protests were concentrated and, in addition, it locates geographically the neighborhood forums that mushroomed throughout the city after the police eviction of the occupation in Taksim in mid-June 2013. As one can notice, people frequented the streets mostly in the central districts of Beşiktaş, Beyoğlu, Kadıköy, and Şişli. Protests were also notably common in Sultangazi, more in the west, a district with a sizeable Alevi and Kurdish population. Having said that, protest events were not limited to these districts and also occurred, perhaps more sporadically, in several other districts not highlighted in this figure. Neighborhood forums likewise did not attract the same level of mobilization everywhere, yet they spread to less central districts such as Beylikdüzü on the European and Kartal on the Anatolian side.
In fact, street protests had not been infrequent in Turkey’s political landscape prior to the outburst of Gezi. Our data show that the Gezi Park revolts were embedded in a relatively dynamic protest environment. Figure 2.4 outlines the number of protests and level of participation between 2011 and 2013 on a three-month basis. Obviously, in the period of the Gezi Park protests, the number of protesting people skyrocketed. However, the preceding periods do not seem substantially quiet as regards the reported number of protests, even if the turnout mostly proved lower in relative terms. In the period covered by our data, social and economic issues broadened the reasons citizens took to the streets, yet people also protested distinctly for civil rights and the Kurdish question, labor and environmental problems as well as to express nationalistic sentiments or Islamic resentment with suppressive regimes in the Middle East – most vividly after the military coup in Egypt or the conflict in Syria (Table 2.1). Concerning collective actors,
it turns out that labor unions came to dominate the organizational realm of street mobilizations in Turkey (Table 2.2). This means that workers in various economic sectors and civil servants employed in public sector jobs override the occupational profile of protest participants in the three-year period we have examined. The salience of social and economic matters along the avenues of protest issues thus reflects on the mobilizing capacity of organizations, labor unions in particular.\(^4\)

Results from our protest event data show that the Gezi Park mobilizations built on a relatively diverse and vibrant protest environment in the country. In our view, this provides a useful indication of the fact that Gezi brought together miscellaneous groups with convergent and divergent stances. The usual suspects of contentious politics in Turkey brought in their own claims, repertoires, and resources, enriching the collective agency of the Gezi Park protests.

