THE GEZI PROTESTS: BETWEEN CARNIVALESQUE AND PREFIGURATION

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ABSTRACT

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This study analyzes the protest forms and practices of social movements built on the practice of occupying public spaces between 2011 and 2013 in the backdrop of the snowballing protest wave that began in 2008. It first traces the concept of carnival in the Bakhtinian perspective to understand how carnivalesque forms in squares revitalize everyday life in festival form and transform it into an opposition dynamic. Second, it examines the prefigurative practices in the squares to explore how prefiguration provides certain mechanisms for producing and reproducing desired social relations. I argue that the articulation of carnivalesque with prefiguration opens cracks since new forms of social relations, new ways of doing, and new ways of life have been established by the accumulation and proliferation of carnivalesque and prefigurative forms. In that regard, I focus on the Gezi Protests to discuss how these protest repertoires negate existing social relations and create alternative visions. This study mainly argues that intertwined spatiality and temporality of carnivalesque and prefiguration as cracks produce a time-space beyond existing relations by reconfiguring everyday life in a way that creates new political possibilities.

ÖZ

GEZİ PROTESTOLARI: KARNAVALESK VE PREFİGÜRASYON ARASINDA

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Bu çalışma, 2008 yılında başlayan ve çığ gibi büyüyen protesto dalgasının arka planında, 2011-2013 yılları arasında kamusal alan işgali pratiği üzerine inşa edilen toplumsal hareketlerin protesto biçimlerini ve pratiklerini analiz etmektedir. İlk olarak, meydanlardaki karnavalesk formların gündelik hayatı festival formunda nasıl canlandırdığını ve bir muhalefet dinamiğine dönüştürdüğünü anlamak için Bakhtinci perspektifte karnaval kavramının izini sürüyor. İkinci olarak, meydanlardaki prefigüratif pratikleri inceleyerek prefigürasyonun arzulanan toplumsal ilişkilerin üretimi ve yeniden üretimi için nasıl belirli mekanizmalar sağladığını araştırıyor. Karnavalesk ile prefigürasyonun eklemlenmesinin çatlaklar açtığını, çünkü bu karnavalesk ve prefigüratif biçimlerin birikmesi ve çoğalmasıyla yeni toplumsal ilişki biçimlerinin, yeni yapma biçimlerinin ve yeni yaşam biçimlerinin oluştuğunu savunuyorum. Bu bağlamda, Gezi Protestolarına odaklanarak bu protesto repertuarlarının mevcut toplumsal ilişkileri nasıl olumsuzlamakla kalmayıp aynı zamanda alternatif vizyonlar yarattığını tartışıyorum. Bu çalışma temel olarak, karnavalesk ve prefigürasyonun iç içe geçmiş mekânsallığı ve zamansallığının,

gündelik hayatı yeni siyasi olasılıklar yaratacak şekilde yeniden yapılandırarak mevcut ilişkilerin ötesinde bir zaman-mekân ürettiğini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: toplumsal hareketler, Gezi Protestoları, karnavalesk, prefigürasyon

It is dedicated to my nephew Efe.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Justice and Development Party
EZLN	Zapatista Army of National Liberation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
OWS	Occupy Wall Street
WTO	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Objective of the Study

In the wake of the 2010s, a wave of uprisings expanded worldwide by organizing around the parallel demands and employing similar repertoires of protests. Della Porta and Mattoni (2014, p. 2) contend that recent events should be seen as a part of an enormous wave of protests that started in Iceland in 2008 and spread to other nations in subsequent years rather than focusing on a single protest. Successively, students in London staged protests in the first year of the 2010s in response to an increase in the payment required for tuition. In 2011, the governments in Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen collapsed due to the Arab Spring. Other events that grabbed news that year included the Indignados movement in Spain and the anti-austerity movement in Greece. These struggles eventually led to the formation of Occupy Wall Street in the United States. The demonstrations in Gezi Park in Turkey and Brazil in 2013 appeared to have originated from the same sources as its progenitors. Demands for democracy against authoritarian tendencies in state formations, demands for equal distribution of incomes, demand for increasing the incomes of subordinate classes, and environmental problems can be considered some of their common roots (Korotayev et al., 2018). In addition, what makes this wave unique is its distinguishing feature, primarily characterized by the movement of the squares (Clement, 2016).

This wave of protests is particularly striking because of the typical traits they share. Sitrin and Azzelini describe the uniqueness and commonalities of this cycle of protest as follows:

> Something new is happening—something new in content, depth, breadth, and global consistency. Societies around the world are in movement. Since the end of 2010 millions of people have been taking to the streets in cities, towns, and villages—assembling in plazas, occupying parks, buildings, homes, and schools. There is a growing global movement of refusal—and simultaneously, in that refusal, a movement of creation (Sitrin & Azzellini, 2014, pp. 5–6).

They are opposed to the established system, but at the same time, they intend to put up alternatives to it. Therefore, this new wave of protest has brought a new form of activism and political opposition that is different from traditional politics and political protest. Thus, one of the most cited studies is that of Donatella della Porta (2015), who considers these movements to be the "newest" sort of social movement, distinguishing them qualitatively from previous social movements. In this context, this thesis aims to analyze their protest repertoires to understand the new forms of activism and political opposition of these social movements.

Repertoires of protest in social movements have been primarily developed around Charles Tilly's famous concept of repertoires of contention (Tilly, 2008). The repertoire in social movements studies is an umbrella term covering a wide range of "arrays of performances that are currently known and available within some set of political actors" (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p. 14). Tilly (1986) generally defines repertoires of contention as the means and strategies of collective action used by a social group to make different demands and claims on another group or individual. That is, a repertoire can be understood as the set of strategies and tactics that a particular social movement chooses to use. This definition includes tactics and strategies such as riots, strikes, demonstrations, barricades, sit-ins, petitions, demonstrations, internet-based calls to action, occupation of public spaces or petitions, as well as the equipment such as flags, masks, or costumes that protesters choose and use during collective action (Givan et al., 2010). The conceptual framework that Tilly and Tarrow developed is founded on the idea of historical continuity. The kinds of protests mentioned previously are, without a doubt, present throughout history. Nevertheless, repertoires are capable of developing over time and are flexible to new ideas.

In this given context, della Porta (2013, pp. 2–3) identifies four features of contemporary protest repertoires that have changed. In the first place, demonstrations are taking on a more worldwide flavor, as evidenced by actions directed against international political organizations and global days of action. The second is the shift that has occurred in the nature of protests as a direct result of the progression of communication technology and the rise of the internet. Thirdly, "the modern repertoire of protest had tended to adopt forms of action which reflect a particular logic of action" (Della Porta, 2013, p. 2). The logic of action referred to here can be thought of as the principle of experimenting and experiencing the desired social relations during protests rather than a more result-orientated form of protest. In the following sections, we will explore this logic concerning prefigurative politics. Finally, with reference to Jasper (1997), she emphasizes the '*taste*' generated during the realization of protest practices. She states that diversity and subjectivity have come to the fore through more playful and spontaneous protest practices. In the next section, we will consider this aspect as a joyful affirmation in a carnivalesque context.

It can be stated that the logic and forms of protest create repertoires with specific characteristics. These repertoires include the legacy of previous demonstrations. In this respect, before examining the logic and forms of protest in contemporary social movements, it would be helpful to overview the historical course of social movements briefly. The historical trajectory of social movements can be divided into four phases, considering their social basis, values, and organizational structure (della Porta, 2015, p. 53). The first phase is the old social movements covering the 19th and mid-20th centuries. According to the social movements' literature, old social movements are working class, political party, and trade union oriented. Traditionally, it has been argued that old social movement refers to labor movements organized within bureaucratic unions and political parties, emphasizing economic redistribution and economic demands (Nash, 2009, pp. 87–90). The struggle of these movements was aimed at seizing state power and, ultimately, achieving a proletarian revolution. The primary forms of protest adopted were strikes, mass demonstrations, and marches.

The second phase is the new social movements from 1968 to the 1990s. During the 1960s, several social movements came to the forefront, including civil rights, feminist, LGBTQ, and environmental movements. To comprehend and explain the processes of social protest that evolved in Europe after 1968, the concept of "new" social movements emerged. Hence, these movements were referred to as new social movements, and new social movement participants were considered a "new middle class" (Ertuğrul & Çırakman, 2016). The struggle was shaped in specific areas based on identity in this period. These movements, which had horizontal forms of organization, demanded rights and reforms related to the particular area of struggle. Practices such as mass demonstrations, petition campaigns, and sit-ins came to the fore as protest repertoires. As a result of these movements, gains have been made in areas such as women's rights, minority rights, and environmental protection.

After the 1990s, the repertoires of social movements changed as the number of people who used digital tools to communicate grew and became more common. Thus, the third phase is the Global Justice Movements, or in other words, "the movement of movements," which covers the period from the 90s to the mid-2000s and acts with anti-globalization motives. The institutionalization of neoliberal regimes worldwide has led to the emergence of anti-globalization movements. In 1994, the resistance launched by The Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in the southern region of Mexico marked a turning point for this period. They began their opposition on the day when Mexico was officially admitted into North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The EZLN has a local and flexible organizational structure with a demand for the expansion of regional autonomy. And most importantly, the Zapatistas pursued a strategy that opposed the struggle for state power in principle (Holloway, 2002). While resembling new social movements in this respect, they also had transnational support thanks to their focus on neoliberalism and their links with international civil society and human rights organizations. Hence, Hardt and Negri (2004, p. 85) argue that "the Zapatistas are the hinge between the old guerrilla model and the new model of biopolitical network structures."

The Seattle protests in 1999 against the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, and the World Social Forum, first convened in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 2001, were the starting points for creating a global network of social movements. These movements are fundamentally against neoliberal globalization, not the phenomenon of globalization itself, and claim that another globalization is possible. In this context, the essential characteristic of this period is that these movements are shaped as transnational struggles or global social movements. The main actors have emerged as plural identities, bringing together the working class, middle class, and other marginalized groups. With their network-type organizational structures, these movements have questioned neo-liberal globalization and aimed to fight for deliberative democracy (della Porta, 2015). While the protest repertoire includes the means of the action of previous periods, they have added theatrical and performance-based forms of protest to its repertoire.

Another characteristic of this period in terms of the logic and forms of protest is the fact that the carnivalesque and prefigurative practices that we will discuss in terms of the post-2008 square movements were made visible in the protest movements of this period. Carnival as a form of protest has been used to describe protest events with attractive costumes or dance and music activities. For example, the International Day of Protest that coincided with the 25th G8 summit in Cologne, Germany, on June 18, 1999, was called "Carnival Against Capital," and the main slogan of this protest action was "*Our Resistance is as Transnational as Capital*." Bogad explains the use of carnival imagery as a protest tactic in global justice movements as follows:

> [T]hese activists are attempting to deploy the ideal of carnival in a practical, experimental way on the street, to create a new, twenty first century kind of 'carnival' that is not calendrically nor spatially circumscribed or permitted by the state but declared and embodied by a movement that identifies itself as global, anti-corporate and anti-authoritarian (Bogad, 2010, p. 537)

Further, the concept of prefiguration has received more widespread attention in parallel with the growing interest in identifying the novelties of global mobilizations. Later, because of the 2010s square movements, this interest will expand. Nevertheless, prefiguration has been one of the defining features of transnational justice movements. Richard Day (2004) emphasizes the centrality of prefiguration as

a direct action in the global justice movements. For Day, practices in these movements were characterized by a "logic of affinity" based on direct actions. This logic entails "the use of tactics that not only prefigure non-hegemonic alternatives to state and corporate forms, but also create them here and now" (Day, 2004, p. 731).

The last phase, building on the legacy of global justice movements, is the social movements in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. Della Porta (2015) critiques the lack of attention to capitalist economic structures in new social movements and emphasizes their reappearance in these social movements. Della Porta contends that despite significant national distinctions, the rise of a new socioeconomic class, the so-called precariat, and its complaints create a common framework for square movement outbursts (2015, p. 26). Similarly, Özen (2015, p. 13) argues that despite some significant similarities with the conceptualization of old and new social movements, the social movements of the square differ remarkably. Although they resemble new social movements as they include social groups with different affiliations other than class, they make capitalist relations of domination and exploitation an issue similar to old social movements. For this reason, according to Özen, the most crucial feature distinguishing square movements from others is that, unlike old and new social movements, they can articulate a wide range of social demands and thus mobilize highly heterogeneous masses.

The hallmark of this global wave of protest after 2008 is the encampment in public space and the transformation of everyday life in this space to create a counter time and space. For this reason, I take these movements as square social movements and limit the scope of this study to movements categorized by square occupations. They are characterized by the occupation of the square, which contrasts with the typical demonstrations in public areas, where people congregated for brief periods to voice their complaints and demands. It is possible to say that this practice turned public spaces into political symbols (Gürer, 2019, p. 14). There is no question that reclaiming the squares as public spaces as a means of political protest is not a novel tactic. Many protest actions are associated with occupying a public space, such as the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests and the 2010 Ankara TEKEL Workers' Protest. However, what distinguishes the square movements of the 2010s is that the

occupation was more than a protest tactic. Instead of just being a place for people to gather or hold protests, squares were used to show a utopian vision of social and political relationships based on fairness and equality. In other words, squares were places where an idealized version of the society people wanted to live in was displayed in which social and political order was changed drastically.

Therefore, social movements in the 2010s created an experience of political and social transformation. What is important here is the emergence of squares as spaces where a decisive moment of rupture in the existing order takes place. Through carnivalesque and prefigurative practices, squares have become a space where individuals, freed from the constraints and rules of everyday life, can experience and express different political alternatives and subjectivities, albeit temporarily. In this sense, squares have become a laboratory where new social relations are experimented with and experienced; thus, "they must also be recognised as sites where movement repertoires are made, diffused and modified" (McCurdy et al., 2016, p. 4).

Therefore, the post-2008 protests were characterized by the occupation of squares and the transformation of everyday life, thus creating a rupture in time and space. della Porta contends that certain demonstrations have the potential to precipitate an abrupt change because, as a departure from everyday life, they attempt to make a significant impact by challenging the status quo. In this regard, she argues that this impact might be a precursor to a crack's formation. Hence, della Porta labels these movements as "eventful protests" "to indicate moments in which actions change structures rather than being constrained by them" by referencing William Sewell's concept of "eventful temporality" (2020, p. 560). This temporality and spatiality open an unusual fissure that can cause a sudden transformation in people's ideas, values, conducts, and typical political practices, thus opening a space for experimentation with these changing and emerging elements. She states that:

> Eventful protests thus reproduce, rather than just consuming, resources of solidarity and collective identification, fueling positive emotions of empowerment. During eventful protests, participants experiment with new tactics, send and receive signals about the possibility of collective action, and create and experience feelings of belonging as occasions for interactions multiply. In fact, the perception of time

accelerates, as what had seemed impossible now appears possible (Della Porta, 2020, p. 561).

Furthermore, Della Porta (2020, p. 559) argues that "some eventful protests trigger critical junctures, producing abrupt changes" to the extent that they "act as exogenous shocks, catalyzing intense and massive waves of protest." The reorganization of daily life in the occupied places appears to have produced new social relationships with time and space. This encounter with a distinct spatiality and temporality interrupts everyday routine. In this manner, a new modality of time and space is established, giving people different opportunities for relating to dominant social and political structures than they ordinarily face. Combining "eventful protest" with "critical junction," della Porta (2020) proposes to explain and comprehend this wave of protest by constructing a three-pillared structure. This structure consists of the following processes: "a sequence of processes of cracking, as the production of sudden ruptures; vibrating, as contingently reproducing those ruptures; and sedimenting, as the stabilization of the legacy of the rupture" (2020, p. 559). The cracking phase signifies the suspension of structural restraints and an unexpected, sudden outbreak of mass mobilizations. The vibration phase suggests that new political norms and social bonds were used to reproduce this rupture. The legacy of these occurrences in the present is referred to as the sedimentation phase. In line with Della Porta's framework by identifying post-2008 square social movements as eventful protests that trigger critical junctures, this thesis proposes to analyze the repertoires of this wave to comprehend the cracking and vibrating processes in squares of contemporary social movements.

Protest repertoires have been instrumental in our understanding of social movements. In this framework, it is argued that, in terms of the forms of protest and the underlying logic that shapes those forms, social movements that emerged after 2008 are distinct from both old and new social movements. In this study, I argue that carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices were essential contributors to the development of protest repertoires throughout this period. I contend that these forms and practices of contemporary social movements reconfigure everyday life in the square and produce time-space beyond existing social relations. Thus, they create a crack for new political possibilities and possible social change. Therefore, this thesis

aims to shed light on this protest wave's cracking and vibrating processes by analyzing protest forms and practices in the specific context of the Gezi Protests in relation to the other prominent social movements of the period. It is possible to claim that one of the most important events in the recent history of Turkey is the Gezi Protests. Taking the Gezi Protests as a case in the track of interpretation this thesis suggests enables us to grasp and explain the joint dynamics of protest repertoires of contemporary social movements. In this regard, the most significant contribution this study makes to the existing body of research is an analysis of the various forms and practices of protest characteristic of square social movements. While studies of the post-2008 wave's protest repertoires have identified carnivalesque and prefigurative aspects of these social movements, no study analyses how these two are articulated. Moreover, while many studies emphasize the carnivalesque atmosphere of the Gezi Protests, studies that draw attention to the prefigurative logic of the Gezi Protests are still in their maturation phase. Few studies have been conducted to determine the possible effects of prefigurative political actions in the Gezi Protests (Binbuğa Kınık, 2020; Ertuğrul, 2022; Uncu, 2022; Yumuk, 2022).

1.2. Research Questions and the Methodology

Against this background, the specific questions which drive the research are:

- What kinds of protest forms and practices are typical of square social movements, and how do they manifest themselves?
- What are the factors behind these repertoires?
- Which theoretical approach might explain these common repertoires of protest despite geographical, cultural, historical, and linguistic differences?
- What protest forms and practices characterize the Gezi Protests?

The forms and practices that emerged during the Gezi Protests were analyzed to answer these questions. In addition to linguistic and text-based tools such as graffiti, banners, and slogans, collective action practices such as direct democracy practices and communal living were analyzed. In this regard, the methodological approach taken in this study is a combined methodology based on discourse and frame analysis

(Lindekilde, 2014). With reference to Parker (1992), Lindekilde (2014, p. 198) defines discourse as "an interrelated set of texts, and the practices of their production, dissemination, and reception, which brings an object into being." According to Lindekilde, discourse analysis reveals how particular "texts" reproduce or challenge established definitions and understandings of social reality. Furthermore, frame analysis, according to Lindekilde, in the context of social movements is:

> preoccupied with how ideas, culture, and ideology are used, interpreted, and spliced together with certain situations or phenomena in order to construct particular ideative patterns through which the world is understood by audiences. (Lindekilde, 2014, p. 199)

In this respect, framing can be considered a strategic initiative that guides the activation of certain discourses and repertoires.

1.3. Outline of the Chapters

The remainder of the thesis is divided into five chapters. Following the first chapter, which serves as an introduction to the rest of the thesis, there are five additional chapters. Chapter 2 presents a detailed and critical analysis of carnivalesque forms in contemporary social movements. In this respect, the chapter starts by analyzing the historical and political texture of the carnival with reference to Bakhtin and Lefebvre. It examines the connection between carnivalesque forms and the concept of freedom, as well as the subversive nature of the carnivalesque act. Also, some of the limitations of this conception are reviewed and discussed, as well as the convenience of the carnivalesque concept to study social movements. In addition, it outlines how these carnivalesque forms of protest were detected and analyzed to show how these forms of protest appeared in contemporary social movements. It analyses the Occupy Wall Street movement, Tahrir Square, and the 2013 anti-government protests in Bulgaria and assesses the carnivalesque nature of these demonstrations. Chapter 3 presents a theoretical discussion on the concept of prefigurative politics. Recently, considerable literature has grown around the theme of prefiguration and its role in social movements. It aims to provide conceptual explanations by discussing the different conceptualizations of prefigurative politics in the literature to attest significance of this practice as a strategy or tactic of contemporary social

movements. It also examines critiques of this approach and its practical relevance for social movements. Following the definition and elaboration of the concept, prefigurative politics is exemplified in Tahrir Square, Puerta de Sol, and OWS to understand the role of prefiguration in the squares.

Chapter 4 ties together the common themes of protest repertoires and explains the articulation between carnivalesque and prefiguration. It starts by analyzing the central premises of John Holloway's theory on radical social transformation by introducing the concept of crack. Hence, this chapter describes the theoretical approach utilized in articulation between carnivalesque and prefiguration. Chapter 5 briefly reviews the backgrounds of the Gezi Park Protests and their evolution from local protest movements into the nationwide protest movement. It provides detailed analyses of protest forms and practices of the Gezi Protests. Particular emphasis has been placed on the free spaces of Taksim Square and Gezi Park and the prefiguration of a new social and political order that became collectively perceived as the desired ideal. The thesis is summarized in chapter six with a concise discussion of the key ideas and results. It also outlines the argument's limitations, possible implications, and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER 2

CARNIVALESQUE FORMS OF PROTEST: THE FIRST PILLAR OF THE SQUARE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

This chapter is comprised of two sections. It begins by concentrating on the idea and practice of carnivalesque and seeks to give a general overview of this practice's historical and philosophical context. It explores the relationship between carnivalesque forms and freedom as well as its subversive nature and provides conceptual clarifications. It also reviews and discusses some limitations of this concept and the applicability of the notion of carnivalesque to social movement studies. The second section discusses how these carnivalesque forms of protest were detected and analyzed in post-2008 social movements. It aims to explain the role of carnivalesque and show how specific examples of carnivalesque forms of protest appeared in contemporary social movements.

2.1. What is Carnivalesque?

Deleuze asserts that "tyrants require gloomy souls to govern, while mournful souls require a tyrant to sustain and spread" (Baker, 2017, p. 13). To the extent that tyrants require sadness, the first step toward freedom is dispersing the sadness. Then, what Bakhtin captures in the carnival becomes the carnivalesque laughter in Rabelais's novels due to "its indissoluble and essential relation to freedom" (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 89) against the official system's seriousness.