\(^4\) Note that in 2012 trade union density in Turkey was registered at 4.5 percent, the lowest among the OECD countries.
## Table 2.1  List of classified protest issues (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>2011 (N = 1,464)</th>
<th>2012 (N = 889)</th>
<th>2013 (N = 1,113)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal rights</td>
<td>.68 (10)</td>
<td>1.69 (15)</td>
<td>.45 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights: LGBTQ issues</td>
<td>.14 (2)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights: Rights of the disabled</td>
<td>.41 (6)</td>
<td>1.35 (12)</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights: Government repression &amp; political prosecutions</td>
<td>6.49 (95)</td>
<td>4.49 (40)</td>
<td>21.47 (239)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights: Prisoners’ rights and conditions</td>
<td>.07 (1)</td>
<td>.11 (1)</td>
<td>.18 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights: Freedom of expression and assembly</td>
<td>.27 (4)</td>
<td>.45 (4)</td>
<td>.54 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights: Press freedom and media issues</td>
<td>1.71 (25)</td>
<td>1.24 (11)</td>
<td>1.53 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights: Freedom of religion</td>
<td>1.02 (15)</td>
<td>2.36 (21)</td>
<td>.81 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights: Rights of other minorities</td>
<td>.34 (5)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative social values / pro-Islamist</td>
<td>.75 (11)</td>
<td>2.02 (18)</td>
<td>1.98 (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic policies and problems</td>
<td>8.27 (121)</td>
<td>10.34 (92)</td>
<td>5.58 (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment &amp; ecology</td>
<td>5.94 (87)</td>
<td>5.16 (46)</td>
<td>4.05 (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist struggle / women’s movement</td>
<td>5.11 (76)</td>
<td>4.16 (37)</td>
<td>3.95 (44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global/transnational: Anti-“Transnational Union” &amp; anti-capitalist &amp; anti-imperialist movements</td>
<td>1.16 (17)</td>
<td>2.03 (18)</td>
<td>.45 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International human and civil rights / democratization</td>
<td>5.32 (83)</td>
<td>12.60 (112)</td>
<td>26.96 (300)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish political movement and pro-Kurdish protests</td>
<td>9.29 (136)</td>
<td>5.62 (50)</td>
<td>2.70 (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor and syndical issues</td>
<td>7.57 (111)</td>
<td>6.86 (61)</td>
<td>5.48 (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National pride and Turkish identity</td>
<td>18.30 (247)</td>
<td>4.50 (40)</td>
<td>1.62 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace movement</td>
<td>1.70 (25)</td>
<td>2.58 (23)</td>
<td>1.80 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political regime, rule of law and jurisprudence</td>
<td>5.26 (77)</td>
<td>5.40 (48)</td>
<td>2.34 (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural policies and problems</td>
<td>.21 (3)</td>
<td>2.47 (22)</td>
<td>1.17 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>1.09 (16)</td>
<td>2.14 (19)</td>
<td>.90 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban policies and problems</td>
<td>2.59 (38)</td>
<td>4.27 (38)</td>
<td>5.48 (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various social issues</td>
<td>15.83 (232)</td>
<td>15.39 (135)</td>
<td>8.36 (93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreported / unidentifiable</td>
<td>1.43 (21)</td>
<td>2.70 (24)</td>
<td>2.25 (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ protest event data from Anadolu Agency
Table 2.2  Protests by classified organizations (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2011 (N = 915)</th>
<th>2012 (N = 706)</th>
<th>2013 (N = 867)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture and recreation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and arts</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other recreation and social clubs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education and research</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sciences &amp; policy studies</td>
<td></td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public health &amp; wellness education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health treatment, primarily outpatient</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for the handicapped</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster/emergency assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee assistance</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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<td>Income support and maintenance</td>
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<td>Material assistance</td>
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<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
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<td>Environment</td>
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<td>Animal protection</td>
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<td><strong>Development and housing</strong></td>
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<td>Community and neighborhood assoc.</td>
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<td>Social development</td>
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<td>Housing assistance</td>
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<td><strong>Law, advocacy, and politics</strong></td>
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<td>Advocacy associations</td>
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<td>(5.9)</td>
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<td>(6.3)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(4.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Voluntarism promotion and support</td>
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<td>Fundraising organizations</td>
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<td><strong>Religion</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Associations of congregations</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>10.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Business and professional associations, unions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Business associations</td>
<td>(2.7)</td>
<td>(2.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional associations</td>
<td>(6.4)</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>60.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor unions</td>
<td>(28.1)</td>
<td>(42.6)</td>
<td>(27.6)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ protest event data from Anadolu Agency
2.3 Authoritarian drift and the attribution of political opportunities

The Gezi Park protests broke out in a political context of rising authoritarianism during the third consecutive term of the conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP) in government. As a hybrid regime, Turkey had already been a consistent player in the league of “democracies in danger,” to use Stepan’s (2009) words, where authoritarianism had never been an eliminated risk. Yet, in the subsequent terms of AKP’s single-party rule, the fragile nature of the Turkish democracy resurfaced unmistakably.

One can trace several indicators of the authoritarian path on which Turkish politics embarked under the dominant party period of AKP. As documented in a recent survey by the Associated Press, in the post-9/11 era Turkey registered as one of the most blatant enforcers of anti-terror legislation among more than sixty countries covered in the survey (Iğsız, 2014). Under the guise of fighting terrorism, the Turkish national security state has been aiming at suppressing political opposition: dissident groups as well as other actors, including the ex-allies of the incumbent party who ran into a conflict with its governing elites. In 2000, Turkish courts convicted 327 people of terrorist offences, whereas in 2013 the number of convictions reached 2,280 (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Justice, General Directorate of Judicial Records and Statistics, 2015). In addition, annual reports on political freedoms and civil liberties state that Turkey’s already weak record of press freedom has been steadily deteriorating since 2010 (Freedom House, 2015). Not by chance, by 2012 Turkey had the highest number of journalists in prison (Reporters Without Borders, 2012). Reducing democratic accountability even more, in 2012 the AKP proposed a draft law constraining the competences of the Court of Accounts to impede fiscal monitoring of budgetary decisions and public institutions. Even though the Constitutional Court eventually ruled against the proposal, it was initially passed in the parliament, and the government continued with its legislative efforts to curb the auditing functions of the Court of Accounts (Soyaltın, 2013).