Bakhtin developed his carnival concept to discuss 16th-century France and the works of Francois Rabelais. Bakhtin is fascinated by medieval Europe's glorious carnivals. Bakhtin regards carnivals as liberating situations in which the church and the state's

political, legal, and ideological authority are temporarily overthrown. During this period, beliefs and rules are used as a source of ridicule, while an ecosystem for new ideas to emerge is created. By comparing medieval and Renaissance culture, Bakhtin explores the historical foundations of carnival and its significance in the context of medieval France. According to Bakhtin, the carnival is a culture based on the traditions and rituals of medieval folk culture. The carnival setting, with its entertaining spectacles, comic parodies, derogatory language and behavior, profanity, and slang, is a time of laughter and direct communication.

In *Rabelais and his World,* Bakhtin presents carnival and carnivalesque theory as a framework for interpreting the writings of Rabelais and the culture of the Renaissance in contrast to the culture prevalent in Western Europe during the Middle Ages. Bakhtin characterizes carnival as a social celebration and experience that brings people from different backgrounds together in defiance of authority and power. According to him, the carnival's principal function throughout the Middle Ages was to provide a "temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions" (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 10). Consequently, Bakhtin argues that the carnival experience can be a way to break free from oppressive social norms and normative structures in the past.

The carnival's essential feature is its laughter. Laughter is a crucial component of Bakhtin's theory; he views it as a literary, philosophical, and social concept. Bakhtin's writings trace the idea of laughter from Ancient Greece to the modern-day, emphasizing the cultural and political images associated with public laughter in carnival squares. Bakhtin affirms that "seriousness burdens us with hopeless situations, but laughter lifts us above them and delivers us from them. Laughter does not encumber man; it liberates him," thus, "everything that is truly great must include an element of laughter. Otherwise, it becomes threatening, terrible, or pompous; in any case, it is limited. Laughter lifts the barrier and cleans the path" (Bakhtin, 1986, pp. 134–135). Carnivalesque laughter becomes a critical activity because people who participate in the carnival are renewed through laughter. They make room for laughter in their rigid, dogmatic, and ordinary lives by challenging the limits of their

minds and bodies. People generate humor by eating, drinking, playing games, or running wild. Thus, this laughter and humor that emerges during carnival are critical, satirical, and creative humor. In this context, laughter becomes a transformative, healing, regenerative, destructive act with the carnival.

In this sense, Bakhtin celebrates carnivalesque humor and laughter as a critical, liberating, oppositional force that undermines and challenges the dominant ideology and order because the carnival is a sincere life organized by the people based on laughter by building its own world versus the official world. As a result, Bakhtin refers to laughter as the social consciousness of all the people, rather than the individual and subjective laughter, so that, "this is why festive folk laughter presents an element of victory not only over supernatural awe, over the sacred, over death; it also means the defeat of power, of earthly kings, of the earthly upper classes, of all that oppresses and restricts" (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 92). In other words, Bakhtin distinguishes popular laughter from individual laughter. It means that laughter is experienced collectively in the carnival square. In this sense, Bakhtin states that:

> Carnival laughter is the laughter of all the people. Second, it is universal in scope; it is directed at all and everyone, including the carnival's participants. The entire world is seen in its droll aspect, in its gay relativity. Third, this laughter is ambivalent: it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives. Such is the laughter of carnival (Bakhtin, 1984b, pp. 11–12).

In the carnival square, Bakhtin reveals four broad features of carnival life that characterize the carnival square (1984a, p. 123). The first feature is "*free and familiar contact among people*" in the carnival square. It means that life in the carnival square improves a special kind of communication that nurtures equality among those who take to the streets, and hence it endorses egalitarian values among all people in the carnival square. The second feature is "*eccentricity.*" It suggests that life in the carnival square fosters a distinct subculture of carnival life by allowing a wide variety of quirky behaviors among those who hit the streets to join in the carnival. From the outside, the carnival world, with all its unusual aspects, appears strange and inappropriate because odd and bizarre practices are purposefully exaggerated during the carnival. A third aspect of the carnival sense of the world is linked to familiarization: "*carnivalesque mésalliances.*" The carnival square invites

people from all backgrounds of life together. Thus, everyone in the carnival square becomes collectively connected and bonded. Additionally, in carnivalesque forms of expression, inappropriate pairings are frequently encountered. Opposites such as "sacred" and the "profane," the "sublime" and the "inferior," the "important" and the "insignificant," the "wise" and the "fool," which cannot come together under ordinary categories of thought, come side by side in these forms. In other words, polar opposites are purposefully juxtaposed to highlight the relative nature of the conflict between the parties. The fourth feature is *profanation*. In carnivalesque practices, desecrating the sacred, the noble, and the sublime is typical. Religious figures are inverted and discredited; all kinds of obscenity connected with the worldly and bodily are applied to the sacred; sacred narratives and sayings are parodied. Hence, the carnival square deprives the powerful of their 'sacred' authority and instead invites rebellion to them (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 123)

According to Bakhtin, the carnival is the "people's second life" within this context, which implies that through the carnival, people can transcend the conventional forms and traditions of everyday life. Carnival life is devoid of the established laws, customs, and regulations that place limits on the people. By adding the two themes of a medieval person's "official life" and "life of the carnival square," Bakhtin broadens his conception of carnival (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 129). In other words, he contends that a medieval man, in a sense, had "two lives." One was the rigidly organized official life, while the other was the briefly liberated carnival life. Carnival served as a temporary interruption of the established order, complete with all its restrictions and hierarchical roadblocks. Life briefly departs from its usual, lawful, and sanctified flow and reaches a utopian state of freedom. This freedom's fleeting and transitory character heightens the magical and radical utopian quality of the images created by the joyous environment (Bakhtin, 2001, p. 109).

In addition, Rabelais' works and the carnivalesque culture they represent are described by the grotesque in their singularity. Bakhtin states that "the essential principle of grotesque realism is degradation, that is, the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract; it is a transfer to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity" (Bakhtin, 1984b, pp. 19–20). In the carnivalesque

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context, the grotesque is inextricably linked to the destruction of the human body. Thereby, "it inscribes the indivisible wholeness and positivity of the human body in its images of sexual acts, defecation, eating, etc., and turns the world inside out with its abuses, curses, oaths, thrashing, degradation, etc." (Erdoğan, 1998, p. 16). It refers to an appreciation of ambivalence, heterogeneity, metamorphosis, and mockery instead of uniformity, homogeneity, conformity, and seriousness. In addition, grotesque realism is characterized by the violation of limits, the parodying of high spiritual values, the mocking of authority, the destruction of pretense, and the manipulation of meaning (Erdoğan, 1998, p. 16) so that "this simultaneously deconstructive and reconstructive thrust of grotesque realism is designated as, "series" constructed along the lines of the material bodily principle: series of the human body, food, copulation, and sexual indecencies, drink and drunkenness, defecation, urination, birth and death, thrashing, and clothing" (Erdoğan, 1998, p. 17).

Given the importance of the carnival, Bakhtin is not the only figure who discusses the relationship between festive forms and their subversive nature. Furthermore, Lefebvre also elaborates on the importance of festive or carnival forms for emancipation and social change. At this point, Lefebvre points out the importance of festival-carnival forms in terms of their ability to radically reconfigure everyday life. In the "ideal city," Lefebvre asserts that:

> play and games will be given their former significance, a chance to realize their possibilities; urban society involves this tendency towards the revival of the Festival, and, paradoxically enough, such a revival leads to a revival of experience values, the experience of place and time, giving them priority over trade value (Lefebvre, 1971, p. 191)

Furthermore, Highmore (2002, pp. 122–124) states that the festival is a highly significant experience for Lefebvre because "festival holds an equivocal position in the everyday" and what Lefebvre interested in the festival "is its ability to overturn cultural values for (potentially) revolutionary ends," because, festival or carnival, then, is the invalidating of traditional differences. Moreover, Highmore (2002, p. 123) enhances that "such an overturning is not the erasure of difference; rather it is a negation that generates the possibility of re-ordering difference" since, for Lefebvre,

"the carnival is a moment when everyday life is reconfigured, but this different order of things is present in everyday life itself." In this sense, Lefebvre (1991a, p. 202) notes that "festival differed from everyday life only in the explosion of forces which had been slowly accumulated in and via everyday life itself." Lefebvre (1991b, p. 54) suggests that "a social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space." Regarding the focus on daily life, Gardiner (2000, p. 97) points out that "such a transformed urban space will be based on the idea of the 'city as play,' where everyday life would become a creation of which each citizen and each community would be capable" (Lefebvre, 1971, p. 135).

Therefore, it can be assumed that Lefebvre's insights about the festival-carnival forms in the sense of its transformative aspects of everyday life and emancipatory features can be perpetuated and synthesized with the carnival notion of Bakhtin. Hence, it can be argued that carnivalesque can be a helpful tool to apprehend social movements repertoires to the extent that it transforms everyday life.

2.2. The Limitations of Carnivalesque

There have been various questions and criticisms of Bakhtin's conceptualization of carnival. Primarily, the most frequently expressed criticism is the claim that the carnival has historically functioned as a safety valve, and as such, it is an action that ensures the continuation of the existing system rather than being an experience for social change. Also, it is argued that another weakness of the idea of carnival is its temporary nature. In this context, Robinson (2011) stresses that some authors have criticized Bakhtin's interpretation of carnival for omitting its transitory nature because carnival, according to them, serves as a sort of safety valve through which individuals can vent their frustrations so that carnival eventually sustains and serves the dominant system. Therefore, in a critical framework, carnival primarily promotes the reinforcement of power rather than social liberation. Through carnival, societal tensions and disputes are alleviated. In this light, carnival might be viewed as a short-term, permitted practice designed to alleviate friction between society and power. Accordingly, Dentith states that:

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The reason for these criticisms is the argument that carnival is a legal action. As Terry Eagleton (1981, p. 148) puts it; "carnival, after all, is licensed affair in every sense, a permissible rupture of hegemony, a contained popular blow-off as disturbing and relatively ineffectual as revolutionary work of art." The licensed announcement of carnival is considered a type of social control of the low by the high, therefore serving the interests of the official culture it appears to resist. Furthermore, Sales (1983, p. 169) argues that although the carnival seems to be turning the world upside down, the fact that the king and queen are elected, even if by-election, is testimony that the status quo is preserved in some way. Thus, the spirit of carnival can serve as both a vehicle for social protest and a means of disciplining it. As a result, although it appears that a carnival turns the world upside down and, in doing so, changes social structures upside down, it can also work to maintain the established order by providing relief to the forces that threaten to overthrow it.

On the other hand, Holquist (1984) believes that carnivals should not be confused with government-sponsored holidays or festivals. Carnival is eventually sanctioned not by a church or governmental calendar but by a power that predates priests and monarchs. Furthermore, while public holidays affirm static, unchanging, and permanent social relations, carnivals suspend hierarchical ranks, norms, prohibitions, and privileges and provide a temporary liberation from the regime of sovereign truth and the established order. Furthermore, Stam summarizes the utopian possibilities of carnival:

Carnival, in our sense, is more than a party or a festival; it is the oppositional culture of the oppressed, a countermodel of cultural production and desire. It offers a view of the official world as seen from below – not the mere disruption of etiquette but a symbolic, anticipatory overthrow of oppressive social structures. On the positive side, it is ecstatic collectivity, the joyful affirmation of change, a dress rehearsal for utopia. On the negative, critical side, it is a demystificatory instrument for everything in the social formation which renders collectivity impossible: class hierarchy, sexual repression, patriarchy, dogmatism, and paranoia. (Stam, 1989, p. 95)

The use of carnivalesque forms for political purposes has also been questioned in the literature on contemporary social movements. Hammond (2020, p. 279) notes that some critics contend that rather than diverting frustration and anger into political change, it inclines protestors' energy by allowing a dissatisfied populace to vent their frustrations, so that it weakens their protest because it diminishes the seriousness of a cause. Hammond continues by stating that another criticism is that carnival provides no significant challenge to society's dominant political powers. On the opposite, it serves as a temporary "safety valve," as has historically been discussed above. Thus, it is argued that carnivalesque forms of protests are ineffective.

Considering the framework above, how can we evaluate the carnival and carnivalesque forms as a framework to understand the protest forms in social movements? In order to overcome the conceptual limitations of carnival and carnivalesque practices, Stallybrass and White suggest that the carnivalesque should be considered "as an instance of a wider phenomenon of transgression." Thus, they assert that this approach "moves us beyond the rather unproductive debate over whether carnivals are politically progressive or conservative" because "it reveals that the underlying structural features of carnival operate far beyond the strict confines of popular festivity and are intrinsic to the dialectics of social classification as such" (Stallybrass & White, 1986, p. 26).

Hence, it is plausible to claim that carnival represents "instances of transgression" by familiarizing the rehearsal for utopia by embodying the temporary suspension of ordinary life, turning the world upside-down, and reversing the hierarchies. Therefore, it is possible to claim that carnivals create "cracks" to disrupt the established order. In this sense, John Holloway (2010, p. 31) states that carnival implies a deeper meaning than just being a safety valve because carnivalesque invents temporal rupture to the extent that "the normal relations of the hierarchy are not just reversed but abolished." Thus, Holloway points out that:

> A crack, then: a moment in which relations of domination were broken and other relations created. This is a time too in which laughter breaks through the seriousness of the business of domination and submission, not individual laughter but a collective laughter that opens towards another world (Holloway, 2010, p. 31).

In this regard, it is possible to claim that the transformative aspects of carnival on everyday life throughout the resistance is an effective form of expressing political dissent and desire for social change by creating cracks since it could be "a way to action, perhaps modifying the society as a whole in the direction of social change and possible progress" (Le Roy Ladurie, 1979, p. 316).

2.3. The Role of Carnivalesque in Square Social Movements

The change of daily life into a carnival-like atmosphere during protests in public places was frequently revealed in terms of the demonstrations' features. In other words, carnivalesque imagery is employed as a resistance tactic and strategy, incorporating a critique of capitalism and a desire for radical change. This situation is adequate with Bakhtin's notion of the carnival since its humorous forms stood against the severe and strict tone of the church and feudal culture. Therefore, the carnival offered a critique of high culture and a utopian vision of inversion of social hierarchy. Regarding the carnivalesque manner, by tracing the roots of the carnivalesque back to medieval ritual feasts that sanctioned and celebrated the destruction of order and authority, Bakhtin defines the concept of carnival and its subversive, alternative, participatory, material, and transgressive characteristics. Accordingly, it is asserted that carnivalesque laughter "builds its own world versus the official world, its own church versus the official church, its own state versus the official state." (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 8).

In this framework, festive and entertaining activities have recently played an increasingly central role in street protests, particularly during the 1990s and early 2000s. Several contemporary protest movements have staged carnivalesque acts in this case. In certain respects, the 1999 anti-World Trade Organization protests in Seattle can be described as carnivalesque, where carnivalesque protest forms were used extensively. The protests were marked by colorful costumes, massive puppets, performers and marching bands, and activist groups dressed as sea turtles and butterflies. The ambiance at these kinds of demonstrations is that of a carnival. Furthermore, the Carnival against Capital, which took place in London on June 18, 1999, was the first significant demonstration to refer to itself as a carnival in recent

history. It was planned by the British anti-globalization organization Reclaim the Streets in conjunction with anti-globalization demonstrations worldwide called by the international network People's Global Action during the G-8 summit conference in Cologne, Germany (Hammond, 2020, p. 269). Moreover, the carnivalesque form of protests, such as creating a carnivalesque atmosphere in a square, extensive use of humor aligned with carnivalesque laughter, subversion of authority, etc., continued to increase after 2010.

Before examining the examples of social movements in the 2010s where protesters used carnivalesque forms of protest, some characteristic features of carnivalesque protest forms and how these forms are determined as an opposition dynamic will be revealed. In this context, St John (2008, p. 167) examines the characteristics and recent history of the carnivalesque forms to reveal the contemporary significance of carnivalized forms of protest. To conceptualize the carnivalesque form of protest, St John (St John, 2008, p. 168) uses the term "protestival," which, according to him, provides "a useful heuristic for contemporary events simultaneously negative/positive, transgressive/progressive, aesthetic/instrumental." He adds that the carnivalesque form of protests, which is mobilized by the alter-globalization movement, is an innovative response to the traditional protest forms by making power visible and displaying symbolic challenges to the extent that it is a polyvalent tactic encompassing the values of diversity, creativity, decentralization, horizontality, and direct action (St John, 2008, p. 168).

In this manner, Bruner (2005, p. 138) explores carnivalesque protest forms and their relationship to progressive public transgression by delving into the political potentials of carnival and carnivalesque protest in order to identify the essential circumstances for these forms. Accordingly, Bruner contends that, since political corruption impairs state actors' sense of humor, one of the most successful ways to combat state corruption, at least in specific contexts, would be through the imaginative utilization of carnivalesque protest. In this context, Bruner (2005, p. 140) argues that "a political carnival is not only about the temporary suspension of the rules of everyday life but the intentional inversion of the normal order."

The deliberate reversal of the established order for various potential goals, such as emancipating oneself from the constraints of everyday life and enforcing progressive political reform, is another aspect of political carnival, according to Bruner. Thus, by allowing individuals to enter a liminal space of freedom by inverting hierarchies, the carnivalesque expression of protest might ultimately serve a much broader purpose. This is mainly because the carnivalesque appearance allows a space for critique that otherwise would not be present in usual society. For this reason, Bruner (2005, pp. 140–141) underlines that "during carnival, people replace the everyday world with a symbolic/utopian world, and the "truth" of that utopian world becomes a real existing force." Also, Bruner (2005, p. 139) summarizes that Stallybrass and White (1986, pp. 1–26) defined the carnivalesque forms as having the following characteristics and functions: "(1) a potent, populist, critical inversion of all official words and hierarchies; (2) the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions; (3) positive degradation and humiliation and an attitude of creative disrespect; and (4) a temporary retextualizing of social formations that exposes their "fictive" foundations."

Carnivalesque humor used as a tactic and a means of peaceful resistance is another one of the social movements' most recognizable characteristics. In this sense, Janjira Sombatpoonsiri (2015) summarizes three features of how carnivalesque humor works in protest. For her, forms of humor such as satire and parody subvert the propaganda discourse of rulers by taking it over and adapting and reconstructing it in a ridiculous way that undermines its original purpose. That is, humor destroys and then reconstructs it ridiculously. In this respect, it functions as a reversal. In this context, humor becomes not only an element to be entertained but also a means of resistance that harms power. Second, carnivalesque events can change the mood of a demonstration from hostility to joy. That is why humor increases the sustainability of the protest by providing a playful atmosphere. For example, this emotional shift can persuade security personnel trying to prevent the protest from refraining from intervening, thus negating the government's excuse for intervention. Third, carnivalesque forms serve as a metaphor for participants' liberation from oppression. This metaphor can raise awareness of the possibilities for changing the status quo or

social relations and encourage activists to make them a reality (Sombatpoonsiri, 2015, p. 2).

In the light of the above considerations and characteristics, it is argued that carnival-festival forms offer a creative tactic and strategy as a mode of social protest because it performs "as political action, as a festive celebration, as cathartic release, as wild abandonment of the status quo, as networking tool, as a way to create a new world." (Ainger et al., 2003, p. 180). At this point, we will examine a few cases from contemporary social movements in which particular dynamics of everyday life are mobilized in a festive-carnival form to create a vibrant opposition dynamic. Against this background, the Gezi Protests will be under focus in the last chapter.

Bogad explores the carnivalesque style of protest utilized by global justice movements in this setting. Using the term "tactical carnival," Bogad investigates the deployment of carnivalesque protest forms. According to Bogad (2010, p. 542), the tactical carnival is an international performance experience "that has developed as a tactic in the toolbox of the burgeoning global justice movement." The tactical carnival offers a cheerful, interactive, semi-anonymous, and relatively secure venue for the reversal and subversion of power, while also mobilizing an experimental approach in which new methods of playing with and around power can be tested. An experimental strategy tries to develop less evident and predictable ways for individuals, organizations, and spectators to participate in public demonstrations. Many creative practices are used to combat fear and anxiety, for example, during conflicts where police presence is high (Bogad, 2010, p. 542). In this context, Bogad (2010, p. 547) contends that rejecting more conventional and structured forms of social movement protest is a fundamental component of this tactical carnival approach. Rather than occupying public space through standard uniform marching and chanting, the goal is to liberate it through innovation. In this sense, one of the critical goals of the carnivalesque type of protest is to experiment with transforming public space into a more open and enjoyable environment for protest and direct action.

Occupy Wall Street (OWS) was one of the most notable social movements that emerged during the wave of protests that characterized the 2010s. OWS was started in the center of the U.S. financial system and spread to other cities in 2011. The demonstrators who occupied Zuccotti Park are protesting growing inequality and the power of financial institutions. As Pickerill and Krinsky (2012, p. 279) contend; "it was the moment when resistance to the inequalities of capitalism finally emerged: a tipping point in which the unfairness of bank bailouts juxtaposed against rising personal poverty triggered a moment of clarity of the absurdity of the current economic and political system." In this sense, "We Are the 99 Percent" indicates these problems creatively.

In fact, carnivalesque imagery and language in the 2011 OWS protests are distinct aspects of protests (Hammond, 2020; Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012; Tancons, 2014). Similarly to Bogad's tactical carnival, Hammond (2020, p. 266) distinguishes "communal carnival," which refers to Bakhtin's carnival elaboration, and the "intentional carnival" employed for political ends in contemporary social movements. According to Hammond (2020, p. 266), the intentional carnival is a progression from communal carnival in that it attempts to persuade people's political message while simultaneously appealing to the participants' sense of humor and entertainment. Hammond analyzes the OWS movement from a communal and intentional carnival perspective, proving that the movement embodies both aspects.

Moreover, Hammond scrutinizes the different protest demonstrations as examples of intentional carnival performances. For example, he examines the occupation of the Bank of America branch wherein a small number of occupants who had lost their home to foreclosure moved their stuff into a bank to live there for a while. According to Hammond, this move demonstrates the irony of the government's support for the wicked while the innocent was penalized simultaneously. The difficulties of people who have lost their houses due to bank failures are brought to the forefront by the protestors in this manner. Hence, Hammond (2020, p. 274) suggests that this action "subverted the logic of capitalism with a different logic" because, in this way, protesters posit that even if we do not live in banks, we rely on them to help us get

housing; if this is the case, when the bank removes our home, we must go directly to the bank to obtain refuge.

Additionally, Hammond (2020) affirms that principles such as horizontality, mutual help, and prefiguration were embodied in the OWS protests. The concept of horizontality signified the commitment that everyone shared authority equally and that no one was given a privileged leadership position. Food, tents, and other services were provided at no cost to everyone because of donations and volunteer efforts from the public. Horizontality and mutuality were supposed to serve as models for the social interactions that will prevail in an emancipated society of the future, and they attempted. As a result, Hammond (2020, p. 272) argues that the occupation not only confronted the capitalist system at its core but also attacked the capitalist ethos of possessive individualism. People came to the occupy, either as full-time inhabitants or as visitors, to engage in the act of defiance against established customary limits on the use of public space. These aspects served as the foundation for the pleasure of involvement and encouraged people to embody the carnivalesque atmosphere because "interaction was festive" (2020, p. 272).

The appearance of the carnivalesque form of protest expressing political dissent is also a prominent aspect of Arab Spring. Throughout the uprisings, central urban squares such as Avenue Habib Bourguiba in Tunis, Maidan al-Tahrir in Cairo, Martyrs' Square in Libya, or the Pearl Square in Bahrain are occupied by protestors. The fact that everyday life here has experienced a drastic change creates a new reality for people. For instance, Bayat (2017, pp. 114–116) describes the everyday life in Tahrir Square by emphasizing situations such as collective decision-making, the setting up of makeshift tents to house those who spend the night, the socialization of young men and women together, helping Muslim and Christians each other in worship, taking care of food, resting places and the like together, those young couples having their weddings here and spending their honeymoon in that square, and transcendence of gender, religious, and class divides at least temporarily. At this point, Bayat (2017, p. 115) states it was "a carnival of conviviality and fun, where people enjoyed the magical energy, the light and sound of those intimate and extraordinary moments." In this context, Bayat considers that the large banner

"Welcome to the Land of Liberty" at the entrance of Tahrir Square denotes "entry into a different space and social existence," which is characterized by "becoming a microcosm of the alternative order the revolutionaries seemed to desire" involving the features of democratic administration, nonhierarchical organizations, communal decision making, self-help, collaboration, and altruism.

Accordingly, Damir- Geilsdorf and Milich (2020, pp. 10–12) argue that occupying these squares represents a considerable symbolic power due to forming the new, utopian reality of a world-shattering moment in the backdrop of "carnivalesque festivities." They assert that squares "were not only converted into forums for mass organization and mobilization but also became complex spaces of aesthetic production and democratic conversation, providing opportunities to unlearn civil obedience, rehearse egalitarian and democratic practices and acquire revolutionary capacities." In this sense, the carnivalesque form of protest "has led to the rise of new forms of articulation of dissent and political criticism through the creation of counter-public spaces" (Damir-Geilsdorf & Milich, 2020, p. 11).

Furthermore, anti-government protests in Bulgaria are another movement characterized by carnivalesque forms. In 2013, anti-government protests in Bulgaria were started because of abnormally high electricity bills. The protests soon grew into a nationwide uprising, including government-granted monopolies, austerity measures, poverty and unemployment, government corruption, and the general failure of the democratic system (Stoyanova, 2018; Trifonov, 2017). In this context, Trifonov (2017) explores the carnivalesque form of protest involvement in the 2013 anti-government street protests in Bulgaria in order to deliberate the role of carnivalesque performances as an alternative way for democratic protest and dissent. According to the author, the protests in Bulgaria were a carnivalesque response to the policies of an ostensibly democratic state aimed at suppressing the people's voices. Through carnivalesque forms, they have symbolically reversed these policies. In this sense, Trifonov builds his study on carnivalesque protest performances and iconic protest images in the context of social movement rhetoric. As a result, Trifonov (2017, pp. 237–240) shows how the carnivalesque enables activists to transcend the norms of democratic dissent in their rallies against government tyranny.

Within this framework, Trifonov explores the critical events and moments that characterize the Bulgarian protests of 2013. According to Trifonov, demonstrations' visuals and performative elements exemplify what Mikhail Bakhtin called the carnivalesque. As part of their ritualized inversion of Bulgarian political reality, activists demonstrated their dissatisfaction with the existing rituals and norms of political engagement in a system that maintained political oppression and corruption practices by utilizing the carnivalesque form. Because of the sociopolitical atmosphere in Bulgaria's public sphere, the 2013 carnivalesque performances of protest served a rhetorical purpose by enacting a new form of democratization that gave voice to those who otherwise would not have one; thus, Trifunov (2017) argues that this is because the traditional forms of democratic dissent are ignored, invalidated, and rejected by the regime. Therefore, in situations where conventional forms of protest are inadequate or suppressed, the creative and alternative forms provided by carnivalesque forms give people a different possibility to express their discontent and reactions.

Overall, the primary goal of this chapter was to dissect the theory and practice of a carnivalesque form of protest from various perspectives by providing an overview of the carnival and its appearance in social movements as a form of political criticism and resistance. In this regard, it first traces the concept of carnival in the Bakhtinian perspective synthesized with Lefebvre's arguments about festive forms. After that, some of the criticisms and limits raised about carnival and carnivalesque forms as a mode of social protest were reviewed. Lastly, the role of the carnivalesque form of protest in OWS, Arab Spring, and Bulgaria's anti-governmental protest is evaluated to detail how these carnivalesque dynamics are determined. Thus, carnivalesque forms are a crucial aspect of contemporary square social movements to the extent that they revitalize everyday life in festival form and transform it into an opposition dynamic by creating cracks.

CHAPTER 3

PREFIGURATIVE POLITICS: THE SECOND PILLAR OF THE SQUARE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

This chapter aims to reveal prefigurative dynamics in contemporary social movements, especially in the square movements. In this context, this chapter firstly offers a theoretical discussion on the concept of prefigurative politics to lay the groundwork for interpreting different prefiguration claims that rest on the politics of social change in contemporary social movements. It aims to provide conceptual clarifications to recognize this practice's essential and valuable components as a strategy or tactic of contemporary social movements. Additionally, certain drawbacks of this strategy are examined, as well as the practical significance for social movements. After defining and deepening the concept, prefigurative politics will be discussed concerning three cases that emerged after 2008 to understand what roles prefiguration plays in social movements.

3.1. What is Prefiguration?

It is plausible to argue that contemporary social movements reflect the characteristics of prefigurative politics through here-and-now practices, creating horizontal orientation by using direct-democracy methods, developing new social relations by creating and practicing more egalitarian forms of commitment, forming counter-institutions, and transforming everyday life experimentally (Dixon, 2014; van de Sande, 2015; Yates, 2020). In this context, in addition to the carnivalesque form of protest, it is argued that the appearance of prefigurative politics in terms of how movements bring equality, solidarity, democracy, and cooperation into practice is another prominent aspect of the square social movements in the last decade.

The terms prefiguration or prefigurative politics is one of the central topics discussed in the literature of social movements studies in the last years (Yates, 2020). In its simplest terms, prefigurative politics are forms of organization and social relations that attempt to reflect the desired future society in the here and now. Even though prefiguration is frequently regarded as a new way of undertaking the political activity and is increasingly being used to analyze contemporary social movements, the concept has been used since the 70s in the context of social movements. In this regard, prefiguration was initially defined by Carl Boggs in a 1977 article, which is considered one of the earliest examples of the term. Boggs elaborates on the prefiguration as a non-instrumental political strategy and explains as:

> By "prefigurative," I mean the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal (Boggs, 1977a, p. 100).

It can be argued that prefiguration is considered a political strategy regarding social change within this framework. In addition, Yates argues that conversations concerning prefigurative politics have developed through time. While it is used as a label for the particular movements in the 1990s or a description of Left strategy in the 1970s and 1980s, the literature tends to describe prefigurative politics as protest events and political orientation towards action in recent years (2020, p. 9). More importantly, Yates (2015, p. 18) underlines that "the breadth and flexibility of prefiguration have produced a variety of usages and meanings which detract from its potential as a theoretical concept for understanding political action."

In this context, it is highly essential to scrutinize the concept itself to acquire a better understanding of prefigurative politics because there are various usages and meanings of prefiguration. Van de Sande (2019, p. 228) states that four different frameworks of prefiguration as a radical political practice in contemporary social movements literature can be determined. Here, two important points need to be made regarding prefigurative politics before delving into the details of different conceptualizations. First, these different approaches may overlap and contradict each other in certain respects. Secondly, even though prefigurative politics is considered

anarchist and leftist radical political activity, it should be noted that prefiguration can be seen in the right-wing or conservative political agenda.

In this regard, according to van de Sande, the first conceptualization of prefiguration is referred to as a *futur antérieur* which roughly means "a representation of the future in the present that can only be recognized from a retrospective point of view" (2019, p. 228) In fact, this framework is primarily concerned with its early Christian theological relevance, which is also underlined by Gordon (2018) in his discussion of 'recursive prefiguration.' In this sense, it is argued that this notion was initially used to explain how certain events, persons, or actions in the Old Testament foreshadowed related events, persons, or activities in the New Testament and Christ's story (van de Sande, 2019, pp. 228–229). In this vein, van de Sande contends that this previous usage continues to connect with modern uses because contemporary social movement practices predict a future world in a similar vein to the extent that practices and organizational structures might be viewed as manifestations of a world that has yet to be realized.

In this respect, van de Sande proposes that this connection might be understood in light of Gordon's reference to 'recursive prefiguration' as a way of thinking about the relationship. Gordon explores the term's conceptual genealogy in this regard and indicates that Christian theology is one of the term's historical roots. In this context, Gordon (2018, p. 525) explains prefiguration in terms of Christian theology "as a *recursive* temporal framing in which events at one time are interpreted as a *figure* pointing to its *fulfillment* in later events, with the figure cast in the model of the fulfillment." In this way, it is reasonable to assume that this framework presupposes the existence of a planned future that must be foreseen in the present. Namely, recursive prefiguration requires a predefined future condition that has been established in the past and will be established again in the future. In other words, "certain events, practices, or persons may later be understood to have prefigured their future realizations or incarnations" (van de Sande, 2019, p. 228). Prefiguration is merely a blessing of this ideal because what is to be accomplished in the future has already been clearly outlined. The current course of activity and what is intended to be accomplished in the future appear to be qualitatively equivalent. In this regard, it

does not result in a fresh outlook on the future. On the contrary, it restates what has already occurred and what will happen. Thus, in this interpretation, recursive prefiguration suggests a recursion and repetition rather than forming novel and creative understandings and dispositions toward the future.

Furthermore, van de Sande states that the second conceptualization embraces prefiguration "as a moment of *kairos* that interrupts chronological time and makes past, present, and future collide with each other in the here and now" (2019, p. 231). Here, it would not be wrong to assert that time is understood as more than a linear and quantifiable chronological order that gradually unfolds. More precisely, it is perceived as a rupture with this chronological order. As a result, prefiguration is conceived "as a moment at which the temporal distinction between different events in the past, present and future completely disappears" (van de Sande, 2019, p. 228).

Furthermore, van de Sande follows the development of this theme in recent literature. He cites Marianne Maeckelbergh (2011) and Dan Swain (2019) as those who have contributed to the definition of modern practices prefiguration in this sense. For instance, Maeckelbergh (2011, p. 4) underlines that "practicing prefigurative politics means removing the temporal distinction between the struggle in the *present* and a goal in the *future*; instead, the struggle and the goal, the real and the ideal, become one in the present." Besides, in his article, Swain (2019) distinguishes two broad types to define how activists engage in prefigurative politics: 'ends-guided' and 'ends-effacing' prefiguration. Whereas the first one "seeks to match action in the present with long distant and reasonably specific ends," the other "shifts focus in the present and emphasize how ends and means ought to be seen as of a kind" (Swain, 2019, p. 3). The ends-effacing prefiguration highlights exactly the conceptualization that Sande is trying to convey in this manner because "ends-effacing prefiguration is concerned with collapsing the future into the present, rather than holding them apart" (Swain, 2019, p. 9).

Here, according to van de Sande, it is necessary to point out that the two conceptual lines outlined above contribute little to our understanding of prefiguration as a type of radical politics or a tactic for social movements in terms of enabling a more

durable, systemic change in a long time. Hence, it is necessary to frame the two other prefigurative formulations to grasp prefiguration to answer the question of how we can critically evaluate the use of prefigurative practices as a particular political strategy to comprehend the protest practices in recent social movements.

Furthermore, the starting point of the third framework originates from the discussions of revolutionary left strategy regarding how to reach a social and political change considering the questions of whether to take state power and what methods should be used to achieve a social transformation, such as using violent or non-violent methods or adopting hierarchical or horizontal forms. Also, leaving the desired change to a distant future is a subject of criticism. Because more specifically, prefiguration appeared as a critique of Marxist-Leninist strategies, as well as their failures, towards social change, as Boggs points out:

> One of the most troublesome dilemmas encountered by Marxist movements and regimes is how to effectively combine two distinct sets of tasks-*the instrumental*, which includes above all the struggle to conquer and maintain political power, and the *prefigurative*, which expresses the ultimate ends of the revolutionary process itself: popular self-emancipation, collective social and authority relations, socialist democracy (Boggs, 1977b, p. 359)

Here, prefiguration is considered a non-instrumentalist movement strategy. Boggs's approach was to combine the strategies of this prefigurative tradition with those of the Marxist movements so far and to transform them into a distinct political orientation that abolished the distinction between means and ends. In light of this, as Boggs touches upon, it is possible to claim that combining the instrumental and prefigurative tasks not only overcomes the shortcomings of Marxist strategy toward social change but also enables the implementation of "a particular form of radical change prior to its realization on a grander (and possibly also more durable) scale" (van de Sande, 2019, p. 231). More clearly, Holloway (2010, p. 43) contends that "living now the world we want create with its "social practices and correspondent relations" breaks the instrumental separation of means and end: the means is the end."

Namely, it is critical that the means by which you seek social change are perfectly aligned with the future society you desire. The means are inextricably linked to the ends because today's practices gradually build the future world. In this regard, Yates conceptualizes this framework as a "means-ends equivalence" and underlines that prefigurative politics, in this manner, refer to "scenarios where protesters express the political 'ends' of their actions through their 'means'" (2015, p. 1). For instance, consensus or other direct democratic processes are frequently used to foster egalitarian decision-making and the organization of collective action among heterogeneous groups. In this context, Farber (2014) states that "there is a one-to-one correspondence between the strategies and tactics adopted to fight exploitation and oppression—including the right of the oppressed to resort to force and violence—and those followed by the future society."

In this regard, prefiguration is assumed as "a revolutionary strategy of building the new society in the shell of the old" (van de Sande, 2019, p. 228). To put it another way, this framework regards prefigurative politics "as a gradual process, rather than a particular moment or event" (2019, p. 230) because it is possible to progress through prefiguration since it appropriates a future world that will be realized with the support of the existing activities that are prefigured in the present day. In this context, according to Gordon, means-ends equivalence indicates a path dependency. Gordon (2018, p. 529) asserts that it "refers to what today might be called a 'path dependency' between revolutionary practices and results, where 'initial moves in one direction elicit further moves in that same direction' and 'the trajectory of change up to a certain point constrains the trajectory after that point.'" On the other hand, van de Sande argues that this framework carries some problems to the extent that it is based on an "archaic concept of progress" because the notion that a distant future can be performed here and now presupposes that one has a clear vision of what that future should be like in the future (2019, p. 229). The problem here is that there is one missing object to complete the puzzle: experimentation.

The last conceptual framework of prefiguration as a radical political practice in contemporary social movements is to regard prefigurative politics as an

"experimental political repertoire." More clearly, Van de Sande explains that prefigurative politics can be considered as:

> A future-oriented practice or development that does imply a temporal distinction between the present and the future, but which does not require an articulated, positive conception of what this future must look like. Thus perceived, prefiguration is first and foremost an *experimental* political repertoire, in which the reformulation of our political goals is continuously at stake (van de Sande, 2019, p. 231)

Considering the framework above, van de Sande argues that this experimental aspect of prefiguration has two significant ramifications, both critical in defining current social movements. The first one is that a variety of different futures can be prefigured concurrently. Thus, prefiguration is never the accomplishment of a single purpose but a constantly changing approach that can result in a range of distinct, dependent consequences in this manner. Secondly, this interpretation also implies that prefigurative politics is not preoccupied with establishing complete coherence between means and ends. In this sense, Raekstad and Gradin (2020, p. 11) define prefigurative politics "as the deliberate experimental implementation of desired future social relations and practices in the here-and-now."

The underlying idea is that we cannot possibly be expected to understand what a future society would look like from our current point of view deep within mainstream society. Consequently, the experimental role is that through having prefigurative projects that are alternative to mainstream capitalist society, ideas for how a future society could be formed will emerge from these experiments. In this regard, Yates (2015, p. 1) defines prefigurative politics as "the attempted construction of alternative or utopian social relations in the present, either in parallel with, or in the course of, adversarial social movement protest."

3.2. Prefigurative Squares in the 2010s

In the twenty-first century, prefiguration has attracted more attention in parallel with the growing interest in identifying the newness of global justice movements and square movements. It has been mainly stimulated by debates on the characteristics of transnational justice movements, and this interest has been further heightened by the

impact of the square movements of the 2010s. In this context, it is argued that prefiguration creates movement dynamics for social change in square social movements. The question then is what kind of actions prefigurative politics entail and how to discover these dynamics. Therefore, before delving into details of prefigurative dynamics in some social movement cases, certain distinguishing aspects of prefigurative practices will be revealed and discussed briefly. In this context, van de Sande (2015, pp. 188–189) states that three essential qualities that characterize prefigurative practices in recent square social movements can be determined. These are here-and-now practices, the reconceptualization of means and ends formulation, and prefiguration's experimental and experiential character. In this regard, van de Sande accentuates that:

> 'Prefiguration' or 'prefigurative politics' refers to a political action, practice, movement, moment or development in which certain political ideals are experimentally actualised in the 'here and now', rather than hoped to be realised in a distant future. Thus, in prefigurative practices, the means applied are deemed to embody or 'mirror' the ends one strives to realise (van de Sande, 2013, p. 230)

It is undeniable that prefigurative politics aspires to foresee social transformation in the future using imaginative means. However, one differentiating feature is that this type of transformation should be demonstrated in the present moment by alteration of everyday life. In this sense, here-and-now practices are essential in prefiguration as protestors strive to make a difference in the world by putting their values into action in the here-and-now. Thus, it is claimed that here and now practices in contemporary social movements have appeared as dynamics for social movements regarding the prefigurative aspect.

Moreover, the reformulation of political means and ends is the other distinguishing aspect of prefigurative politics. Dixon states that the heart of this argument is that how we get ourselves to a transformed society is crucially tied to what that transformed society will look like in the future. Namely, prefigurative politics is the deliberate shaping of our actions to realize our vision. In this sense, "the means prefigure the ends" since prefiguration is "organizing now the way you want to see the world later" (Dixon, 2014, p. 85).

The third reason highlighting the distinguishing aspect of prefiguration stems from the fact that prefigurative practices are experimental and experiential. In this sense, Hardt and Negri argue that experimentation and experiences of prefigurative politics by embodying the practices like free libraries, food, and medical services and democratic decision-making in squares such as Tahrir, Zuccotti Park, Gezi Park, and Puerta del sol envision the desired society. In this sense, it is essential to note that the crucial aspect that highlighting the significance of the prefiguration is "its ability to open broader social debates about democracy and equality" since "the movements not only demonstrate a desire for a different social order but also open avenues for experimentation in the larger society" (Hardt & Negri, 2017, p. 275).

Based on the considerations and characteristics mentioned earlier, it is asserted that prefigurative politics provides a theoretical framework within which to understand the prevalent practices of square social movements in the previous decade. At this stage, a few examples from current social movements will be reviewed in which particular dynamics of everyday life are mobilized through prefigurative practices to generate dynamic opposition. Against this background, the final part will focus on the Gezi Protests.

Arab Spring is the significant social mobilization in the last decade that embodies prefigurative practices and influences the other wave of protest worldwide. As we stated earlier, many public squares, which are the core social manifestation of the movement, were occupied during mobilization in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). But it is possible to claim that Tahrir Square has emerged as the primary symbol and source of inspiration for all of the worldwide protest movements that have taken place since the beginning of 2011. According to Dhaliwal (2012, pp. 252–253), it is possible that the occupation of Tahrir Square in Cairo will be the most permanent and significant image of recent mobilizations. Tahrir Square functioned as the epicenter of the Egyptian Revolution, with hundreds of thousands of people congregating there at any given time during the uprising. Thus, this image has inspired many of the current mobilizations in the Western world. For example, student activists in the United Kingdom attempted to occupy Trafalgar Square in London to transform it into Tahrir Square. Aside from that, the wave of Occupy

movements tried to transform numerous public spaces into a miniature version of Tahrir Square.

The Egyptian revolution of 2011 transformed the power dynamics in the country, overthrew the Mubarak dictatorship, and has since fought resolutely against the resurgence of oppression in the shape of military rule. The previous chapter revealed that everyday life had experienced a drastic change by creating a carnivalesque atmosphere. In what follows, we will try to show what practices have emerged in this changing everyday life and what they tell us. During the occupation of Tahrir Square in Cairo, thousands of people from a variety of political, cultural, and religious backgrounds came together to protest collectively, and "Bread, Freedom, and Social Justice were the main themes of the revolution." (Castells, 2015, p. 67). Also, necessities such as health, food, and shelter were met by people working together. Decisions were reached in a collaborative effort. In this context, Bayat (2017, p. 115) states that Tahrir Square "became a microcosm of the alternative order the revolutionaries seemed to desire" because it entails the features of "democratic governance, nonhierarchical organization, collective decision making, self-help, cooperation, and altruism."