To summarize, while engineering a repressive law and order regime, the government put the system of checks and balances between different institutions in serious jeopardy. The project of urban restructuring in Taksim, therefore, mirrored yet another face of an authoritarian rule. The latter also thrived on a “nanny state” unduly interfering with the public morals and private lives of its citizens, starting from how they should dress and what they should drink, to how many children they should have. In doing so, the top cadres of the party capitalized on a self-assessed notion of the “nation’s
will," i.e., the will of a formerly belittled and neglected majority of a Sunni Muslim people. Those who refused to abide with the “unobjectionable” mandate relayed to AKP through the ballot box – i.e., political parties, social movements, civil society organizations, or individuals – became the government’s enemies, more often than not criminalized or at best publicly demonized. Hence, the miscellaneous groups who took to the streets upon the police crackdown on the protest encampment in Gezi Park by the end of May 2013, in one way or another “encountered the full wrath of state authority” (Abbas and Yigit, 2014).

Under these circumstances, the Gezi Park revolts acted out an unprecedented mass outcry at the authoritarian power personified in Erdoğan’s leadership. While this was not the single cause of the protests since multiple mechanisms were arguably at play, it certainly nurtured soaring public resentment, particularly among those who were already dissatisfied with the political business of AKP. The hatred towards the government had various origins that lay bare the different political agencies of the protesters. For instance, a leading activist from the Turkish Youth Union (TGB)5 underscores the Ergenekon trials6 or parliamentary decrees rescinding public celebrations on Republic Day (October 29), as well as the anniversary of the start of the war of independence (May 19), as markers of a process in which “societal opposition was rampant while suppression was escalating” (Interview TK5). Other interviewees point to the patronizing language and the practices subjugating women as well as policies in the realm of family.

The then prime minister once stated that men and women cannot be equal. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Women has been replaced by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. Domestic violence and violence against women in general has increased steadily under the rule of AKP. They did not take sufficient precautions against murders of women. Instead, all policies of AKP aim to exert control over private lives and

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5 Türkiye Gençlik Birliği [Turkish Youth Union] is one of the largest youth/student organizations in Turkey. It claims to be a defender of the foundational premises of the Turkish Republic, is committed to “Atatürk’s Revolutions,” and has as a main goal: “to unite the Turkish youth, without differentiating between the left-wing and the right-wing, for the purpose of defending the homeland” (Türkiye Gençlik Birliği, 2015).

6 Broad in scope and protracted in time, the Ergenekon trials lasted from the first hearing in October 2008 to August 2013. The trials involved more than two hundred suspects ranging from journalists to military officers who were accused of forming a terrorist organization to overthrow the government. The vast majority of the suspects were sentenced to long-term imprisonment.
women’s bodies that is shaped in a conservative, Islamist mindset. Take the example of the abortion debate and the rhetoric that “all married couples should have three children.” In general, political discourse on women – starting from interfering with the cleavages of anchorwomen on TV to the misogynist statements by Bulent Arınç7 – serves to strengthen patriarchy (Interview TK9).

The underlying causes of mass outrage were diverse, even if directed at the same adversary, but the most commonly cited source of public frustration was the severity of police violence. Suffice it to recall that, throughout the mobilizations, eight protesters and one policeman died, 4,329 protesters and 697 policemen were injured, and 5,513 people were taken into custody. Even if coercive protest policing had been a familiar phenomenon in Turkey, the harsh way in which the police handled the peaceful resistance in Gezi Park shocked many, above all socially privileged citizens thus far unaware of or indifferent to the violence of the state – which was well-known in segregated, impoverished neighborhoods or in the Kurdish-populated parts of the country. In fact, some activists argue that the heavy-handedness of the police was becoming more tangible in the run-up to the outbreak of Gezi.

From the closure of Taksim to May Day demonstrations to the police assault on the events commemorating the murder of Deniz Gezmiş on the 6th of May and further to the protests after the Reyhanlı bombings on the 13th of May. [...] What we noticed was that the police, for the first time, started to directly target people’s heads and this recently became a common practice. We were feeling that something different was going on. Also recently, a friend of us was shot by the police purposefully at one of the university students’ protests (Interview TK3).

In short, the Gezi Park protests united a sizeable proportion of people who were upset by the authoritarian drift of the government, and above all, of Erdoğan as the premier. We do not propose this drift, which had several implications in politics and society, as a single cause for the protests. Rather, we consider it as a structural factor that contributed to the growing public resentment which, under similar circumstances, could also have culminated in a scenario different from a mass uprising.