Within this framework, Van de Sande (2013) argues that the practices conducted in Tahrir Square bear the essential characteristic of prefigurative politics through developing here-and-now methods, reformulating means-ends distinction, and becoming experimental and experiential. Firstly, it would not be wrong to assert that, first and foremost, individuals in Tahrir Square battled to bring the ideal of an alternate society here and now to realization. Moreover, this aim is inherently experimental and experiential to the extent that new political visions were conceived and realized through discussions in real-time with other participants. Hence, according to Van de Sande, this square can be considered a social laboratory where a new political community began to take shape due to prefigurative practices. Also, it is essential to note that the tools put in place, from decision-making processes and open meetings to social media use and the fulfillment of basic needs, did not only serve as a means to an end but they also reflected the intentions established during the process into their practical organization (van de Sande, 2013, pp. 235–236).

The Indignados movement, also known as the 15-M Movement, began on 15 May 2011. Although protest movements spread throughout the country, the squares of Puerta del Sol in Madrid and Plaza Cataluña in Barcelona were the centers of the movement. Economic issues and unemployment were the primary impetus for its emergence. In this regard, Castañeda (2012, p. 309) states that the Indignados as "a direct precedent and inspiration for the Occupy movement" is a social movement that is responding to the global economic crisis, as well as the measures chosen by the European Union and the Spanish government to deal with it. Also, he notes that Spain had a high national unemployment rate of 21 percent for the general population and 43.6 percent for those younger than 24 years at that time. In this regard, the people's reaction, adversely affected by the current economic situation and the austerity policies implemented, was to organize protests to address the economic crisis. In this respect, Flesher Fominaya (2015, p. 142) summarizes the uniqueness of the Indignados movement with two features: "their refusal to allow institutional left actors to participate in or represent the movement, framed as a movement of 'ordinary citizens' and their insistence on the use of deliberative democratic practices in large public assemblies as a central organizing principle."

Within this context, it is argued that prefigurative politics is one of the defining features of the Indignados movements. From shelter to health, food to security, all of life's necessities are met cooperatively in this place by establishing collective groups. As Dixon (2014) points out, one of the most critical aspects of prefiguration is starting and operating counter-institutions such as food co-ops and free community health clinics. Counter institutions of this type not only meet popular necessities such as food, health care, and housing but also provide spaces for people to exercise democratic and equitable forms of collaboration. For instance, nonhierarchical decision-making mechanisms are established by promoting assemblies as a deliberative democratic practice. Dhaliwal (2012, p. 262) states that the egalitarian occupation was enhanced by consensus decision-making in meetings, emphasizing promoting equal participation and avoiding establishing leaders and hierarchies. Also, assemblies often use rotating positions, in which no single group or individual retains a position indefinitely, as this would create hierarchies for controlling information, contacts, and specific operational decisions. Additionally, assembly

start and end hours are often posted to ensure that decisions are not solely based on who can stay the longest. In this respect, Dhaliwal cites the following quotation, which is written by one of the occupier groups Abrasad@s de Sol:

> The occupation and liberation of the Puerta del Sol has opened a crack in the wall of the established order, routine and even the domesticated common sense, through which has sifted the spirit of liberty, embodied in the assemblies, commissions and working groups and their horizontal operation based on free discussion of resolutions and rotating delegates, as well as solidarity, real communication and mutual support, in real democracy; in short, we are trying to reinvent and experience as the best and most legitimate means to truly control our destiny, without the dictatorship of money nor the auspices of politicians (Dhaliwal, 2012, p. 258).

In most discussions of prefigurative politics, the Occupy movements are brought up as an actual example that reflects the idea of prefiguration (Graeber, 2013; Hammond, 2015; Reinecke, 2018). As we discussed in the preceding section, in the context of a carnivalesque form of protest, the Occupy protests that erupted in the United States during the last months of 2011 have emerged as one of the most visible examples of current social movements. The rallies, which began in the United States and extended to many nations around Europe, were intended to mobilize public opinion against the financial organizations and banks that were at the root of the crisis. To this end, the occupiers staged sit-ins or pitched tents in public squares and parks and attempted to turn these public places into crucial public debate points by transforming everyday life through carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices. In this context, they define and explain themselves on their website as follows:

> Occupy Wall Street is a leaderless resistance movement with people of many colors, genders and political persuasions. The one thing we all have in common is that We Are The 99% that will no longer tolerate the greed and corruption of the 1%. We are using the revolutionary Arab Spring tactic to achieve our ends and encourage the use of nonviolence to maximize the safety of all participants. This #ows movement empowers real people to create real change from the bottom up. We want to see a general assembly in every backyard, on every street corner because we don't need Wall Street and we don't need politicians to build a better society. (*Occupy Wall Street | NYC Protest for World Revolution*, 2011)

Furthermore, Hammond (2015, pp. 298–300) emphasizes that prefiguration is one of the essential tenets of OWS in combination with the autonomism and horizontal forms to the extent that protestors want to establish social relationships that are free of alienation and exploitation, as well as to anticipate the social ties that will exist in

the new society that the movement aspires to establish. More specifically, through models of intended social interactions, the movement tries to ensure that the means used are compatible with the end goal. In the context of prefiguration, as in Indignados, direct democracy practices are the most prominent prefigurative dynamic among many other practices, such as People's Kitchen and People's Library. In line with this, Castells (2015, p. 181) states that "the Occupy movement experimented with new forms of organization, deliberation, and decision-making as a way of learning, by doing, what real democracy is." In this sense, this is a core characteristic of the movement.

In this respect, General Assemblies established by protestors during occupy movements are the actual examples of prefiguration regarding here-and-now practices, means-ends equivalence and experimentation, and experiential. According to Dixon, the general assembly is a widespread nonhierarchical practice used frequently by recent social movements since direct democracy is a critical feature of prefiguration. As Dixon (2014, p. 87) notes that "assemblies can create dynamic spaces for popular deliberation and decision-making in large meetings even when people present don't share a common background." Moreover, according to Castells (2015, p. 181), this practice was distinguished by the deliberate absence of official leadership, which was the most noticeable aspect of it. No local, national, or international leader was found in the movement. Also, this was a fundamental principle that the occupiers applied whenever someone attempted to play a significant role in the occupation. Likewise, leadership functions were performed locally by the regular General Assembly meeting in the occupied area, and coordination to help shape collective decisions was made over the Internet. In this regard, Castells (2015, pp. 181–182) asserts that "this was truly an experiment in social movement organization. It belied deep-seated assumptions that no socio-political process could work without some sort of strategic guidance and vertical authority." Thus, it is possible to claim that prefigurative dynamics in Occupy movements have opened the door to show what democracy can be in the future by experimenting and experiencing the general assembly practices.

3.3. The Limits and Critique of Prefigurative Politics

Even though we have implicitly touched on some of the drawbacks of this approach in the preceding discussion of what prefigurative politics is, further clarity is required to define the limits of prefigurative politics. Prefigurative politics has come under criticism from various perspectives for some reasons, including its lack of broad capacity for influence, the absence of traditional structures, or its individualistic nature (Disalvo, 2015; Farber, 2014; Giri, 2013). Generally, the central point of criticism about prefigurative politics is based on the idea that it is a naïve attempt to transform society because it is ineffective and insufficient to reach social transformation, so it is limited as a political strategy. Different reasons feed this idea. Similar to the criticisms and limitations of the carnivalesque form of protest, inquiries into the limits of prefigurative politics in relation to each other focus on questions of temporality, utopianism, effectiveness, and individualism.

One of the grounds for its label as a naive endeavor is that it is accused of utopian tendencies. Therefore, it is argued that prefigurative politics is a naïve attempt to actualize utopian dreams. For instance, Smucker (2014, 2017) contends that while prefigurative politics might instill a sense of utopia in many people during protests, it is really an emotion, and utopianism as an emotion is not actually about the future. In this sense, he asserts that a more comprehensive and strategic approach should be adopted instead of a utopian understanding:

> If our intention is to change the world—not just to prefigure a utopian vision, with no idea about how to actualize it—then these collective rituals must take their place within a larger overarching strategic framework (Smucker, 2017, p. 65)

Furthermore, constantly highlighted problem related to the limit of prefigurative politics is identified in the absence of traditional political forms due to their lack of ideology and established organizational structures. As a result, it is argued that prefigurative attempts cannot gain visibility regarding a durable organizational and political form so that it is only temporary and utopian. In this respect, Soborski (2018, p. 53) argues that "political theory is typically seen as having no application in prefigurative activism, and a strong link is often drawn between the practice of

prefiguration and the ostensible absence of ideology." Thus, it is possible to claim that there is no clear purpose in the absence of a clearly defined ideology and political structure, which results in significant weakness.

Thus, for Soborski (2020, p. 301), the weakness of Occupy and other related movements comes from the commitment to prefigurative politics, characterized by "an ostensible absence of ideology." Regarding political objectives, prefigurative politics has been used to justify a refusal to support any single and unambiguous intent owing to "a refusal to endorse any clear political goal" (2020, p. 301). Therefore, prefigurative politics is insufficient when faced with a strong structure like neoliberal capitalism. While prefiguration has a transformative effect on its participants, the rest of the world remains untouched and therefore poses no significant danger to the existing system. In this respect, Rohgalf (2013, p. 153) contends that prefiguration is a 'dead end' because it "tends to hinder than to foster fruitful social analyses and political struggles on which any democratization of democracy depends."

In a similar vein, Srnicek and Williams (2016) argue that the reason behind the failure of the Left and recent social movements is so-called 'folk politics' which characterizes the logic of mobilizations and dominant protest forms by embodying the principles of direct action, horizontalism, and local solutions. Here, experimentation with new organizational forms, consensus decision-making structures, horizontalism, and local initiatives represent the logic and symbol of forward-thinking. Also, they state that some protest forms, such as sit-ins, occupations of squares, and carnivalesque protests, constitute the defining types of action. However, while these practices are essential and can be beneficial at times, Srnicek and Williams argue that they are insufficient to resist global capitalism, notably neoliberalism. According to the authors, commitment to prefigurative politics as a crucial aspect of folk politics diminishes the effectiveness of protests due to a lack of precise aim toward future and preliminary analysis of society. Thus, it eliminates the possibility of creating a long-term hegemonic project. Srnicek and Williams (2016, p. 58) assert that:

> At its best, prefigurative politics attempts to embody utopian impulses in bringing the future into concrete existence today. Yet at its worst, an insistence on prefiguration becomes a dogmatic assertion that the means must match the ends, accompanied by ignorance of the structural forces set against it.

Another criticism is that prefigurative politics is self-closed and bears individualistic convergence. According to Raekstad and Gradin (2020, p. 164), the argument is that prefigurative politics is insular to the extent that it is elaborated as an approach that inclines to isolate activists into small camps and prevent them from establishing broad solidarity with other communities. They state that this argument claims that prefigurative politics requires protesters to focus excessively on their group's internal problems, practices, and relationships, diverting their attention away from more significant and pressing social and political issues by ignoring the other aspects of political strategy. Namely, in this case, the needs of the activists' interests take precedence over the needs of the public.

In this respect, Smucker (2014, p. 81) contends that prefigurative politics creates imbalance by overrating the importance of a group's inner life and protest practices more than the desired accomplishment. Hence, Smucker argues that prefigurative politics can only be a 'project of private liberation' because this politics solely creates a 'particular lifeworld' to the extent that it grounds "expressing values and affirming the life of the group." As a result, such an approach favors just its participants, and no meaningful claim for change can be made outside of it. Subsequently, Smucker (2014, 2017) concludes by stating that recent social movements have exhibited a tendency toward insularity and self-enclosure as a result of prefigurative actions.

Also, according to Soborski (2019, p. 81), prefigurative politics has a robust individualist component to the extent that prefigurative politics is inherently introverted because of its "highly individualistic dimension." Here, the problem is that it may be consistent with certain parts of neoliberalism by foregrounding the values of creativity and autonomy. Additionally, he argues that prefigurative politics tends to focus on the field of action and internal issues rather than trying to make a difference in the world beyond the activist fields. For instance, according to Soborski, shortcomings of recent social movements stem from a commitment to

prefiguration, which places a high value on the process and rituals of protest so that the reliance on prefigurative politics limits the scope of political strategy. One central tenet is that existing society will never change fundamentally unless a critical mass of people completely quit existing society. The notion is that while developing prefigurative practices is admirable; it will never result in a genuine change in society until somehow constructing a prefigurative alternative community that draws a sizable critical mass of people and drives them away from the existing society. Also, the premise is that nonhierarchical movements will never be sufficiently structured to overcome a highly organized, efficient, and bureaucratic adversary.

Furthermore, Young and Schwartz (2012) discuss the possibility of prefigurative politics in the context of broader social transformation processes through critical reading of Holloway's crack theory. They emphasize the need of the organization and institutions to alternate the existing ones. They come to the conclusion that prefiguration should be linked with the active creation of counter-institutions and the reformation of existing ones to have maximum effect. In a similar vein, Brissette (2013) investigates the contradictions that endure between strategic and prefigurative thought and practice in the context of the Occupy Oakland movement. Prefigurative politics, she believes, is ultimately insufficient on its own and should be supplemented by more strategic political activity. The ability to experience the ideal world in the present moment might be advantageous in terms of generating an alternative vision or expressing a sense of authenticity; nevertheless, this does not make sense unless it is linked with a more strategic vision because "the promise of the prefigurative depends on its articulation with the strategic" (Brissette, 2013, p. 226).

To summarize, prefigurative politics and its limitations are criticized on the grounds that they are ineffective and inadequate political approach since it is utopian and temporary. The pillars of this criticism are the absence of a specific ideology or political theory and a lack of planning and organization. The rationale behind this argument is that prefigurative politics will not lead to a significant change in the established order and will remain a naive attempt for as long as the aspects mentioned above are deliberately and willfully ignored. In accordance with this

prevalent viewpoint, the strategy must comprise hierarchical organizational structures that pursue a planned and unified political purpose. Furthermore, prefigurative politics is criticized for being individualistic and imbuing the process and practices with excessive significance. Although it has a transforming influence on participants, its intrinsic predicament prohibits a more comprehensive social transformation due to its political, spatial, and temporal limits. Moreover, it is essential to notice that these tendencies result in an introverted form of conduct, which leads to a sense of insularity. In this respect, another dispute is the ritualization of protest. The crucial issue is that the primary aim to be reached becomes overshadowed by attaching too much significance to the process and practice. Thus, Soborski (2019, p. 88) contends that prefigurative politics make protest forms "into a hedonistic experience of activism" (Pleyers, 2010, p. 99) or lead to the "fetishization of form over function" (Wolfson & Funke, 2017, p. 90).

In this respect, it would not be wrong to assert that prefigurative politics is a blind alley like carnival by allowing people to vent their outrage temporarily rather than diverting frustration and anger into political change. Namely, similar to the criticism of the carnival, it is possible to claim that prefigurative politics with the features of utopianism, temporality, apoliticism, and experimentalism function as some sort of safety valve to absorb the dissent of people rather than creating real social change. Considering the framework outlined above, how can we evaluate prefigurative politics as a paradigm for understanding protest forms and practices in social movements?

Since prefigurative politics began to emerge in social movements literature, the dichotomy between prefigurative and strategic politics has been debated. While justifying and accepting Young and Schwartz's suggestion for the necessity of establishing durable prefigurative political organizations and counter-institutions, as well as reforming existing structures, it is argued that the criticism based on the absence of ideology and traditional hierarchical political organizations overlooks the fact that this is a hallmark of prefigurative politics' logic.

As one of the first theorists to employ the prefigurative concept after Boggs, Wini Breines concentrated on the dispute between strategic politics and prefigurative politics in the context of the New Left movements that erupted throughout North America in the 1960s and 1970s. While strategic politics is defined as a 'serious, national political organization' marked by instrumentalism, goal orientation, and centralism, prefigurative politics is described as 'local, utopian, and spontaneous' (Breines, 1980, pp. 421–423). Describing the grounding point of this criticism as an 'instrumental' or 'organizational bias,' Breines (1980, p. 420) states that "they assume not only the efficacy but the necessity of certain kinds of instrumental politics or certain kinds of organization." Thus, according to her, because prefigurative politics possesses these traits, it has been considered the primary reason for the New Left's failure. On the other hand, Breines (1980, p. 422) states that it is not the case that activists embrace prefigurative politics "because they were ignorant, unconcerned or unaware of organizational issues," on the contrary, what is under dispute is whether its characteristics, such as "the process, the means, the participation and the dialogue" are as critical as the desired political objective. As a result, it is plausible to claim that prefigurative politics requires neglecting or rejecting strategy is unfounded.

Following the footsteps of Breines, Maeckelbergh (2011) also discusses the tension between strategy and prefiguration in her article on the Alterglobalization Movement. Even though she considers Breines' argument essential for its time, she believes it is insufficient today. The critical contribution of Maeckelbergh's inference is its stress on locating prefigurative politics as a strategy for social movement formation. That is to say, the author questions previous arguments that have led to the conclusion that prefiguration and strategy are opposites to one another or complementary to each other. These previous arguments typically argued that movements with a prefigurative character lacked a solid ideology as well as a sound political strategy to be successful. As a result, they are delaying the implementation of a comprehensive political strategy to achieve their objectives. To refute these arguments, the author believes that prefigurative politics is a strategy in and of itself. In this sense, Maeckelbergh attempts to demonstrate how this approach was successfully employed by the alter-globalization movement to achieve its objectives.

A prefigurative strategy enabled this movement to represent its different goals by organizing with a horizontal intent. Furthermore, prefiguration ensured that these goals were not predetermined and singular but relatively open to change and adaptable over time. In this context, prefigurative politics created a different strategy by establishing an intricate relationship between means and ends.

In this respect, Maeckelbergh (2011, p. 2) identifies diversity and horizontality as guiding principles of prefiguration and argues that they represent a different but equally strategic way of conceptualizing processes of social change than is meant by the common understanding. While diversity refers to the inclusion of many distinct perspectives and conceivable aims, horizontality is a continual process that opposes the centralization of power to create the highest possible equality between participants. Indeed, horizontal organization and decision-making processes created an atmosphere in which these diverse goals could co-exist and flourish, and she explains that:

> The practice of horizontality is believed by many movement actors to be the best way to create equality, because horizontality means actively creating practices that continuously challenge inequalities – both structural and inter-personal. Rather than assuming that equality can be declared or created through a centralized authority that is legitimated to rule by the people, movement practices of horizontality rest on the assumption that inequality will always permeate every social interaction. It, therefore, becomes imperative to acknowledge that these inequalities exist and to set up structures that hold each person responsible for continuously challenging inequalities at every step of a democratic decision-making process. The assumption about power that is built into practices of horizontality is that power always centralizes, and so structures and procedures are needed to continuously challenge this centralization. Horizontality is the process of continuously decentralizing power (Maeckelbergh, 2011, p. 10).

When it comes to the critical context that has been built between prefiguration and individualism, the primary issue that has been neglected is that these criticisms treat prefiguration's different practices and activities as politics in and of themselves. Undeniably, prefiguration can be found in a wide range of contexts and fields. For example, according to Dixon (2014, p. 85), actions and practices that are regarded as prefigurative can be divided into four broad categories that can be considered in the most general sense. The first one is 'practicing countercultural lifestyles,' which refers to lifestyle activism by embodying the lifestyle activities such as

vegetarianism, collective living, or nonmonogamous relationships. The critical point is that such activities can be undertaken by individuals with a broad spectrum of political viewpoints and are not always associated with organizational efforts and collective action. Another form of prefigurative praxis is creating alternative counter-institutions in the squares to provide basic human needs such as food, health, and shelter. These behaviors are critical because they enable individuals to collaborate in a democratic and equal manner. The horizontal organization is another crucial aspect of prefiguration. The last element stressing the variation of prefigurative politics stems from the fact that it aims to practice non-hierarchical, democratic decision-making mechanisms.

Considering Dixon's framework above, it is clear that there is no single prefigurative practice. The organization of those in the square, the dynamics of internal relations, and the decision-making mechanisms are all examples of prefigurative politics as a collective action. Still, prefigurative politics can also be determined by individual behaviors such as veganism, communal living, and other things. In other words, prefigurative practices occur as collective public actions and collective and individual actions within the social movement organizations themselves. Moreover, Haenfler et al. (2012), in their article discussing the relationship between lifestyle movements and social movements, which they describe as a deficiency in the contentious politics literature, also dwell on "lifestyle choices as tactics of social change." Haenfler et al. (2012, pp. 4, 15) underline how lifestyle movements such as vegetarianism and virginity pledgers can be inextricably linked to or an exercise of prefigurative politics. However, they emphasize the importance of keeping in mind that they may not have a bigger political purpose. When this is the case, while the criticism that it is individualistic is partially justified, it is noteworthy that prefiguration is not limited to this.

Furthermore, returning to how we should understand and assess prefigurative politics to grasp the prevalent practices and forms that characterize square social movements, it is necessary to state that experimentation is essential to understand and evaluate. In this regard, understanding the prefiguration as an experimental political repertoire will not only assist us in removing the points of criticism that we have raised above,

but it will also make it easier for us to comprehend the practices exhibited in the square. Thus, this thesis relied on the framework conceptualizing prefigurative politics as an experimental political repertoire. Prefiguration is conceived as an experimental political repertoire in which our political objectives are constantly reformulated. In this way, multiple futures might be prefigured continuously. Thus, prefiguration is never the attainment of a single goal but rather a continually changing strategy that can result in diverse, dependent outcomes. Also, this understanding indicates that prefigurative politics is not concerned with perfect consistency between means and ends (van de Sande, 2019, p. 232). As Graeber states:

> [T]his is a movement about reinventing democracy. It is not opposed to organization. It is about creating new forms of organization. It is not lacking in ideology. Those new forms of organization are its ideology. It is about creating and enacting horizontal networks instead of top-down structures like states, parties or corporations; networks based on principles of decentralized, non-hierarchical consensus democracy. Ultimately, it aspires to be much more than that, because ultimately it aspires to reinvent daily life as whole… Their ideology, then, is immanent in the anti-authoritarian principles that underlie their practice (Graeber, 2002, pp. 68, 72).

It is plausible to state that the characteristics of square social movements, including their forms and practices, are shaped around prefiguration. As a result, prefiguration, much like the carnival, can be interpreted as cracks in the existing system, which have the potential to produce disruptions and ultimately result in social transformation. Because "a crack is the perfectly ordinary creation of a space or moment in which we assert a different type of doing" (Holloway, 2010, p. 84), prefigurative politics as instances of transgression represent a crack by expanding and concretizing the envisioned social relations. It is worth repeating that carnivalesque and prefigurative dynamics generate oppositional dynamics in square social movements by mobilizing everyday life. Thus, it is argued that Holloway's crack theory is essential in articulating these two conceptions and demonstrating how they intersect. In this respect, in the next chapter, how the notions of carnivalesque and prefigurative coincide and how they can be articulated in the context of Holloway's crack theory will be discussed. Then, the Gezi movement will be analyzed in reference to this coincidence and articulation.

CHAPTER 4

HOLLOWAY'S POLITICAL THEORY: THE CRACK AND SOCIAL CHANGE

It is plausible to argue that analyzing today's social movements requires constant reference to the occupation of public squares and the transformation of everyday life in these squares by using some new and widespread forms and practices for expressing dissent and the purpose of building a new world. This necessity is essential in analyzing these movements' shared characteristics and unveiling contemporary social movements' crucial aspects. In this context, previous chapters first analyzed how carnivalesque forms in protest with their inverted and subversive nature revitalize everyday life in festival form and transform it into an opposition dynamic by creating cracks. Secondly, it explored how prefigurative political actions represent a crack by expanding and concretizing the envisioned social relations through experimental and experiential here-and-now practices. In this respect, it can be argued that these two sets of concepts establish the pillars of contemporary social movements, which are based on not only rejecting, destroying, or turning the existing one upside down but also developing alternatives on what kind of social relations and practices should be in the future. In this respect, I argue that carnivalesque forms of protest have been closely linked to prefigurative political actions; therefore, the defining character of square social movements should be conceived as an outcome of carnivalesque forms and prefigurative political actions.

In this sense, the purpose of considering contemporary social movements' prevalent forms and practices through constructing a relationship between the carnivalesque protest forms and prefigurative political actions, which have different tendencies and problematizations, is not to build arbitrary connections. Instead, this thesis aims to

trace the common forms and practices that infiltrate the squares worldwide regardless of geographies and cultures to apprehend the relationship between the protest forms and the quest for social change in social movements. Hence, to achieve the goal of this thesis, it is necessary to uncover the relationship between carnival and prefiguration and be able to articulate these relationships.

Intending to illustrate this articulation, this chapter analyzes the central premises of Holloway's theory on radical social transformation. Secondly, I will elaborate on how this theory articulated the carnivalesque protest forms and prefigurative political actions. After defining and deepening the concept of the crack in the context of Holloway's political theory and explaining how carnivalesque forms and prefigurative political activities are intertwined within the framework of this approach, the next chapter will specifically evaluate Gezi Protests to put forth how this concurrence and articulation characterizes the square movements to the extent that they revitalize everyday life in festival form and transform it into an opposition dynamic through prefiguration of the future envisioned by creating cracks.

4.1. Crack Capitalism: The New Language of Contemporary Social Movements

Crack Capitalism (2010) is a book by John Holloway and expands on the political ideas he presented in his earlier book, *Change the World Without Power* (2002). The primary objective of these books is to inspire people to explore social change in the present day. It is plausible to state that the purpose of Holloway's writings, in which he provides his political theory, is to explain how radical social transformation can be achieved. Holloway's central thought is the significance of rupture and social struggle in attaining radical social change. In this sense, the cracks symbolize a break with the logic of capitalist society. For Holloway (2010, pp. 51–60), this logic called 'social synthesis,' which roughly refers to the system and social cohesion that sustains our places and compels us to behave in particular ways, must be transcended to establish a more uncontrolled and fair-minded society because capitalism generates a system that is inherently unjust, violent, and discriminating, it cannot and must not continue to operate indefinitely. Holloway explains that:

Any society is based on some sort of social cohesion, some form of relation between the activities of the many different people. In capitalist society, this cohesion has a particular logic often described in terms of the laws of capitalist development. There is a systemic closure that gives the social cohesion a particular force and makes it very difficult to break. To underline the close-knit character of social cohesion in capitalist society, I refer to it as a social synthesis (Holloway, 2010, p. 52).

The social synthesis of capitalist society can be broken through resistance, which will be depicted as cracks, and this will make space for new possibilities based on dignity. The encouraging news for Holloway is that the various moments and spaces in which individuals build alternative ways of interacting with reality demonstrate that a world beyond capitalism has already existed in the social settings in which we currently live. It is just a matter of finding a way to bring it to light. In this regard, Holloway suggests a strategy based on "the method of the crack" (2010, p. 8) to find openings for social change. In this regard, it can be argued that this strategy is essential for its contribution toward comprehending the core of the social movements of today as it aims to build a "different world" (2010, p. 3) inspired by "a new language of a new struggle" (2010, p. 10).

First and foremost, the word "NO" (Holloway, 2010, p. 17) is the first word in Holloway's new language for a new struggle. The "scream" (2010, p. 17) of ordinary people represents a desire to change the world due to the numerous forms of injustice inherent in capitalist relations. Holloway suggests that this NO will mark the beginning of the cracks, and from these cracks, negation and creation will sprout with dignity. It is with dignity because, for Holloway, the concept of human dignity refers not only to the rejection of the existing social order but also to the possibility of creating an alternative society that can transcend the logic of capitalism. Harrison (2019, p. 56) emphasizes that the notion of dignity is central to Holloway's anti-capitalist agenda insofar as it reflects both the form and the content of the movement against a sort of society that denies it. Therefore, social transformation consists of both negations in the sense of refusing to accept social interactions that lack dignity and developing a new set of social relations through the pursuit of dignity. More clearly, Holloway asserts that:

the No is backed by an other-doing. This is the dignity that can fill the cracks created by the refusal. The original No is then not a closure, but an opening to a different

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activity, the threshold of a counter-world with a different logic and a different language. The No opens to a time-space in which we try to live as subjects rather than objects (Holloway, 2010, p. 19).

This statement of 'other-doing' is the foundation upon which Holloway's stand rests. Holloway argues that doing something we have no control over is an entirely different sensation from doing something we have voluntarily chosen to undertake. Thus, one of the most crucial points he makes is the contention that there ought to be a distinction between what he refers to as "power-over" and "power-to" (Holloway, 2002, pp. 28–30). The two activities referred to as "doing" in this context are distinct. The first action is to do what the capital requires, and the second action is to do what we consider necessary or want to do. He states, "whereas power-to is a uniting, a bringing together of my doing with the doing of others, the exercise of power-over is a separation" (2002, p. 28). The first refers to labor in the capitalist mode of production that has been abstracted and categorized, and the second corresponds more concretely to the production of use value. In this regard, Holloway argues that:

> The revolt of doing against labour is the revolt of one form of activity, which we choose, against another form of activity, which we reject. We reject labour because it is unpleasant to do something as the result of external obligation, and also because we can see that it is labour that creates capital, that creates a world of injustice that is destroying humanity. The doing we choose is more agreeable by virtue of the fact that we choose it, and it is also an attempt to stop creating capitalism and create a different world (Holloway, 2010, p. 85)

Furthermore, the negation of capitalism entails the rejection of the factor that generates capitalism and hence the dissolution of abstract and alienated labor. The intention to liberate what Holloway calls helpful or creative doing is the antithesis of abstract and alienated labor. Importantly, Holloway's class struggle is not a struggle for labor and capital but rather a struggle of doing versus labor and then capital. Susen (2012, p. 289) states that it is "the conflict between abstract, alienated, and colonized forms of labor, on the one hand, and purposive, cooperative, and creative forms of doing, on the other." Abstract labor is a social connection organized by the capitalist mode of production. Both abstract and other forms of doing are present in everyday activities concurrently due to the dual nature of labor. However, while capitalist relations dictate the nature of abstract labor, the relationship between

capital and abstract labor is not in conflict. Therefore, rather than proposing a methodology of struggle in which abstract labor is the founder, it suggests a method of struggle based on doing and focuses on overcoming the conflict between abstract labor and doing. At the same time, this stance is a proclamation that no specific emphasis should be attached to labor fighting against capital, that is, to the struggle of the working class, but that all forms of labor must be anti-capitalist.

Holloway argues that this revelation of the dual character of labor exposes two repercussions in successfully bringing about a social transformation in the modern world. The first of Holloway's premises is that seizing power at the state level cannot bring about significant societal changes. Second, the initial step toward a social change in society will begin to develop through the transformation of everyday life. Holloway's grasp of radical social transformation is the most significant constituent underpinning the novelty of his theory, as Holloway challenges the widely held view that the radical revolutionary perspective relates to the notion of attaining social change by capturing state power. Regarding the state, Holloway (Sitrin, 2005) argues that "directing our anti-capitalist anger towards winning influence or power within the state means channeling our activity into the logic of power, and the logic of power is the logic of reconciliation with capital." He also notes that it is possible to claim that the lessons of history have shown us that strategies for social transformation that center on the state are doomed to failure. Therefore, Holloway argues that emancipatory efforts to restructure society by seizing state power will fail. As a result, he advocates abandoning the idea that taking state power can bring about genuine social transformation. Holloway articulates the state's role in this matter as follows:

> The state, by its very existence, says in effect, 'I am the force of social cohesion, I am the centre of social determination. If you want to change society, you must focus on me, you must gain control of me.' This is not true. The real determinant of society is hidden behind the state and the economy: it is the way in which our everyday activity is organised, the subordination of our doing to the dictates of abstract labour, that is, of value, money, profit (Holloway, 2010, p. 133).

According to Holloway (2002, pp. 8–12), relationships based on capitalism can be found wherever. They are not just deeply ingrained in the state. As a result, the age-

old debate over the acquisition of state power through either revolutionary or reformist means is a logical fallacy. In both scenarios, the issue of capturing state power leads to the replication of the hierarchies inherent to capitalism; hence, the seizure of power is synonymous with the outbreak of the structure of hierarchies and authorities over society again (De Angelis, 2005, p. 237). On the other hand, this is not what social transformation ought to be about; rather, it should be about eliminating power over people and establishing anti-power relations. In capitalist social relations, human relations assume the shape of connections between things, which, in the end, implies that the object dominates the subject and the power-over dominates the power-to. In other words, the subject is subservient to the object. According to Holloway, in the context of this discussion, this is the power that dominates us and penetrates everything; it is not a force that exists independently of us, such as a capitalist class or a state. As a result, in order to liberate the power-to from the possession of power-over, an understanding of radical social transformation needs to be established, and this understanding needs to take the form of a struggle against power-over (De Angelis, 2005, p. 238).

Holloway (2010) highlights the need to break the link between state and social transformation. Ultimately, he underlines that radical transformation of society should not be viewed as structural alteration or power shift that can be achieved by seizing control of the state apparatus but as a potential of the future that can be realized via continual quests and processes of creation in everyday life. Holloway (2010, p. 58) states that this kind of action is a "struggle in-against-and-beyond capitalism." It corresponds to two opposing ways of doing, namely, which we strive to avoid and want to bring into existence. He states that "the point of the crack is that it is a rupture: not just a response to capitalist aggression but the attempt to move beyond it, to create now a different set of social relations" (Holloway, 2010, pp. 55–56). In this sense, cracks in existing relationships can be used to create the foundation for a new world by encouraging people to look beyond those relationships and pointing in that direction rather than aiming the taking state power. In addition to dismissing the use of state power as a strategy for radical social change, the central importance of everyday life and ordinariness for social change constitutes the second pillar of Holloway's uniqueness. To the extent that 'the

orientation towards the state and the idea of influencing the state or taking state power' (Holloway, 2010, p. 159) cannot lead to radical social change, the seeds of change can be sown in the ordinariness of everyday life by uncovering the potential of power-to that has been alienated and repressed by the power-over. Thus, Holloway's strong focus on daily life and ordinariness constitutes another critical component of his approach because his theory is a theory of everyday life (Tischler, 2012). It is claimed that the contradiction between doing and labor, i.e., power-to and power-over, can be exceeded by creating other doings and social relations by transforming everyday life. As Tischler (2012, p. 271) explains, in Crack Capitalism, everyday life emerges as a struggle because daily life is conceived as a living process constituted by the antagonism between power-to and power-over. For Holloway, everyday life is considered the only space where the contradiction between power-to and power-over can be transcended.

Along the same lines, Susen (2012, p. 283) stresses that the notable complementary strength of Crack Capitalism comes from its emphasis on the "ordinary constitution of social struggle." It is noteworthy that this emphasis on changing everyday life as the primary goal of social change is also a criticism of vanguardism, the idea that there must be an organization or a vanguard to bring consciousness to the masses. Holloway points out that the most important thing to keep in mind is that the fight against capitalism is also a fight against fetishism and that fetishism itself needs to be understood as a process that leads to fetishization: "the fetishization of social relations under capitalism" (Holloway, 2005, p. 39). Thus, Holloway (2005, p. 39) makes a distinction "between fetishism-as-accomplished-fact and fetishism-as-process." According to Holloway, to conceive this problem as a completed situation is to design social change as a phenomenon outside everyday life. Therefore, the need for a vanguard arises because the vanguard is outside the structure of this mundane life and can work on its contradictions. According to Holloway (2005, pp. 39–41), when fetishism is perceived as a completed fact, this can lead to a view that change is either impossible or needs to be led by an emancipated vanguard acting on behalf of the working class. This results in a focus on the state.

On the contrary, to conceive fetishism as a process means to begin with a subject and her everyday life fighting against alienation or fetishization. Therefore, daily life itself becomes a struggle. Holloway explains that as follows:

> The struggle starts from where we are and what we are; the struggle is a refusal of where we are and what we are: we are in-and-against, against-and-in. But more than that: in order to be sustained, the struggle in-and-against must become a moving against-and-beyond—a point being emphasised increasingly by the current struggles against capitalism (Holloway, 2005, p. 39).

As a result, Holloway further predicates the significance and necessity of the emergence of different forms and practices in everyday life against abstracted and fetishized labor. And perhaps most crucially, he (2005, p. 40) stresses that they are always intrinsically experimental. Nevertheless, he adds that conventional practices such as direct democracy and horizontality are essential in actions that aim to oppose capitalist forms.

Hence, in Holloway's theory, the subject is the ordinary person. In this vein, social transformation aims to revolutionize people's everyday lives. Therefore, the goal of revolution is to create a society in which we are no longer governed but where everyone is responsible for their actions. Holloway's radical subject is 'we' (Dinerstein, 2018, p. 541). As a result, Holloway prefers to regard resistance as a broad category comprising a wide array of daily actions that individuals engage in (van de Sande, 2017, p. 53). According to Holloway (2010, p. 11), this is the story of the composer in London who expresses his anger through his music, the gardener in Cholula who creates a garden to fight the destruction of nature, and the university professor in Athens who organizes seminars outside the university to promote critical thinking. All these people are interwoven throughout the entirety of Holloway's narrative. Holloway does not hesitate to provide numerous examples and circumstances comparable to others. Holloway does not choose these instances arbitrarily, as he contends that change must originate from the everyday lives of ordinary people because "this is the story of ordinary people" (Holloway, 2010, p. 5). In this regard, Holloway (2010, p. 12) asserts that:

> Social change is rather the outcome of the barely visible transformation of the daily activities of millions of people. We must look beyond activism, then, to the millions and millions of refusals and other-doings, the millions and millions of cracks that constitute the material base of possible radical change.

Taken together, the perpetual emphasis on everyday life and ordinariness and rejection of the use of state power as a transformative instrument requires a 'method of the crack.' The crux of Holloway's perspective on radical transformation is the claim that resistance to the dominance of capitalism can be realized through cracks in the system. Crack is a generic notion that describes forms and practices that simultaneously subvert the structures of domination and create new social relations. Holloway (Holloway & Susen, 2013, p. 24) defines crack "as being a space of negation and creation, refusal and creation." Consequently, Holloway views cracks as representing "the material base of possible radical change" (Holloway, 2010, p. 12) since it symbolizes "a break with capitalist social relations" (2010, p. 39). A fundamental element of Holloway's method is that the act of negation is the first step in achieving dramatic transformation in society. That is, in Holloway's worldview, destruction and reversing is the first stage, and this process must begin with negation. However, just overthrowing or overturning existing norms would not suffice. The second step of this process must be characterized by enthusiasm and practices for creating a different world. Nevertheless, the crucial point is that these are not independent processes but rather processes that are entangled with one another. According to Holloway, what orthodox Marxism and traditional left politics have not been able to overcome from the past to the present is that these acts of negation and creation have not operated in harmony with each other in the process. As a result, individuals who wish to see a radical change in the world today should prioritize the negation of abstract labor and the accompanying implementation of new practices through the cracks as their principal purpose.

It is worth repeating that cracks are at the heart of Holloway's method for social transformation; this method focuses on creating, developing, and multiplying cracks. The cracks can be spatial, as in the instance of the Zapatistas' occupation of spaces that the state cannot penetrate; temporal, as in the case of slowing down labor or refusing to meet performance goals; or structural, as in the case of building non-monetary forms of social interactions (Holloway, 2010, pp. 27–30). But where and

how do these cracks appear? For Holloway, the answer is in the spaces and times where people are making rebels against labor. For him, capitalism builds its walls by transforming doing into abstract labor. The crisis of these walls lies in creating forms of doing that cannot be converted into abstract labor. In this respect, the essence of his approach is based precisely on how to prevent this doing from being transformed into abstract labor.

4.2. Two Sides of the Same Coin: An Articulation Between Carnivalesque and Prefiguration

Regarding this constitution, the argument made in this thesis asserts that Holloway's method can be characterized as carnivalesque and prefigurative. We have previously demonstrated that carnival signifies "instances of transgression," embodying the momentary suspension of everyday life, the inversion of hierarchies, and the turning of the world upside-down. Therefore, it is claimed that carnivalesque forms of protest create "cracks" that undermine the established order. In this context, I base my arguments on a perspective that considers the transformational effect of carnivalesque forms on everyday life during protests in squares as producing cracks in society that can lead to social change, as Holloway envisioned. More clearly, carnivalesque protest forms pave the way for the negation and creation process in squares during protests.

One of the purest examples of the formation of temporal, structural, and spatial cracks is seen in the experience of square social movements. As mentioned in the previous chapter, acts of protest reminiscent of a carnival can significantly impact how daily life is lived during demonstrations. Therefore, carnivalesque forms of protest play a substantial part in forming an opposing dynamic and maintaining the protest by transforming ordinary life, as comprehended in the social movements between 2011 and 2013. As a result of these characteristics, carnivalesque forms result in cracks for Holloway. In a similar vein, according to Holloway, carnival can be regarded as a temporal crack in dominance patterns, a time when typical hierarchical ties are not only inverted but eliminated. In this matter, this is more than a safety valve that is just a letting-off of steam for the replication of dominance; it is

something much deeper to the extent that a crack is "a moment in which relations of domination were broken and other relations created" (Holloway, 2010, p. 31). Thus, it is reasonable to argue that carnivals broke the routine of everyday life and created new ways of doing things as well as new social relations. When viewed in this light, the carnivalized public spaces can be interpreted as "cracks." Likewise, Holloway describes this rupture as "the cracks, the spaces or moments in which we reject external authority and assert that 'here and now we rule" (2010, p. 23).

The first reason that protests in the form of a carnival are essential is that they are the ones that instigate the 'scream of NO' that is required for the process of negation and creation to happen. Because the occurrences that we name carnival, which has been examined historically, crack the door for change due to its features, such as inverting the given relations and suspending the established order, carnivalesque forms generate a place for change. Additionally, it provides a way to cultivate dignity, which Holloway has emphasized constantly. Because it makes possible the eradication of inequality and the inversion of power by momentarily dismantling hierarchical relations, privileges, norms, and taboos, so flooring the way for the realization of the principle that Holloway refers to as dignity. Highmore (2002, p. 123) states, "such an overturning is not the erasure of difference; rather, it is a negation that generates the possibility of re-ordering difference."

Secondly, for this process of negation and creation to occur and for a dramatic transformation to emerge from there, the typical everyday life activities will need to be restructured or transformed. This is a prerequisite for the liberation of power-to by developing different relations based on power-to. In this assertion, carnivalesque forms create a movement dynamic for social change because they generate a crack for social change in the same way they create a joyous environment in the squares during protests. When all of this is considered, it can be said that carnivalesque forms of protest develop cracks in a sense Holloway proposes. In other words, considering the protest movements that occurred between 2011 and 2013, while people congregated in the squares to protest, they created an atmosphere reminiscent of a carnival through the widespread use of carnivalesque forms of protest. In doing so,

they not only opposed but also created cracks for an experience of social transformation.

As previously stated, everyday life for Holloway (2010, p. 92) is dominated by abstract labor, which comprises capitalism-based social interactions. In other words, the structure that shapes the commodity form and social interactions determines everyday life. However, these are not the only types of activity inherent in daily life; other forms of action that are the opposite of these are also a part of everyday life. They are, however, repressed or transformed into abstract labor. That is why, for social transformation, it is crucial to undermine the power and its daily dominance. Therefore, what is considered social change is the inversion of this relationship and the emancipation of the power-to. In this sense, the carnivalesque is significant on the grounds that it is a form of action that serves this purpose. As Lefebvre (1991a) emphasizes, the carnival is a moment in which everyday life is reconfigured, yet this altered order is already present in everyday life. The only difference between the carnival and daily life is "the explosion of forces which had been slowly accumulated in and via everyday life itself" (Lefebvre, 1991a, p. 202). This rupture, which Lefebvre refers to as the 'explosion of forces,' is a crack that paves the way to new egalitarian political possibilities where new kinds of social relations based on self-realization can be realized.

Furthermore, Holloway's method of crack is undoubtedly prefigurative. According to Holloway's definition, radical social transformation is the process of developing and enlarging cracks in the relational structure that capitalism has established by moving beyond the power-over. In this regard, cracks interrupt the reality imposed by capital, making it possible for another world to become visible. Van de Sande states that "in these 'cracks,' radical change is at once envisioned and actualized" because cracks not only make the existence of a radical alternative sensible but they also make an experience of it possible here and now. Holloway, with reference to Zapatistas' principle of "asking we walk," reflects on its contemporary repercussions:

> An enormous amount of experience has been gained, especially in recent years, in this prefigurative or other politics, this politics of dignity. This includes both experience in the organisation of the great anti-summit events of the anti-

globalisation movement and the organisation of the world and regional Social Forums, but also the less spectacular creation of community gardens, alternative schools, radio station in resistance, street theatre, and so on. The idea is gaining ground that the only way to change the world is to do it ourselves and to do it here and now. And yet, the attempts to create now the other world that we say is possible are never unproblematic: in a society based on the negation of dignity, a politics of dignity is always a struggle (Holloway, 2010, p. 45).