7 Then spokesperson of the government.
2.4 **Transformative effects of protest on political subjectivities**

Extraordinary moments such as the Gezi Park uprisings emerge as intense time that breaks with normality. As it happened in Egypt, Tunisia, Spain, Greece, or the United States during the waves of protests against austerity (della Porta, 2013a; 2015; della Porta and Mattoni, 2014), such moments have the capacity to produce transformative effects on collective actors and individuals. In this last section, we address the question of the eventfulness of the Gezi Park mobilizations by exploring some of the rare encounters lived through the protests which seem to have set off a transformative process.

Scholarly writings as well as lay accounts commonly refer to the birth of a unique *spirit* in Gezi. The latter is denoted as a marker of new political subjectivities which derive from a recomposition of collective and individual identities within the logic of “becoming” (Karakayalı and Yaka, 2014). Gezi is said to resemble a “spontaneous coming together in a moment of ‘irruption,’ when disparate heterotopic groups suddenly see, if only for a fleeting moment, the possibilities of collective action to create something radically different” (Harvey, 2012: xvii). That “something radically different” owes to a subset of practices enabled by perplexing yet simultaneously awakening encounters. Surprise at the breadth and intensity of relations is often mentioned:

Unlikely brushes of the shoulder took place, surprising encounters between feminists and football fans, secularists and anti-capitalist Muslims, members of Istanbul’s bourgeoisie and the working classes, LGBTQ activists and professional lawyers, Kurds and Jews. Unpremeditated meetings. Unthought criss-crossings of purpose. [...] This was the thrill, the excitement, the euphoria of Gezi Park, the life energy it exuded, the hope it created. It broke everything out of their boxes. It enabled us all to imagine, think, and possibly be, otherwise. All in the midst of tear gas and plastic bullets and debris (Navaro-Yashin, 2013).

The strong presence of the LGBTQ activists in the mobilizations was emblematic of those encounters. Their recalcitrant efforts and contributions rendered these groups profoundly visible to those eyes that willingly or unwillingly used to turn blind to their existence. In fact, as several slogans and graffiti initially contained sexist connotations and swearwords, LGBTQ and feminist activists spoke up against those internalized vocabularies
and strove for desexualizing and queering the language of contention in a figurative manner. As it has been noted, “[b]y painting over offensive graffiti, altering some swearword letters with the female symbol, and organizing an alternative ‘Swearword Workshop’ (Küfür Atölyesi) to dispute the humiliation of women, gays, and sex workers, queers, together with feminists, challenged the misogynist, homophobic, and transphobic language of the resistance” (Zengin, 2013). It is also noteworthy that football fans – who as a group are infamous for their frequent resorting to a notoriously sexist language – “presented their apologies and responded to the noted concerns by endeavoring to translate their political rage and passion into a more all-embracing language” (2013).

Few among the protesters, including those who regularly partook in the occupation in Gezi Park, knew about the location’s history. The intervention by Nor Zartonk, a political organization of Armenians, shed light on a pre-existing Armenian cemetery and on the history of dispossession by the Turkish state. The cemetery, a gift to the Armenian community by the Ottoman Sultan Süleyman, “stretched from the north-west of the barracks to today’s TRT building” (Bieberstein and Tataryan, 2013). In the early years of the Turkish Republic, the cemetery was expropriated by the state and its gravestones used in the construction of the stairs of Gezi Park. During the occupation, Nor Zartonk erected two pieces of symbolic gravestones, writing a line reading “You took our cemetery, you won’t have our park!” and signing it as “Turkey’s Armenians” (2013). It was undoubtedly an unsettling and yet an illuminating practice for both the members of the Armenian community and for other visitors.

Such revealing encounters were probably more commonplace in and around Gezi Park due to its peculiar atmosphere, which could not equally penetrate into other avenues of the mobilizations. Still, firsthand experience of exposure to police violence and the act of fighting it back through a riotous performance shook the minds of many protesters. “I became politically more rigid,” says a non-affiliated activist. “I used to think that we can solve issues by discussion. Previously, if ever I saw someone hurling a stone to the police, I would have said, ‘Don’t do it! They are our policemen.’ In Gezi, I for the first time experienced throwing a stone to the police. That very first stone, of course, never finds its target. You don’t even know how to throw it! But after that first time, your character changes altogether” (Interview TK6).