In a nutshell, it is essential to emphasize the two primary characteristics that describe prefiguration as a political action. The first object of understanding prefigurative politics is that it entails formulating, testing, and evaluating means and ends simultaneously throughout the political process. In other words, prefigurative politics ought to be seen more as a process than as the implementation of a predetermined strategy (Maeckelbergh, 2009, p. 94). Second, the nature of this process can best be described as experimental and experiential. Put differently, one is required to continually and concurrently construct and redefine a projection of both the objective of his political acts as well as the means used in the performance of those actions. In light of this, van de Sande (2017, p. 29) emphasizes that the implication is that prefigurative acts are characterized by a high sense of immediacy and urgency. Political activities that are prefigurative are founded on the actualization of social and political aspirations here and now. In other words, for van de Sande (2017, p. 30), "prefiguration is most commonly considered a way to reach beyond the experiential distinction between longer-term revolutionary goals and the urge to free ourselves in the present." Thus, although long-term, idealistic, and sometimes even utopian political objectives are pursued through a prefigurative practice, they are totally directed toward the context of everyday life. In other words, prefiguration is an attempt to build a world we believe beyond the existing social relations is possible in the present moment.

Regarding the discussion of prefigurative politics within the framework of modern social movements, it is possible to assert that Holloway's approach has progressed to a stage where the underlying themes of prefiguration have achieved a more ripened level. In these "cracks," to the extent that radical change is tried to be envisioned and realized, Holloway's theory becomes the prefigurative understanding of social change. Van de Sande states that Holloway's conception of prefiguration crystalizes in his differentiation between power-to and power-over. To the extent that power-to

is a potential that can only be fulfilled by overcoming alienated or fetishized power-over, the new set of social relations that are desired and envisioned should not be alienated and commodified and should be compatible with the means you use to achieve it. Holloway stresses that "living now the world we want to create with its social practices and the correspondent relationship breaks the instrumental separation of means and end: the mean is the end" (2010, p. 241). This notion of creating a new society through forms of conflict is fundamental to Holloway. Holloway (2002, p. 94) elucidates that:

> the most liberating struggles, however, are surely those in which the two are consciously linked, as in those struggles which are consciously prefigurative, in which the struggle aims, in its form, not to reproduce the structures and practices of that which is struggled against, but rather to create the sort of social relations which are desired.

There is no doubt that Holloway's articulation incorporates both the carnivalesque forms of protest and the prefigurative political actions in this framework. Prevalent practices of square social movements are knotted in the crack method since new forms of social relations, new ways of doing, and new ways of life have been established by the accumulation and proliferation of these carnivalesque and prefigurative forms. What is crucial for us to recognize here is that they are intertwined in this articulation. Both carnivalesque and prefiguration mirror each other in that they share several key features, as inferred from the above discussions. It can be claimed that carnivalesque protest forms and prefigurative practices are crucial driving factors for opening and experiencing cracks in squares. If the carnivalesque form of protest is an incident that ignited these cracks, the prefigurative character of demonstrations is the actualizations of different other-doings and social relations experienced within this crack. They constitute a process of negation and creation and refusal and creation. As a crack, what is carnivalesque becomes prefigurative, and what is prefigurative becomes carnivalesque.

It is undeniable that the occupation of the squares has become a space where protesters have attempted to create a different everyday life experience for themselves. These different everyday life experiences in squares make, develop, and multiply spatial, temporal, and structural cracks. It can be argued that this rupture

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emerged through carnivalesque and prefigurative political experiences in the squares by attempting to transcend structures of domination based on abstract labor. These practices as repertoires of contention indicate doings based on power-to beyond the power-over. As a result, these two, as a crack, correspond to a practice, vision, and opening toward social change as envisioned by Holloway. Also, Holloway (2010, pp. 30–31) asserts that even though these protest movements are thought to be unsuccessful because they are temporary and do not result in long-term change, this perception is incorrect because these protest movements have worth in their own right, regardless of the long-term implications of their doings:

> Like a flash of lightning, they illuminate a different world, a world created perhaps for a few short hours, but the impression which remains on our brain and in our senses is that of an image of the world we can (and did) create. The world that does not yet exist displays itself as a world that exists not-yet.

Another important aspect of this articulation is the joyful affirmation of change and utopianism. Carnival is "the joyful affirmation of change, a dress rehearsal for utopia" (Stam, 1989, p. 95), as I have explicated earlier. It can be said that prefigurative practices are accompanied by a festival atmosphere. Also, the joyous affirmation of expressing what is different or alternative imagination, in other words, of making it livable in spaces and everyday life, is inherent in prefigurative politics. The transgression of the norms of everyday life through prefigurative practices comes with a sense of joy and accomplishment. If prefigurative politics implies "a political action, practice, movement, moment or development in which certain political ideals are experimentally actualised in the 'here and now,' rather than hoped to be realised in a distant future," it is hardly surprising that prefigurative practices are considered together with the concept of utopia. In this respect, Cooper (2014) uses the term "everyday utopias" to refer to prefigurative politics by stating that prefiguration creates spaces that "condition participants to think, feel, hope, imagine, and experience life differently" (2014, p. 12).

Also, as explained earlier, prefigurative practices are characterized by their experiential and experimental nature. In this regard, carnivalesque forms of protest involve prefiguration because carnival is not just a transgression in the sense of a practice of breaking or transcending moral codes, even if only temporarily. Quite

clearly, it is also experimental and experiential inherently because carnival corresponds to a different sort of activity or makes room for a different kind of action. The carnivalesque protest turns the public sphere into a freer space and more joyous for direct action and protest utilizing experimentation. Carnivalesque entails the experience and experiment with alternative imaginaries and practices of social relations.

The relationship between the logic of protest and the quest for social change in social movements can be revealed through the interrelation of these repertoires. In this respect, we bring these two phenomena together to explore and comprehend square social movements' protest forms and practices concerning social change. Precisely, this is why we engage in this manner: the ability to recognize the carnivalesque in the prefigurative and the prefigurative in the carnivalesque. The way in which people protested in the squares, the relationships they developed with one another, and the activities they participated in during the social movements between 2011 and 2013 are all characterized by this particular aspect. The interwoven spatiality and temporality of carnivalesque protest forms and prefigurative practices in the square movements generate time-space beyond the existing relationships characterized by alienated and commodified labor by reconfiguring everyday life in ways that create new political possibilities. It can be argued that the occupied squares become temporal, structural, and spatial cracks in the patterns of domination. They become "centres of transgression" (Holloway, 2010, p. 35) by creating cracks experimentally and creatively through carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices.

CHAPTER 5

CARNIVALIZE AND PREFIGURE: CREATING CRACKS IN THE GEZI PROTEST

This chapter aims to analyze the case of the Gezi Protests through the lens of the articulation constructed between carnivalesque and prefiguration. It is worth repeating that the spatiality and temporality of carnivalesque and prefiguration constitute cracks as a space of negation and creation in squares. This articulation reconfigures the everyday life in the square and produces time-space beyond existing social relations. Thus, they create openings for new political possibilities and possible social change. This chapter analyzes the Gezi Protests regarding carnivalesque protest forms and prefigurative political actions as instances of transgression by representing a crack by inverting existing social relations and expanding and concretizing the imagined social relations. To illustrate this, this chapter is divided into two sections. The background of the Gezi Protests and their trajectory from local environmental movements into nationwide protest movements will be briefly elaborated on in the first part. The second part will focus on the forms and practices in Gezi Park and Taksim Square to illustrate changing forms of social relations under the oscillation between carnivalesque and prefiguration. This square will be presented as the junction point of the dynamics we have covered thus far.

5.1. Overview of The Gezi Protests

Gezi Protests began on May 27, 2013, when Taksim Solidarity members gathered at Gezi Park, Taksim. Taksim Solidarity, a social initiative that includes more than 120 groups from NGOs, trade unions, and chambers of commerce, was founded in February 2012. It aims to resist the Pedestrianization Project at Taksim Square

(Elicin, 2017). Elicin adds that the primary strategy of Taksim Solidarity, a leaderless and unorganized initiative not affiliated with any political party, can be defined as organizing public meetings, peaceful sit-ins, and press statements in Taksim to force the AKP government to withdraw its plans to renovate Taksim Square, including the demolition of Gezi Park. More than fifty members of Taksim Solidarity camped in the park on May 27 and refused to leave with the hope of preventing the destruction of Gezi Park. The use of excessive force by the police on protesters in the park on May 28 can be considered the first breaking point of the protests. The police used tear gas and pepper spray to evict the protesters from the park so that they could continue with the demolition. However, the excessive use of force by the police and the dissemination of visuals showing this violence against the protesters led to a public reaction against the police.

Public support for the protesters in the park increased rapidly after this incident. While support for the activists in the park grew with messages of solidarity from different political and social groups, the burning of the activists' tents on May 29 and the rapid spread of images of this incident on social media platforms triggered a public outrage that resulted in the escalation of protests in different districts of Istanbul. From May 30 onwards, following violent interventions by the police using tear gas, pepper spray, water cannons, and rubber bullets, the scale of the protests shifted from local to national. It rapidly spread to other major cities such as Ankara, İzmir, Antakya, and Adana. From this point onwards, the Gezi Protests spread to 80 of Turkey's 81 provinces and became a wave of protests with broad participation. The data submitted by the Ministry of the Interior indicates that 3,611,208 persons participated actively during the demonstrations (*Türkiye İnsan Hakları Kurumu Gezi Olayları Raporu*, 2014). The protests lasted for over a month and gradually subsided in the early days of July 2013. As a wave of leaderless and unorganized demonstrations sparked by a series of predominantly anti-government and pro-democracy demands after an environmentalist start, the Gezi Park Protests had various social and political consequences. Of course, it is beyond the limits of this thesis to discuss all of these, but it would not be wrong to state that the most significant outcome of the protests was the prevention of the demolition of Gezi Park and the withdrawal of the project.

It can be stated that the initial motivation for protests was the demand for a right to the city because concerns about the potential environmental destruction caused by neoliberal urban policies are the starting point of the demonstrations (Elicin, 2017; Kuymulu, 2013a). It should be noted that the demand for the right to the city has always remained at the center, although other motivations have been added to it. In this sense, the right to the city seems to embed into these protests a significant notion by representing a conjunction point of this wave. The critical aspect of the debate on the right to the city is the deprivation of the use value of the common areas of the city for their exchange value (Kuymulu, 2013b). For this reason, the protest practices implemented during the protests have always been shaped by use value; thereby, they challenged the abstract labor by releasing the power-to. Even though Gezi Park is a public park that all city residents can use for free, the government decided to tear it down and replace it with a shopping mall that looks like an artillery barracks from the Ottoman Era. Concerns regarding the commodification of urban space and the imposition of conservative ideology on urban space have given rise to discontentment.

It can be argued that although local urban and environmental problems were influential in the emergence of the first protests, the protests turned into a nationwide wave of protests due to the masses' discontent towards the government. Yörük (2014) portrays the Gezi Protests as a result of demonstrations organized by many social and political groups, including women, students, Kurds, Alevis, LGBTs, workers, and secularists in opposition to the anti-democratic policies and ideologies of the AKP government. It was found by Yörük and Yüksel (2014, pp. 109–110) that between July 2012 and May 2013, there were more than 250 political protests per month compared to less than 60 per month before that. Restrictive regulations on alcohol, restrictions on women's rights, honor killings against women, and murders of LGBTQ+ individuals, as well as policies and events such as the spread of a conservative and pro-Sunni discourse in both the private and public spheres, anti-environmental neoliberal construction projects, restrictions on freedom of expression and media freedom, can be shown as some of the exact reasons motivating both these protests and the Gezi Park Protests (Yörük & Yüksel, 2014). The findings of a survey conducted by the KONDA Research Institute (2014) in Gezi Park support

these claims: 34.1% participated in protests due to restricted freedoms, and 18.4% protested human rights violations and demanded more democratic rights. In addition, 9 out of 10 protesters believe that the AKP government violated their rights and freedoms and that their participation in protests resulted from government policies (KONDA, 2014).

In addition to these political motivations, it is essential to highlight two other aspects that played a crucial role in expanding the protests to such a large scale. The first issue is the disproportionate use of physical force by the police. According to research conducted by KONDA (2014), 49.1% of protesters participated in the protests after they witnessed police violence. There were deaths and numerous injuries resulting from police brutality during the demonstrations. In fact, everyday life itself emerged as a struggle during the protests. The level of attention that police aggression during the protests received on social media platforms had a substantial impact on the extent of mass mobilization that took place. The second issue in this context is the impact of social media use on this protest. The use of social media has been a vital feature of the post-2008 global protest wave (Castells, 2015). Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc., have changed the basic principles and dissemination channels of protests in this period with their mobilizing role. Also, social media platforms played an essential role in intra-community and inter-community communication during the protests (Rane & Salem, 2012). In this context, the active use of social media platforms during the Gezi Protests and the rapid dissemination of information on these violent incidents linked to the abusive use of force by the police had a mobilizing effect on the public. Thus, the rapid dissemination of images of violent incidents against protesters on social media platforms triggered a public outrage that resulted in the escalation of the protests. Further analysis of Konda's survey (2014) states that the rate of those who indicated that they learned about the Gezi protests from social media is 69%. The rate of those who used social media during the protests was 84.6%.

Before proceeding to examine protest repertoires, it is essential to have a brief discussion on the identity of the participants in the protests. During the demonstrations, the term "çapulcu" was commonly used by protesters and eventually

evolved into the protesters' unified expression. The term literally meant looters and vandals and was used by the Prime Minister at the time to denigrate the protesters in his speech on June 2, 2013. Ironically, the protesters immediately adopted this deliberate insult, dubbing themselves Çapulcular. Moreover, the protesters even invented a new concept called "chapulling," which in English has become a verb form and now means to protest or to be stubborn. In this regard, who is the çapulcu? Gezi Protests brought together people from various identities, cultures, and belief structures. Most protestors had not been politically involved in the past and represented a diverse cross-section of society concerning gender, age, and class (KONDA, 2014). For this reason, the Gezi Park protests display heterogeneous activism. Moreover, to the extent that the protests were spontaneous, non-institutional, and horizontally organized, similar to other post-2008 social movements, there was no leadership of a specific vanguard group (Sitrin & Azzellini, 2014). According to the research conducted by KONDA, the average age of the people in Gezi Park is 28. The Gezi Report revealed that gender representation is approximately equal. Also, 37 % of the protesters identified themselves as students and 52 % as employees. To the question "With which identity did you come?" 93.6 % of the protesters answered, "as simple citizens." The rate of those who said they came with an organized group was 6.4 %. Furthermore, 79 % of the protesters stated that they were not members of any political party, organization, or civil society organization such as associations, foundations, platforms, etc. and that they participated as "ordinary people" or "citizens." 44.4 % of the protesters stated that they had not participated in any protest, march, or sit-in before, and 62 % consider themselves part of one of the groups facing human rights violations (KONDA, 2014). In this respect, it is reasonable to think of the participants as "ordinary citizens" because the radical subject of the Gezi Protests is "we" (Holloway, 2002).

This intense diversity raises the question of identifying protesters, especially in terms of class, to understand their commonalities, characteristics, and common demands. In terms of defining the protesters in terms of class and political alignment, Yörük and Yüksel (2014, pp. 105–107) scrutinize the debates in three categories: first, those who consider the Gezi protests to be essentially a middle-class movement; second, those who regard the protests as a proletarian movement; and third, those who

perceive the movement as a movement of the multitude. The studies that evaluate the Gezi Protests as a proletarian movement begin with the assumption that the majority of participants are students who will become proletarians in the future and that protest participants are equivalent to proletarians in terms of their relations with the means of production. In other words, this line of reasoning contends that the Gezi Protests should be interpreted as a "mature class uprising" against crony capitalists and their government representatives' ambitions to possess urban space (Boratav, 2013; Tonak, 2013). On the other hand, Keyder (2013) argues that the Gezi Protest is the work of the middle classes who are more sensitive to issues such as individual freedom, environmental and state oppression, and states that the middle classes, which constitute the majority of the population, have changed due to capitalist development, and that the position of the members of the new middle class in society is primarily due to the status brought by their education.

It is important to note that the studies evaluating the Gezi Protests on the middle-class axis reveal a more limited approach, mainly covering Istanbul and the park itself (Gürcan & Peker, 2015). However, since this study will specifically analyze the carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices in Taksim Square and Gezi Park, the emphasis on the middle classes should be noted. According to Yörük and Yüksel (2014, p. 121), a possible explanation for this might be that they are more visible in the public sphere than other classes due to their greater representation in social and mainstream media. Another possible reason is that the slightly higher-class profile of the directly present protesters in Gezi Park may have contributed to the impression that the protesters generally belonged to the middle class. In a similar vein, considering these spatial distinctions, Tuğal depicts the Gezi Protests as a movement encompassing multiple social classes but predominately associated with the middle class. Tuğal argues that "the Gezi movement provided a non-commodified space (the barricades, the public park, the shared meals) where this class momentarily tasted the fruits of solidaristic life" (2013, p. 157). Still, he contends that this "prefigurative style survived only among the (relatively) privileged" (2015, p. 80). Another approach is considering the Gezi Protests as a "multitude" (Gambetti, 2014; Karakayalı & Yaka, 2014). Hardt and Negri (2004) explain this concept as follows:

> The multitude is composed of innumerable internal differences that can never be reduced to a unity or a single identity-different cultures, races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations; different forms of labor; different ways of living; different views of the world; and different desires. The multitude is a multiplicity of all these singular differences.

In this regard, Gambetti favors the concept of multitude, explicitly referring to the "living multiplicity" observed in Gezi Park (2014, p. 98). Gambetti believes that the individuals who were demonstrating in Gezi Park were not acting as a unified entity but as groups trying to assert their identities.

Given the importance of heterogeneous class composition above, Yörük and Yüksel (2014, pp. 119–120) conclude that what brought the participants together was their political and cultural orientations crystallized around being more secular, less religious, and in line with leftist policies rather than their class backgrounds. By categorizing the political alignment of the protesters, they demonstrate that those involved in the Gezi Park protests and those who support them have a distinct political and cultural orientation compared to the rest of society. This aspect can be determined based on the participants' class background, gender, and age. Therefore, it is possible to draw the conclusion that a significant portion of society participated in the Gezi Protests as a form of resistance against their sense of repression because of the unjust, discriminatory, and authoritarian tendency of the ruling party. In this respect, it can be argued that the common thread that unites the participants of the Gezi Protests is the search for dignity.

5.2. Prefigurative Carnival: Unveiling the Repertoires of the Gezi Protests

It is possible to say that the occupation of Taksim Square and Gezi Park has become an iconic image of Turkish political history and is embedded in people's collective memory as a utopian social experience. As a free and contested space outside the authorities' control, the square became a place where the everyday life's usual social and political order was radically subverted and inverted. It not only negates the existing relations but also becomes a place where idealized possibilities could flourish. In this sense, Gezi Park can be considered simultaneously as a space of protest and the embodiment of demands against the state, as it functioned both as a

space to challenge the government's control over the public sphere and as a place where protesters could depict and experience a life they desired. In this sense, Gezi Park was not just a demonstration space or a gathering point; instead, it challenged the imposed spatial, social, and political controls that brought to sharp light the injustices of government policies. Through the autonomy made possible by free space, the occupiers were able to create a utopian experience based on dignity in which social and political relations were built around the principles of "respect, solidarity, pluralism, peace generosity, politeness, an ethic of collective work, anti-violence and antiharassment" (Örs & Turan, 2015, p. 457). This experiment and experience constitute the carnivalesque and prefigurative dynamics of the Gezi Protests so that protest opened spatial, temporal, and structural cracks.

5.2.1. Carnivalesque Rupture in Gezi Protests

The carnivalesque atmosphere and the solidarity practices and networks established during protests are the major themes of the Gezi Protests. In this regard, there is a large volume of published studies emphasizing the carnivalesque atmosphere and humor of the Gezi Protests (Çolak, 2013; Emre, P. Ö., Çoban, B., & Şener, 2014; Gambetti, 2014; Kaptan, 2016; Morva, 2016; Öztürkmen, 2014; Tunali, 2018, 2020). As indicated previously, the carnival, first theorized by Mikhail Bakhtin, is a generic term used to describe the particular time when the official system, with all its restrictions and hierarchical barriers, is suspended temporarily. According to Bakhtin, carnival appears as the second life of the people based on laughter against the formal and hierarchical structures of everyday life (1984b, p. 8). In this respect, for Bakhtin, carnival laughter is first and foremost a claim to freedom. Its function is to provide a temporary liberation from the dominant reality and the established order (1984b, p. 10). He (1984a, p. 123) argues that "what is suspended first of all is a hierarchical structure and all the forms of terror, reverence, piety and etiquette connected with it — that is, everything resulting from socio-hierarchical inequality or any other form of inequality among people (including age)." This temporary time and space create "the atmosphere of joyful relativity characteristic of a carnival sense of the world" (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 107). Hence, carnival can be conceived as the celebration of freedom by empowering a "new mode of interrelationship between

individuals" by allowing "free and familiar contact among people" on the carnival square. (1984a, p. 123),

First of all, it is essential to acknowledge the carnival-like atmosphere that can be found in Taksim Square and Gezi Park, which is depicted by conviviality and fun. It has been noted that Bakhtin (1984a, p. 123) has put forward four aspects that characterize the carnival square: free and familiar contact among people, eccentricity, carnivalesque mesalliances, and profanation. The presence of these four aspects in the square gives the Gezi Protests their carnivalesque atmosphere. According to the first category of the carnival square, free and familiar interaction between people promotes a unique style of communication that supports equality among those who take to the streets. In life, people are kept apart by impassable hierarchical walls; nevertheless, they engage in free and familiar contact with one another in the carnival square. According to Bakhtin, this is a crucial characteristic of a carnivalesque vision. It is the first step of the carnivalesque when people who are divided by insurmountable hierarchical barriers in life form free and familiar relationships in the carnival square. This friendly contact is responsible for the unique way people's relationships are organized during mass demonstrations and the creation of carnivalesque aspects. Bakhtin (1984a, p. 123) asserts that "carnival is the place for working out, in a concretely sensuous, half-real and half-play-acted form, a new mode of interrelationship between individuals, counterposed to the all-powerful socio hierarchical relationships of noncarnival life."