For many, in other words, Gezi marked a watershed in personal histories. It was an extraordinary moment which implied “the suspension, sometimes spontaneous, sometimes deliberate, of an awareness of the vulnerability of individual bodies in order to cross that threshold of fear” (Parla, 2013).
Our data on protest events between 2011 and 2013 also sketches the extraordinary nature of the Gezi Park mobilizations in terms of the diversity in action as well as a remarkable drift towards confrontation including the use of violence. Figure 2.5 and Table 2.3 both show that nearly half of the protests involved some form of deviation from the main course of action. In almost one-fourth of the events, protesters proactively or reactively resorted to violence in their fights against the riot police. From the other perspective, almost half of the events were interrupted by coercive policing instruments including the extensive use of teargas, water cannons, and rubber bullets.

Table 2.3  Selected protest characteristics and police coercion (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deviation &amp; diversity in action repertoires</th>
<th>Proactive or reactive violence by protesters</th>
<th>Coercion &amp; violence by the police</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gezi Park protests (N = 173)</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other protests, 2011-2013 (N = 3,293)</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ protest event data from Anadolu Agency
The evidence of police violence is said to have laid the groundwork for a growing empathy with the Kurdish people who had long suffered under state repression. “People asked themselves: ‘Looking at what kind of a state we got to know here, imagine the atrocities the Kurds had lived through.’ You know, one of the greatest obstacles to a peaceful resolution to the Kurdish question has been the ignorance wrapped up in the Turkish mindset. This mindset, thanks to Gezi, is breaking down” (Interview TK4). In particular, when 18-year-old Medeni Yıldırım was killed in Lice/Diyarbakır on June 28, 2013, as a result of the gendarme’s shootings at a protest against the construction of high-security military stations, the armed crackdown sparked off a wave of demonstrations in solidarity with the Kurds.

For years, people followed the Kurdish question from the mainstream media and now they realize that most of what they knew about it is not true. The demonstration for Medeni Yıldırım in Taksim was mostly attended by Turkish people. That they chanted slogans for Medeni Yıldırım was not simply a slogan commemorating a single person. I therefore believe that these were early signs of a Turkish-Kurdish rapprochement (Interview TK1).

Police violence and critical incidents such as the murder of Medeni Yıldırım certainly raised questions in the minds of some Turkish protesters who had previously followed blindly the Turkish state’s official narrative on the Kurdish question, although with still uncertain long-term effects. As a case in point, in October 2014, indignant crowds of Kurdish youngsters in Turkey rioted after ISIS launched attacks in Kobanê (a city in northern Syria next to the Turkish border). While more than forty people lost their lives throughout the riots in just a few days, manifestations of solidarity, not least in the western regions of the country, proved to be rather limited.

Unusual encounters throughout Gezi also concern the cleavage between the secularly minded and the devout (Sunni) Muslims in the country. Typically, government authorities branded Gezi as a movement by heretics, atheists, or irreligious with no respect of the values of the Sunni majority. In this sense, the engagement of anti-capitalist Muslims as an Islamic group of activists led to a peculiar achievement in bridging secular and religious rituals. While anti-capitalist Muslims were practicing Friday prayer on Taksim Square, for instance, they were encircled by a group of non-religious activists who volunteered to safeguard the prayer. On another day, just before the
beginning of one of the Islamic holy nights (kandil), Gezi participants gave each other kandil simidi – a type of sweet bagel consumed particularly on the days of kandil – as a gesture of solidarity and empathy with pious citizens. Most notably, the street iftars – a form of action that entails self-organized dinners on the streets for breaking the fast during Ramadan, and which in fact had been introduced long before Gezi against conspicuous consumption in religious rituals – turned into a widely celebrated, inclusive performance regardless of people’s faith. Few deny the innovative contribution of street iftars and other common activities to harnessing a strong sense of solidarity thanks to their essentially non-commodified and sharing logic. “Yet the daunting challenge,” warns a leading figure from the anti-capitalist Muslims, “is that secular groups are still hesitant to engage in a genuine communication with religious groups.” Pointing at the need for more intense relations in the long duration, he recalls:

[W]hen we made our first call for street iftar, a person with a Kemalist outlook approached us and said that he was very happy to join and would like to come again. Then, two women with a pro-AKP outlook said that they would not join our event in Taksim but if we organized the street iftar in Fatih (a conservative district in Istanbul), they would be willing to come. Now, street iftar brings together people from opposite poles. Eventually, however, this did not work out. The state (officials/actors), by contrast, understood the point. On the Tunnel Square the police dispersed our street iftar. Two days later, the gay pride demonstration took place on the same square. Thousands were present and the police did not intervene. The AKP sends the following message to its constituency: “What Gezi is all about, is basically organized by marginal groups, homosexuals and that’s it.” But they did not think twice about dispersing our street iftar. So what should have happened instead was that those who participated in the gay parade should have joined us in Fatih three days later and said, “Look, I am also here!” True, some pro-AKP people joined us as well but these people were not the majority. As long as this bridge will not be built, you cannot expect that the conservatives cut their ties with this government. Why didn’t they simply come to Fatih? Was it so difficult? There were about a hundred thousand people who marched at the gay parade. [...] The polarizing language of this government is so strong that it reproduces the same language on the side of the opposition (Interview TK2).

8 On the Şişhane side of the Istiklal Street.
This quote points indeed at the fluidity in the emergence of new (political) subjectivities, as embedded in the notion of subjectivities “in the making” or in a phase of “becoming.” Especially regarding the commune in the park, the most surprising element was not so much the diversity of its identities, but rather “the realization on the part of the people that their identities that were so complete and functional outside the park proved utterly inadequate during the commune. It is out of this that a long-lost feeling of solidarity and commonality visited the park, which is related not to what one is but to what one becomes” (Eken, 2014).

The experimentation with alternative imaginaries of politics, most strikingly through neighborhood forums, might also have worked as critical junctures in shaping new subjectivities. First of all, the forums as open stages to speak up and to listen with reverence embody a claim for civility, displaying “a new public culture that is respectful of the other, and careful in the rhetoric of the movement” (Göle, 2013). Secondly, the forum experiment has led to an affinity with extra-parliamentary politics whereby many participants felt empowered. As one of our interviewees observes, referring to the forums and neighborhood solidarity networks, doing “[p]olitics on a high level is not the only option available. They do not need a political party or association to solve problems. They can get organized without a hierarchical structure” (Interview TK7). The transformative effects aside, these alternative political imaginaries also promoted decentralized, locally self-organized, horizontal forms of democratic governance in society.

Here as well, the degree of consolidation of the Gezi spirit is still an open question. Established patterns of political organization, discourses of dissent, and relations of domination did not simply wither away. More often than not, these patterns prevailed over the routes of political experimentation that were supposedly emancipatory and progressive in language and practice. In turn, while attracting utmost interest among old and new generations of activists as well as the formerly apolitical, new political experimentations also created frustrations, and according to some observers, even paved the way for the decline of the movement. As one of them noted, the role of the more structured organizations, with their attempts at cooptation, had negative effects on the protest developments:

The fact that people could speak up was exactly what the feminist movement considers as a form of politics: women could speak up. There were stages where even people without organizational affiliation could come up from their neighborhoods and vocalize their views. On the other hand, I got really furious to witness the discourse held by the socialist
movement. This was a critical juncture for me. I think that they failed to understand the whole idea of Gezi. They are obsessed with maintaining their power and leadership as a political group. They wanted to speak on behalf of others. They were unwilling to leave space to individual voices. They were very judgmental in many ways. For instance, there was a Kemalist woman who came there on her own initiative. What they did was label her as nationalist, even racist. Such a form of politics made me furious. I realized, once again, that they lack a sense of participatory politics which allows people space. On the contrary, they wanted everything for themselves (Interview TK9).

Some formerly enthusiastic participants were also estranged by organizational rivalry and by the content of discussions at the forums, which at times concentrated on issues of rather low interest for the neighborhood inhabitants. This might have nourished “a movement culture where discussion for the pleasure of discussion can trump the formation of programmatic goals” (Tuğal, 2013).

In fact, they [the forums] were perfect occasions to recruit new members. And whenever someone from a particular organization was on the stage, their supporters or fellows applauded them with passion. Yogurtcu Forum, for instance, turned into a feminist forum. Besides, people started to discuss issues that do not concern ordinary people’s lives. For example, having a squat is not a priority issue for many residents. But focusing on such issues alienated many people. For me, for that matter, forums lost their appeal (Interview TK6).

In brief, while at the individual level and in the short term protest emerged as eventful, the potential for the consolidation of the Gezi spirit needs time to be assessed.