In this regard, the heterogeneity and pluralism of the Gezi Protests constitute one of the most distinctive aspects of the Gezi protests. The pluralism and heterogeneity of Gezi are observed in the crowd's diverse backgrounds and orientations (Örs & Turan, 2015). There were hundreds of thousands of people in the square, including environmentalists, sports fans, animal activists, students, artists, academics, feminists, LGBTQ+ individuals, Kurds, Armenians, Kemalists, Turkish nationalists, Muslim socialists, street children, and blue- and white-collar workers of all kinds. The Gezi had a structure that was varied and pluralistic. However, the populace established an egalitarian social framework. This resulted in the development of a unique kind of communication between them. This is clear from the fact that a

security cordon was built by leftist youth to protect people praying on Friday in Gezi Park (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Religious protesters at Friday prayers and activists protecting them.
Photo: Murat Bay

It can be argued that this was the primary feature that gave the square its carnivalesque character. The festival atmosphere of Gezi Park, through the experience of joy and freedom, was essential in bringing together a wide range of people. Bakhtin (1984b, p. 7) states that the core of a carnival is that all its participants can vividly feel it. During the carnival, life is governed solely by the rules established by the carnival itself, and these rules prioritize freedom. Simply put, the carnival is not a spectacle watched by individuals; however, people reside in it as well, as every person joins it since the idea of carnival embraces all individuals. In this regard, the Gezi Protests are an excellent example of a carnival because, during the protests, everyone turned into a performance artist, a writer, a comedian, a graffiti artist, or a dancer (Tunali, 2018, p. 386). Furthermore, even the Gezi Park was turned into a makeshift stage for the performances like piano recitals and theatre plays. In addition, demonstrators in Gezi Park were careful not to insult any group throughout their actions. For instance, feminists have cautioned others from using swear words,

as this could potentially upset LGBTQ demonstrators and women (Yel & Nas, 2013). In this regard, it is arguable that the demonstrations provided participants with an opportunity to gain experience in protesting. Also, it can be argued that there was free and familiar contact among people during Gezi Protests.

In addition, another characteristic that is connected to familiarity is the carnivalesque vision of the world, also known as the carnivalesque mésalliances. Bakhtin contends that a liberated and familiar attitude permeates all aspects of reality, including values, thoughts, and facts. As a result, everything that was once closed off inside itself, divided, and kept apart from one another by a non-carnival life is drawn into carnivalesque encounters. The holy and the profane, the high and the poor, the significant and the insignificant, the wise and the foolish are all united by a carnival celebration. Put another way, it brings people who are highly separated from one another together. It is precisely this phenomenon that brings together people who would not normally interact with one another. Kuymulu (2018) characterizes the crowd that gathered during the Gezi Protests as a 'frictional heterogeneity,' which indicates that the group consisted of a broad set of people hailing from a variety of cultural, political, and social backgrounds, some of which have a long-standing history of contention with one another. Initially thought to be simply impossible, gatherings began to take place before the Gezi Park protests. There was a collaboration between traditionally opposed groups, like Kemalists and Kurds, homophobes and LGBT individuals, or sexist football fans and feminist collectives. According to Kuymulu (2018, pp. 34–35), what made the frictional heterogeneity in Taksim Square so remarkable was that all of these groups, and many more besides, were unified against mass police aggression and that the majority of them were coming into contact with each other for the first time. Although police brutality was the main factor for this unity, carnivalesque forms were also the driving force for maintaining this unity throughout the protests.

Moreover, Bakhtin argues that, in a carnivalesque atmosphere, people's behavior and discourse are freed from the authority of all the hierarchical positions that completely define them in everyday life and thus become eccentric and inappropriate from the point of view of outsiders. The protesters were characterized as looters precisely

because this category of eccentricity was revealed in the square. Moreover, according to Bakhtin, eccentricity is a particular category of carnivalesque world perception, organically linked to the type of familiar contact. It allows the hidden aspects of human nature to emerge and express themselves concretely in sensuous form. This component has been aided in its development by employing costumes and masks and by humorous and inventive jokes, slogans, and graffiti. For instance, many people participating in or supporting the protests wore Guy Fawkes masks, a symbol of the comic book and film V for Vendetta. It is in keeping with the carnival image as Holmes (2003, p. 346) states that "during the carnival, as in the rebellion, we wear masks to free our inhibition, we wear masks to transform ourselves." Indeed, according to Avcı (2013), Gezi humor is an explosion of expression and desire. He emphasizes that one of the roots of humor is the discharge of suppressed, forbidden, and limited impulses. The passion, excitement, joy, and enthusiasm that emerged during the Gezi protests is a period of time when the oppressive life was temporarily suspended, and repressed thoughts and images of freedom were revealed through humor. With reference to Vaneigem, Avcı (2013) argues that all kinds of repressed desires manifest themselves as carnival because enthusiasm and pleasure reverse the "survival sickness" that is the physical and psychological consequence of capitalism (Grindon, 2004).

Even though many people participated in the protests and even more people supported them, it would not be wrong to say that the criticism of those who opposed the protests centered on this point. During the demonstrations, there was an outburst of emotion and desire, which made a lot of people outside of the carnival uncomfortable. The eccentric atmosphere in the square was so intense that it grotesquely challenged even the imagination of those who opposed the protests. To give a well-known example for the sake of clarity, the incident covered in the media as the "Kabataş Lie" is an impressive example of this. The Kabataş Lie is the allegation that one person was attacked during the Gezi protests and that a group of 70-100 people, naked from the waist up, wearing leather gloves and black bandanas on their heads, beat her and urinated on her. It was later confirmed that such an incident had never happened by even journalists who claim it's true.

According to Bakhtin, the last carnivalesque feature accompanying the above is profanation: "carnivalistic blasphemies, a whole system of carnivalistic debasings and bringings down to earth, carnivalistic obscenities linked with the reproductive power of the earth and the body, carnivalistic parodies on sacred texts and sayings, etc." (1984a, p. 123). In this light, the carnivalesque acts undermine the authority of those in control and, as a result, incite the masses to act against them through irony, satire, parody, and the grotesque. Carnivalesque becomes a reaction against all kinds of restrictions, limitations, and hierarchical structures. Carnival mocks authority, ridicules it, uses the destructive power of laughter, and humiliates everything that represents authority. These humor-based acts against the regime appear as a stance against all visible and invisible violence inflicted by authority. Thus, carnivalesque forms give all groups and individuals who have problems with authority the opportunity to participate in the struggle in different ways and at different levels. It is possible to argue that this category of carnivalesque is concretized through the humor of the Gezi Protest, which was a leading repertoire during the protest.

It is possible to argue that the carnivalesque driving act in Gezi Protests is the humor. Cartoons, graffiti, posters, and slogans, used as a carnivalesque critique of social reality, became a tool for protesters to target and humiliate the government and police forces. The term 'disproportionate intelligence,' which refers to all these repertoires of humor, was the protesters' reaction to the disproportionate violence they were subjected to. Hart explains the relationship between humor and protest with reference to the carnival and puts it as follows.

> During carnivals and similar festive periods former ranks and hierarchies disappeared. All participants to the carnival were considered equal and free and familiar contacts were allowed between different social classes and positions. These ritual settings stressed the all-human, all-joyous characteristics of life and opened the way for playful and undefined relationships (T Hart, 2007, p. 4).

In a similar vein, Emre et al. (2014, pp. 435–436) contend that humor plays a crucial role in fostering solidarity, integrating new and marginalized groups, reducing tension, reconciling contradiction, and allowing protesters to express themselves. In addition, they emphasize that humor is an effective means of fostering collective identity, particularly in heterogeneous groups incapable of forming collectivism.

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The discourses, banners, slogans, and graffiti made during the Gezi Protests contain examples of the humor that emerged during the demonstrations. In this sense, the most crucial evidence showing carnivalesque humor has been established in Gezi Protests are the slogans, banners, and graffiti made because of the rhetoric utilized during the uprising. Recently, Van de Velde (2022) explored the power of slogans and writings produced and used during social movements. She argues that these slogans and texts contribute significantly to a better understanding of collective identities, emotions, and statements expressed in contemporary protests. Hence, it is essential to exemplify these elements to provide a more straightforward illustration of the carnivalesque nature of the Gezi Protests.

Carnivalesque acts like parodying high values, mocking authorities, subverting existing values, grotesque imagery, and playing with the meaning and degradation can be found in the protest forms of the Gezi Protests. By challenging current conditions of hierarchy with carnivalesque humor, the protesters created a utopian atmosphere of egalitarian community, autonomy, and liberation. In such a community where participants are positioned as equals, the community has challenged prevailing social positions, norms, habits, ideas, and ritualized practices, while acting against hierarchical structures. Indeed, what emerges from the demonstrations is a joyful subversion of authority. The masses, united under the "Korkma la, biziz, halk!" ("Dude don't be scared. It's us. The people!") graffiti, with a banner reading "Nasıl baş edeceklerini bilmedikleri tek şey şiddet dışı eylemler ve mizahtır" ("The only thing they don't know how to deal with is non-violence and humor") carried by an activist in a clown costume and make-up, subverted, resisted, and reversed the systems of power that structured their everyday life (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. A banner reads, "The only thing they don't know how to deal with is. non-violence and humor." Image from (Avcı, 2013).

Furthermore, the characteristic of carnivalesque humor is that it makes fun of what belongs to this fear. The elements of authority and power include violence, terror, prohibition, seriousness, limitation, anxiety, and so on. In carnivalesque humor, "the people play with terror and laugh at it; the awesome becomes a comic monster." (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 91). In this sense, the humor of the Gezi Uprising also aimed to overcome the source of fear. Through the numerous graffiti and banners, the protestors mock the prime minister, police officers, tear gas and water cannons, etc. The graffiti of "Polis kardeş, gerçekten gözlerimizi yaşartıyorsunuz" (Dear Police, you're literally bringing tears to our eyes), "Tayyip, Winter is coming," and "Everyday I'm chappuling" can be considered an example of that. During the demonstrations, there was a significant amount of police violence, as was mentioned earlier. A considerable amount of pepper spray was deployed to disperse the protesters. The demonstrators' answer was to make light of the sort of assault that was being used against them by using irony and satire. This allowed them to triumph against the violent tactics of the police by using humor. To this goal, activists have

developed several creative street writings, some examples of which are as follows (Morva, 2016): "İstanbul 1. Geleneksel Gaz Festivaline Hoşgeldiniz (Welcome to the 1st Traditional Istanbul Gas Festival)," "Bir porsiyon daha gaz lütfen! (Another serving of gas, please!)," "Biber gazı oley! (Pepper spray, ole!)," "Üç gündür banyo yapmadık, TOMA'ları gönderin! (We haven't taken a shower for 3 days, so send us RCV's! (Riot Control Vehicles))," "Biber soslu demokrasi! (Pepper sauce democracy!)", "Tüp kaçağını çakmak yakarak kontrol eden bir milleti biber gazıyla korkutamazsın (You can't scare a people who checks for a gas leak with a lighter by using tear gas)", "Biz sinek ilacı aracının arkasından koşmuş nesilleriz. Gaz da neymiş? (We are a generation that ran after insect fumigation trucks. What is gas to us?)", "Sekiz gündür TOMA'larla çıkıyoruz, niyetimiz ciddi. (We've been going out with TOMAs for eight days, our intentions are serious.)."

Furthermore, the humor of the Gezi uprising is marked by grotesque realism, that is, the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity. For instance, the concepts of "the resistance" or "to resist" are attributed an untouchable and sacred meaning in the traditional sense. On the contrary, these concepts are degraded by the protestors by using them in different contexts in Gezi protests, including: "diren sprey (resist spray)," "diren pipi (resist wienie)," "diren antrikot (resist rib steak)" and so on (Avcı, 2013). Similarly, the graffiti "Huzur İsyanda (Serenity is in the riot/rebellion (see Figure 3))" represents grotesque imagery by playing the meaning of the well-known Turkish saying "Huzur Islamda (Serenity is in Islam)." By replacing the word Islam with the phonetically similar word rebellion, two worldviews that stand as opposing ideologies are brought together. In this example, the expression in the graffiti enters a dialogical relationship with Islamic doctrine and criticizes its view that inculcates submission and docility. Hence, it perfectly encapsulates the oscillation between sacred and profane. Another example of what is meant by the oscillation between sacred and profane is "Rabbime sordum, #direngezi dedi (I asked God what to do. He replied #direngezi; Twitter tag of the movement)."

Figure 3. A graffiti that reads, "Serenity is in Rebellion."
Image from (Avcı, 2013).

In this framework, it is argued that the carnivalesque humor as deployed by the activists represents a form of protest that symbolically reverses the established norms of a political regime that refuses to recognize the people's voice. By adopting the carnivalesque forms, dominant values, ideologies, and stereotyped narrow views were destroyed and trivialized through humor. It creates cracks in everyday life, giving them new life in the shape of a festival, and transforming those cracks into a dynamic of resistance. Carnivalesque playful activities as instances of transgression have played an increasingly prominent role in Gezi Protests to the extent that it offers a creative tactic and strategy as a mode of social protest because it performs "as political action, as a festive celebration, as cathartic release, as wild abandonment of the status quo, as networking tool, as a way to create a new world." (Ainger et al., 2003, p. 180). They reinvigorate everyday life in the shape of a festival and change it into a dynamic of resistance by creating cracks. The process gained horizontal, non-hierarchical, egalitarian, and anti-authoritarian characteristics because of the atmosphere the demonstrators created with their banners, slogans, and graffiti through carnivalesque forms. In this sense, carnivalesque does not refer to a momentary release from the existing reality; instead, it refers to an open-ended process of transformation and becoming.

5.2.2. Living Utopias in the Gezi Protests: The Prefigurative Politics in Developing New Forms of Social Relations

Analysis of the prefigurative dynamics that characterized the square in Gezi Protests can be made under three confluent headings: the actualization of intended social relations through here-and-now practices, the experimental and experiential nature of the practices conveyed during the protest, and the harmony that exists between means and ends during the protest (van de Sande, 2013). Firstly, it is possible to claim that participants in the Gezi Protests worked toward realizing a vision for an alternative society in the "here and now." Protesters prioritize immediate involvement in the circumstances at hand rather than anticipating possible immense and fundamental shifts in the social order after the projected uprising in the future. It is reasonable to argue that direct action efforts to realize shared and committed values and struggles to transform social relations are symptomatic of here-and-now practices.

Attempts to realize the desired everyday life, social relations, and political approach in the here and now are particularly evident in the communal life practices created in Gezi Park. In fact, a fundamental component of the Gezi Protests is the communal life formed in Gezi Park (Gambetti, 2014; Göle, 2013; Örs & Turan, 2015; Özgüner, 2021; Yörük & Yüksel, 2014). In this way, the park evolved into a space where individuals might manifest their aspirations, goals, values, and preferences by providing actual examples. The protesters not only indicated their resistance by acting out a different experience of everyday life surrounding the park, but they also hinted at how they wanted to organize their social life by providing a glimpse into the future. It is possible to say that they tried to embody the relations they desired through the practices and links that were put forward in the park. These practices include practices of direct democracy, collectively run infirmaries, meeting needs collectively, alternative solidarity economies, libraries, independent media collectives, etc. These events resulted in forming equitable relationships amongst individuals, revitalizing bonds of solidarity, and developing new organizational practices. It is a prefigurative attempt to reconstitute social and political relations to the extent that prefigurative politics is "the deliberate experimental implementation

of desired future social relations and practices in the here-and-now" (Raekstad & Gradin, 2020, p. 10).

Örs and Turan argue that the most distinguishing aspect of the communal life in Gezi Park manifests itself "in the realm of free exchange" because every activity in the park that required payment was banned. (2015, p. 458). Similarly, Kuymulu (2014, p. 37) states that "they set up tents, put up banners, embellished the trees and set up a solidarity economy where the money, the universal form of power, was rendered irrelevant." Also, Örs and Turan (2015, p. 458) state that the solidaristic lifestyle created in Gezi Park was built on the novelty of 'gift-giving' and that food, drink, medicine, clothes, phone chargers, books, stationery, newspapers, blankets, and other necessities were shared free of charge. More importantly, Örs and Turan underline that counter-institutions such as the Gezi market, Gezi café, Gezi restaurant, Gezi library, etc., have been set up and run free of charge. The creation of self-organizing institutions to meet people's needs enables the development of social relations of cooperation, self-management, and equality in opposition to dominant social relations. Dixon (2014, p. 85) states that, as a prefigurative praxis, "counter-institutions address popular needs (such as food, health care, or housing), drain support from dominant institutions, bolster broader movements, and offer venues for people to practice democratic and egalitarian ways of working together." In this sense, these practices have demonstrated that social relations in the park can be organized more egalitarian way than everyday life's predominant values and concepts. A park is a place where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. As stated earlier, the contradiction between doing and labor, i.e., power-to and power-over, can be overcome by creating other doings and social relations by transforming everyday life. The release of power-to from capitalist social relations unites and brings people together. In this respect, the communal life experienced in Gezi Park ended the reign of abstract labor with its solidarity practices and its emphasis on use value because "the cracks are the revolt of one form of doing against another: the revolt of doing against labour" (Holloway, 2010, p. 83).

Secondly, it is plausible to argue that these protest forms and practices are inherently experimental and experiential to the extent that "new political ideals could be

formulated, realised, tested, improvised and continuously discussed" (van de Sande, 2013). A most notable example of the experimentation in Gezi Protest is alternative media experiments. Because mainstream media initially disregarded the demonstration, many people during the protests relied on Twitter for more objective and truthful coverage. For instance, CNN Türk aired a documentary about penguins while Taksim Square and Gezi Park were being attacked with gas and water. Naturally, this led to several responses on social media, and the "penguin" became yet another representation of the Gezi events. Images of protesting penguins wearing gas masks, brandishing slogan cards on ice, and enduring water cannons in Antarctica filled social media. In his study on the mainstream media's coverage of the Gezi protests, Öz (2016) found that pro-government media often relied on the statements of government officials. In particular, he underlines that mainstream media draw a frame for protest based on foreign influence and conspiracy, portraying the protesters as marginal youth influenced by external forces. In this way, they attempted to marginalize the protest and the protesters. Thus, social media was utilized during the protests to circumvent the mainstream media and provide an alternate account of events to address this problem. Alternative media experiments played a significant role in Gezi Protests in creating a free press and ensuring the freedom of information. RevoltIstanbul, çapul.tv, mustereklerimiz.org, Gezi Postası, videoccupy, Gezi Radio, and Gezi Parki TV are alternative media platforms established during the Gezi Protests (Görgülü, 2016, p. 202). These media experiments were carried out collectively by volunteers.

A prominent example of alternative media was Capul Tv experiment. To draw in more viewers and condemn the mainstream media for omitting the events of the Gezi Protests, Görgülü (2016, p. 215) claims that the names of television programs like "Öyle Bir Geçer Toma Ki…" (And a water cannon vehicle passes by…), "Yarışma: Kim Devrimci Olmak İster?" (Competition: Who wants to be a revolutionary?) and "Çizgi film: Toma ve Jerry" (Cartoon: Water cannon vehicle and Jerry) were chosen humorously. Gorgülü adds that volunteer journalists from capul.tv conducted interviews with several Gezi Park demonstrators and televised their conversations. Additionally, more than a million people observed Capul TV broadcasts as an alternative media platform leveraging modern communication technology in its

inaugural week. Çapul.tv provided news to hundreds of internet users who wanted to learn about the events and raised awareness among individuals about the necessity of participatory media when mainstream media failed to cover particular circumstances. Even after the protests faded away, çapul.tv continued its activities and covered the news about Gezi Protests.

Lastly, the endeavor to synchronize means and ends is another aspect of prefigurative politics that became apparent during the Gezi Protests. Prefigurative politics attempts to achieve a certain coherence between its means and ends, although it is recognized that it can never be entirely coherent. Moreover, since prefigurative political action is inherently experimental, it implies a constant formulation and reformulation of means and ends. Nonetheless, it is of the utmost importance that the methods by which you strive to effect social change are directly connected to the type of society you see for the foreseeable future. Holloway asserts that "if our struggle is not asymmetrical to capital in its forms, then it simply reproduces capitalist social relations, whatever its content" (2010, p. 39). In this sense, protesters must express the political 'end' of their actions through the 'means' they choose for themselves. One example would be establishing egalitarian decision-making through utilizing "non-hierarchical decision-making" mechanisms. Non-hierarchical decision-making processes are based on a critique of top-down decision-making structures in which only a few people have a say. It is therefore based on a vision of a society in which the people affected by decisions can participate in the decision-making process. The establishment of participatory decision-making processes facilitates the development of participant trust and a sense of shared purpose, and the emergence of novel ideas. Hence, "this kind of decision-making process is thus both a tool and a vision, a means and an end" for the sake of "creating and practicing more egalitarian modes of interacting" (Dixon, 2014, pp. 86–87). During the Gezi Protests, such structures surfaced as park forums in Gezi Park and other public parks (Akçalı, 2018; Göle, 2013).