2.5 Conclusion

The June 2013 uprisings in Turkey were rooted in long-lasting urban struggle against the municipal plan to transform Taksim Square in Istanbul. The protests were initially spearheaded by young and educated urbanites with high cultural capital, and yet they eventually turned into a socially diverse and spatially diffuse form of mass mobilization. It was not a class revolt as such, but class politics was certainly embedded in the motives and political
articulations of some, if not all, participants. Above all, a mass outcry at government’s political encroachments into particular lifestyles, values, and orientations merged with growing public resentment against the same government’s aggressively neoliberal policies in the urban space. The police crackdown on the peaceful resistance in the Park put flesh on the bones of the authoritarian face of the AKP rule personified in Erdoğan’s leadership, and it paradoxically united overlapping and conflicting arrays of opposition to his rule.

Gezi certainly came as a surprise, but it did not come from nowhere. Social discontent had already taken different forms, including mass demonstrations, prior to the uprisings in June. What Gezi unexpectedly achieved is to mobilize large numbers of non-affiliated crowds without an activist background or protest record together with those groups and organizations that had been known as the usual suspects of contentious politics in Turkey. The many Gezi-inspired occupations of public places all over the country contributed to intensify relations.

In terms of its consequences, there are many questions yet to be addressed in view of future developments. The Gezi uprisings clearly unleashed transformative effects, at least on an individual level, and set the ground for the formation of new political subjectivities. Unusual but revealing encounters with violent state apparatuses, with the other and unknown dissidents on the street as well as experimentations with alternative imaginaries of politics such as neighborhood assemblies empowered people, broke routines, and let the previously unthinkable emerge. Yet, old subjectivities have not been altogether replaced by new ones, as established norms of political organization, discourse, and stigmatization did not disappear. Hence, new subjectivities, if any, are at best in the making or in a process of becoming. They are still “in formation” – a “work in progress,” “an interactive and shared definition reduced by several individuals and groups that is continually negotiated, tested, modified and confirmed” (Özkırımlı, 2014). While Gezi was cleared by the police, the Gezi spirit, as its sympathizers would name it, survived, but not unchallenged.
List of interviews

TK1 member of Emek Partisi. Istanbul, October 21, 2014
TK2 member of Kapitalizmle Mücadele Derneği. Istanbul, October 24, 2014
TK3 member of Halkların Demokratik Partisi. Istanbul, April 16, 2015
TK4 member of DISK. Istanbul, April 8, 2015
TK5 member of Turkish Youth Union. April 12, 2015
TK6 Independent activist. Istanbul, April 14, 2015
TK7 member of Sosyalist Feminist Kolektif. Istanbul, April 16, 2015

9 Emek Partisi [Labor Party] is a left-wing political party that is a member of International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (ICMLPO).
10 Kapitalizmle Mücadele Derneği [Association for Fighting Capitalism] was initially formed by an activist group known as the Anti-Capitalist Muslims. They challenge mainstream interpretations and practices of Islam which, in their view, is reduced to a set of rituals, fraught with a consumerist attitude and alienated from ideas of social justice. Later on, Anti-Capitalist Muslims moved into the associational realm.
11 Halkların Demokratik Partisi [People's Democratic Party] is a left-wing political party and for the time being the main parliamentary actor of the Kurdish political movement in Turkey. It was preceded by a number of pro-Kurdish political parties which had been outlawed by the state on allegations of terrorism and ties with the PKK. Recently, the leading figures of the Kurdish political movement set forth a new agenda with a larger public appeal in the population, not limited to claiming to represent the Kurdish people. On the top of this agenda lies the idea to promote local self-governance and democratic autonomy, but also to address various issues related to ecology, labor, women's rights, and LGBTQ issues. As a result, they founded Halkların Demokratik Kongresi [People's Democratic Congress], a broad left-wing alliance. The HDP is in one sense a by-product of the HDK.
12 Acronym for Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu [Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions], one of the oldest labor confederations in Turkey. The Confederation was banned after the military coup in 1980 and legally resumed its activities in 1992.
13 Halkevleri [People's Houses] is a socialist association with a large network in the whole country. The association runs a broad spectrum of activities including housing, education, health, women's rights, the disabled, urban and environmental issues, and working life.
14 İstanbul Kent Savunması [Istanbul Urban Defense] is a coordinated body of urban movements, neighborhood forums and associations, environmental organizations, and solidarity networks that arose from the Gezi Park resistance. For more information, see its inauguration at www.yeniyol.org/istanbul-kent-savunmasi-kurulusunu-ilan-etti/, accessed on 08.09.2015.
15 Sosyalist Feminist Kolektif [Socialist Feminist Collective] is an anti-capitalist feminist organization in Turkey.
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