The Gezi Protests developed their decision-making processes in a way that was inspired by the idea of direct democracy. Before Taksim Square and Gezi Park could be entirely cleared of protesters, decision-making processes were carried out through

forums in a communal living area established within the park. In the meetings, everyone had the opportunity to speak and make suggestions, and decisions were made by consensus. Specific rules were adopted for speakers and participation to ensure a fair manner, such as fixing the speaking time and determining the course of the speech using particular hand gestures. Practicing direct democracy in the square is not only an experiment and experience in search of dignity but also indicates an envisioned social relation. These forums have extended to several Istanbul neighborhoods and other cities. Some park assemblies have acted as centers for developing new ideas and practices. Pointing out that parks turned into centers of resistance, Özdek (2013) states that forums bringing local people together started to be held in these parks. She argues that the communal life that flourished in Gezi Park has also sprouted here. Solidarity structures were established in the parks of many cities, barter markets and libraries were opened, and in a sense, the experience of Gezi Park spread throughout Turkey (2013, pp. 113–114). Additionally, they have progressed into more sustainable endeavors by constructing neighborhood solidarities, initiatives, urban gardens, and cooperatives (Yumuk, 2022). Uncu (2022, p. 56), in his article evaluating the prefigurative practices that continued after the protests, expresses this as follows:

> Through intensified and condensed collective identity processes carried out in this free space, the Gezi protesters engaged in the work of turning themselves into a politicized collectivity, prefiguring alternative ways of living that diffused into the practices of everyday life and mobilizations in the aftermath of the Gezi protest encampment.

The prefigurative practices in the park evoked a sense of the possibility of another world that could be built on a different social and political life and everyday life. More importantly, it created a sense of joyful affirmation that another world was already being experimented with and experienced in the square. In this regard, as instances of transgression, prefigurative practices in the Gezi Protests represented a crack by expanding and concretizing the social relations envisaged. During Gezi Protests, prefigurative politics negated existing structures and instead produced a new time-space by introducing experimental alternatives, thus creating cracks for new political possibilities. Gürer (2019, p. 198) laid this feature out very clearly:

Prefigurative politics creates a tension between the current space of expectation and the horizon of expectation by producing a new space-time that negates present structures with immanent imaginative utopias and publicly demonstrates concrete egalitarian alternatives. Such an instantiation of egalitarian forms in an exemplary locality counters the hegemonic presentist closure of temporal horizons and opens up new egalitarian possibilities. Prefigurative spatio-temporality enables such broadening of the horizon, even when the prefigurative movement fails to achieve its set goals. (p. 198)

5.3. A Further Step: Understanding the Gezi Protests Between Carnivalesque and Prefiguration

The occupation of Taksim Square and Gezi Park witnessed the transformation of social and consequently political relations through the liberation of the space. The process of encampment in the square and communal living in the park allowed dignity based new social relations to emerge. Different classes and groups found themselves in physical proximity and togetherness, which provided them with a previously unknown sense of awareness and familiarity. People from different backgrounds participated in each other's daily existence. This restructuring of social relations meant a restructuring of political relations. The gathering of a large section of society in Taksim Square and their experience of self-governance built political relations based on the principles of "comradeship, dignity, amorosity, love, solidarity, fraternity, friendship, ethics." For Holloway (2010, p. 43), these principles, by expressing beyond the commodified relations of capitalism, "describe relations developed in struggles against capitalism and which can be seen as anticipating or creating a society beyond capitalism."

Regarding repertoires of contention in Gezi Protests, it can thus be suggested that carnivalesque and prefiguration appeared as the essential component of the protesting, as in other square social movements. Carnivalesque forms created a rupture in everyday life and transformed it joyfully. By pointing out the importance of the festival and carnival forms in terms of their ability to radical reconfigure everyday life, Lefebvre (1991, p. 54) suggests that "a revolution that does not produce a new space has not realized its full potential [...] A social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space." Regarding the focus on everyday life, Gardiner

(2002, p. 97) asserts that such a transformed space "will be based on the idea of the 'city as play,' where everyday life would become a creation of which each citizen and each community would be capable." (Lefebvre, 1971, p. 135). The carnivalesque features that were present in the Gezi Protests appeared in precisely this manner and served this function. 'City as play' through carnivalesque forms constitutes a space and time where desired social relations and political life were experimented and experienced through prefigurative practices. At this moment, the prefiguration is revealed within the carnivalesque and the carnivalesque within the prefiguration. This study argues that this newly discovered time and space is a "crack." During the Gezi Protests, carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices articulated with one another and manifested themselves as a crack in everyday life. In this respect, cracks have been opened up through festive and prefigurative practices in the Gezi Park as a space for negation and creation. This articulation reconstructed ordinary life in the square and established a time-space that went beyond the extant forms of social interactions. As a result, it opened doors to new political possibilities and pathways for potential societal transformation. Namely, the Gezi Protests created a rupture, produced its own temporality and spatiality, and developed alternative social relations within this crack. Ertuğrul (2022, p. 5) laid this out very impressively:

> As a site of counter-action and as a counter-site, it created a 'sort of absolute break' with the protesters' 'traditional time' and generated its own temporality in 'the mode of festival'. It was 'another space', not of 'an illusion' but of a 'meticulous and well organized' attempt to create an alternative world as 'compensation' for the oppression to which they have been subjected.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Holloway retains the term "crack" to characterize forms and practices that fundamentally alter dominant structures and establish new social relations. He describes cracks "as being a space of negation and creation, refusal and creation." Thus, it symbolizes a break with capitalist social relations and constitutes "the material base of possible radical change." The fundamental tenet of Holloway's method is that the act of negation is the first step in achieving a profound social transformation. In other words, in Holloway's perspective, the first stage is destruction and reversal, and this process should begin with negation. However, solely destroying or reversing current norms would not suffice. The excitement and behaviors aimed at building a different world

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characterize the second stage of this process. The crucial point is that they are not separate processes but interwoven ones. In this context, the Gezi Protests are a crack in terms of their carnivalesque and prefigurative aspects. Accordingly, the intertwined spatiality and temporality of carnivalesque and prefiguration in the Gezi Protests reconfigured everyday life to create new political possibilities. Thus, they made a time-space beyond existing relations characterized by alienated and commodified labor. It accomplished this by introducing temporal, structural, and spatial cracks into traditional structures of dominance. The Gezi Protests become transgression centers by experimentally and creatively creating cracks through carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices.

The initial objective of this thesis is to analyze protest practices. The occupation of public space is significant insofar as it enables the establishment of new spaces through the transformation of daily life. The Gezi Protests revealed the potential for occupations to challenge established social connections by exposing participants to alternative ways of doing and organization in public space. As shown above, the repertoire of the Gezi Protests was characterized by carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices. However, these two practices are not wholly independent of each other. On the contrary, they are intertwined. This intertwining is shaped around two characteristics: joyful transgression and experimentation and experientiality. In this regard, the carnivalesque involves prefiguration because the transformative aspects of carnival on everyday life evolve into a prefigurative logic insofar as it opens up a space for the realization of aspired and desired relations. Carnivalesque practices are not only a practice, even if temporary, to transcend everyday life or to break moral codes joyfully. It is also an experiment and experience. In this sense, the prefiguration also involves the carnival. During the protests, everyday life is joyfully inverted through carnivalesque. Nonetheless, the protests were not limited to the reversal of everyday life but also presented an alternative imaginary. Even more important is that this alternative imagination was also realized with joy. A state of joyful affirmation has emerged as a result of expressing the different, alternative imaginary, making it livable in everyday life in open spaces. It also means transgressing the given norms of everyday life because protestors have done something that transcends this. Therefore, what is in question is the state of

joyfulness that this provides. Hence, to the extent that this is the case, it could conceivably be argued that there is a carnivalesque within the phenomenon we characterize as prefigurative. Hence, the spatiality and temporality between carnivalesque and prefiguration joyfully and experimentally generated cracks in Gezi Protests by reconfiguring the everyday life in ways that create new political possibilities.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to better understand the protest repertoires of the contemporary square social movements. For this reason, the role of carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices in the case of the Gezi Protests has been examined. Here the attempt has been to develop an alternative perspective that builds on festive-prefigurative dynamics that open cracks in the extant social reality. As such, it reveals the uniqueness of the protest logic and forms of the post-2008 social movements while engaging in a comprehensive analysis of the repertoires of Gezi Protests.

Before discussing the findings, the limitations of this study should be clarified. One issue with the current study was that the alternative perspective developed herein to understand protest repertoires could not be tested in the field. The primary reason is that the events occurred approximately 10-15 years ago. Therefore, the absence of empirical data from the field is the most important limitation of this study. Furthermore, although this study focused on the cracking and vibration processes that occurred in the square at the time, it is unfortunate that this study did not provide sufficient data to assess whether these processes led to any sedimentation processes today. It is important to discuss whether the experience of trying to embody the ideals of the future here and now during the protests has lasting consequences today. In this sense, it also has limitations in testing the contemporary legacy of the articulation between carnivalesque and prefiguration.

Notwithstanding these limitations, first, this thesis discussed the recent debate in social movement studies to recognize the peculiarities of the Gezi Protests and other

square social movements. In this context, the Gezi Protests have been described as an 'eventful protest' (Della Porta & Atak, 2017) that initiated transformations in people's conventional political ideas, values, habits, and practices and brought about new political practices. This study claims that this transition has occurred because of protest practices and forms. According to della Porta (2020, p. 559), the temporality of eventful protests may be broken down into three distinct processes: "a sequence of processes of cracking, as the production of sudden ruptures; vibrating, as contingently reproducing those ruptures; and sedimenting, as the stabilization of the legacy of the rupture." By focusing on the square where the protest took place, this study examined the processes of cracking and vibrating by assessing the forms and practices performed there.

In these processes, I have identified carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices as the prominent repertoires of square social movements. Consequently, the second chapter reviewed the historical and political texture of the carnival and the studies that treat the carnivalesque as a protest form. Based on the framework offered by Mikhail Bakhtin and Henri Lefebvre, this thesis perceived the carnivalesque as an instance of transgression which embodies the temporary suspension of ordinary life, playfully and joyfully turning the world upside-down and reversing the hierarchies. The study has found that the transformative aspects of carnival on everyday life throughout the resistance are an effective form of expressing political dissent. Ultimately, I argue that carnivalesque forms revitalize everyday life in festival form and transform it into an opposition dynamic.

In the third chapter, the focus has been on the concept of prefiguration. Different frameworks of prefiguration as a radical political practice in contemporary social movements are elaborated to overcome the concept's vagueness in the literature. After determining the theoretical foundations, this thesis perceived the prefiguration as an experimental political repertoire defined as "the deliberate experimental implementation of desired future social relations and practices in the here-and-now" (Raekstad & Gradin, 2020, p. 10). Prefigurative politics aims to transform society in a more egalitarian and democratic direction by prioritizing the creation of cracks and fractures in the existing social structure. Instead of waiting for structural changes,

one of the most important promises of prefigurative politics is to realize the imagined or desired life "here-and-now," even on a limited scale. The main ideas behind prefigurative politics are direct democracy and participatory democracy, opposition to hierarchy and capitalism, and a horizontal organizational model (Dixon, 2014; Yates, 2015; van de Sande, 2015).

While the concept of carnivalesque has been widely used in framing the Gezi Protests, the use of the framework of prefigurative politics is relatively new and rare (Binbuğa Kınık, 2020; Ertuğrul, 2022; Uncu, 2022; Yumuk, 2022). This research, thus, provides the theoretical discussions on whether prefigurative politics function suitably as a theoretical approach to explain the repertoires of square social movements, especially the Gezi Protests as the episodes of the post-2008 global wave of mobilization. This study has enhanced our understanding of Gezi Protests as a prefigurative experience that entails protest logic and forms characterized by an account that embodies the social relations desired to be experienced in the future.

The fourth chapter provided the connections between carnivalesque and prefiguration in Holloway's political theory. Raising the question of how radical change can be achieved, Holloway argues that the challenge to the dominance of capitalism can be realized by creating cracks in the system. Cracks refer to forms and practices that simultaneously negate structures of capitalism and create new social relations. The first action of Holloway's method of creating cracks is the negation of social relations characterized by capitalism. To put it another way, the first juncture of the process Holloway proposes is the destruction of the social relations produced by capitalism. However, simply subverting or overturning the existing conventions will not be enough. Negation must be supported by "an other-doing." For Holloway, other-doing is the dignity-based social relations that can fill the cracks created by negation. Thus, negation is not an ending "but an opening to a different activity, the threshold of a counter-world with a different logic and a different language" (Holloway, 2010, p. 19). In this respect, the crack appears "as a space of negation and creation" (Holloway & Susen, 2013, p. 24). I argue that the analytics of festive-prefigurative practices as the joyful negation of existing social relations and the experience of new ways of doing is articulated on the notion of the crack. Also, it is

concluded that Holloway's method of creating crack is critical for understanding the commonalities of square social movements despite all historical and cultural differences.

In the fifth chapter, the Gezi Protests have been presented as the junction point of the articulation between carnivalesque and prefiguration. The leading finding of the study is that carnivalesque forms and prefigurative practices characterize the Gezi Protest. This study has also revealed that the repertoires of the Gezi Protests were similar to other square social movements of this period. The research has also shown that intertwined spatiality and temporality of carnivalesque and prefiguration create cracks in Gezi Protest to open doors for new political possibilities. The activists' utilization of carnivalesque forms as a repertoire of protest symbolically reverses the established conventions of a political regime that refuses to acknowledge the people's voice. Carnivalesque forms generated cracks in daily life, gave them new life in the form of a festival, and transformed those cracks into a resistance dynamic. Also, this study found that prefigurative practices in the park evoke a sense that another world is possible. More importantly, they created a sense of joyful affirmation that another world was already being experimented with and experienced in the square. This grounding of protest repertoires in prefigurative practices contributed to expanding and materializing the social relations envisioned. In this manner, prefiguration came to redefine the goals and purpose of the Gezi Protests. During the Gezi Protests, prefigurative politics negated existing structures and instead produced a new time-space by offering experimental alternatives, thus creating cracks for new political possibilities. Therefore, I argue that the interwoven spatiality and temporality of carnivalesque and prefiguration as cracks generate time-space beyond the existing relationships by reconfiguring everyday life in ways that create new political possibilities.

According to van de Sande (2013, pp. 223–227), post-2008 social movements can be seen as failures in terms of "demonstrable outcomes or successes." For example, the Arab Spring can be seen as an inconclusive mobilization that failed to bring about lasting regime change or improve the region's political stability. Moreover, the Occupy movements have left no institutionalization to sustain their demands.

Similarly, although the Gezi Protests were a significant social movement, it is possible to say that they remained on the edge of a political transformation. The protests died down after Taksim Square and Gezi Park were evacuated. The Gezi Protests failed to produce a more durable social and political organization that could sustain the demands put forward. Similarly, while the unique experiences that emerged during the protests were attempted to be continued as forums in neighborhood parks for a time, these attempts failed to produce a permanent practice.

Therefore, our emphasis on process and repertoires throughout this study should not fall into the trap of "hedonistic experience of activism" (Pleyers, 2010, p. 99) or "fetishization of form over function" (Wolfson & Funke, 2017, p. 90). The evaluation of the movement's outcomes might be obscured if there is an excessive focus on the process. It is essential to refrain from romanticizing protest repertoires and processes and attributing a positive power they do not possess. Thus, carnivalesque-prefigurative practices that open cracks in the extant social reality are ultimately insufficient on their own and must be supplemented by more strategic political activities. The joyful affirmation during protests and the ability to experience the ideal world in the present can be advantageous in spawning a more playful and spontaneous protest, producing an alternative vision, or expressing a sense of authenticity. However, without being connected to a more strategic vision, it will not be able to make social changes that will endure. Therefore, it is essential to accentuate the necessity of creating alternative institutions and organizations to the current ones. It is still necessary to cultivate alternative institutions, work to change the ones already in place, and build relationships that reflect desired future social relations and practices.

Nevertheless, the solidaristic economic and social relations that people demonstrated in squares and parks, or the forums organized in these areas, harbor a transformative will that cannot be ignored. In this respect, the repertoires of protest that constitute this process are crucial for understanding this transformative will. It is possible to say that festive-prefigurative practices experienced during the event are still active, developing, and emerging in various areas of social life. In other words, festive-prefigurative patterns are still vibrating after the Gezi Protests. Tracing the legacy of

the Gezi Protests, Yumuk (2022) finds that the unique experiences that emerged in the utopian, carnivalesque, and communal atmosphere of the Gezi Protests are sustained through prefigurative political actions. Yumuk (2022, p. 32) states that the vibration phase of the Gezi Protests is still ongoing. He has shown that collective groups such as Kadıköy Cooperative and Food Not Bombs emerged as a result of the vibration phase and these collaborative groups represent the sedimentation phase of the Gezi Protests. He argues that some of the collective groups formed in the aftermath of Gezi act with a prefigurative logic and adopt a prefigurative understanding of the collectivity's practices, values, ideas, or mechanisms. In this context, Yumuk (2022) emphasizes the central political importance of prefigurative actions in sustaining the unique experiences of Gezi, which have not disappeared but have taken new forms in different spaces and times.

In the same vein, Uncu (2022) argues that the Gezi Protests produced new subjectivities and political identities, which are sustained even today through prefigurative political practices. According to Uncu, even though the protests are over, the subjectivities and political identities developed there "become embodied in the post-Gezi protests and practices of everyday life, such as food collectives, city gardens, citizen initiatives, and issue-specific movement networks" (2022, p. 48). Similarly, Binbuğa Kınık (2020) shows that the experience of the Gezi Protests has influenced today's environmental movements in terms of both the logic and forms of protest and organizational structures. For instance, she states that the Northern Forests Defense, which was formed by the participants of the Abbasağa Forum formed during the Gezi Protests, still maintains the traces of the Gezi experience in the logic and forms of protest and in its organizational structure. Binbuğa Kınık (2020, pp. 188-193) argues that the Northern Forests Defence has adopted the prefigurative politics inherited from the Gezi Protests in terms of the principle of "here and now," horizontal organization, anti-hierarchy, rejection of leadership, and participatory decision-making. In this context, it is plausible to state that carnivalesque-prefigurative practices developed during the event are still proceeding in many spheres of everyday life. In this respect, I argue that carnivalesque-prefigurative experiences that open cracks in the extant social reality are living processes and open-ended.

Although the Gezi Protests failed to gain visibility as a durable organizational and political form, they have showed an alternative way of subverting everyday life through carnivalesque-cum-prefigurative practices. More importantly, these practices testified that another world, even if only for a short time, is possible. The Gezi Protests and other square social movements have not achieved the goal of another world characterized by egalitarian, democratic, or anti-capitalist social relations on a national or regional scale. However, they have created a new time-space and new experiences. The structural consequences of this new time-space, the new experiences, and the horizons opened by the Gezi Protests may take many more years to emerge. In this respect, it is essential to emphasize that this protest experience is a living process and open-ended. As a vision of politics and protest, the Gezi Protests continue to inspire contemporary political life and local protest movements. Therefore, one should not draw definitive conclusions regarding political possibilities.

Overall, this study analyzed the Gezi Protest case as an eventful protest that challenged and undermined power relations by developing new forms of social relations through protest forms and practices. The Gezi Protests created a novel time and space, allowing the freedom to experiment, develop, and transform new forms of social relations. New forms of social relations emerged in the carnivalesque atmosphere were experimented with prefigurative practices. As an act of protest in which other ways of doing were put forward, it created a break with traditional time and produced a carnivalesque temporality. More importantly, by supporting and deepening temporality and spatiality through prefigurative practices, the square, and the park have become a temporary microcosm of another world.

This thesis has ensured a deeper insight into repertoires of contemporary social movements. These findings contribute to our understanding of social movements and provide a basis for constructing insight into repertoires of contention. Thus, the results reported here shed new light on the forms and practices of the Gezi Protests. In this respect, this work contributes to existing knowledge of the Gezi Protests by displaying carnivalesque and prefigurative aspects of the movement. Thus, it would

also expand our understanding of the role of the Gezi Protests in Turkish political history. In addition, this approach will prove helpful in increasing our knowledge of how people protest. The analytics of festive-cum-prefigurative dynamics opening up cracks in the extant social reality would be helpful for further research on the repertoires of social movements. A follow-up to this study would be to explore the sedimentation processes of the experiences elicited by carnivalesque-prefigurative practices.

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A. TÜRKÇE ÖZET/ TURKISH SUMMARY

Bu çalışma, 2008 ekonomik krizi sonrası ortaya çıkan toplumsal hareketlerin önemini kullanılan protesto formları ve pratikleri bağlamında tartışmayı amaçlamıştır. Tahrir'den Puerta del Sol'a Occupy Wall Street'den Sofya'ya, Sao Paulo'dan Taksim'e, paralel talepler etrafında örgütlenen ve benzer protesto repertuarlarını kullanan küresel bir protesto dalgası tüm dünyayı sarmıştır. Bu protesto hareketleri tekil olaylar olarak düşünülmekten ziyade 2008 yılında İzlanda'da başlayan ve sonraki yıllarda diğer ülkelere yayılan daha büyük bir protesto dalgasının parçası olarak değerlendirilmektedir (della Porta & Mattoni, 2014). Devlet oluşumlarındaki otoriter eğilimlere karşı demokrasi talepleri, eşit gelir dağılımı talepleri, alt sınıfların gelirlerinin artırılması talepleri ve çevre sorunları ortak taleplerden bazıları olarak sayılabilir (Korotayev vd., 2018).

Bu küresel protesto dalgasının ayırt edici özelliği, kamusal bir alanın işgal edilmesi ve bu alandaki gündelik yaşamı dönüştürerek karşıt bir zaman ve mekân yaratmasıdır. Bu nedenle, bu hareketleri meydan toplumsal hareketleri olarak tanımladım ve bu çalışmanın kapsamını meydan işgalleriyle kategorize edilen hareketlerle sınırlandırdım. Bu hareketler, insanların şikâyet ve taleplerini dile getirmek için kısa süreliğine bir araya geldikleri kamusal alanlardaki tipik gösterilerden farklı olarak meydan işgali ile karakterize edilmektedir. Bu pratiğin kamusal alanları siyasi sembollere dönüştürdüğünü söylemek mümkündür. Kamusal alan olarak meydanların siyasi protesto aracı olarak işgal edilmesinin yeni bir taktik olmadığına şüphe yok. 1989 Tiananmen Meydanı protestoları ve 2010 Ankara TEKEL İşçileri Protestosu gibi birçok protesto eylemi, kamusal bir alanı işgal etmekle ilişkilendirilmektedir. Ancak 2010'lardaki meydan hareketlerini farklı kılan

özellik, işgalin bir protesto taktiğinden daha fazlası olmasıdır. Meydanlar sadece insanların bir araya geldiği ya da protestolar düzenlediği yerler olmaktan ziyade, adalet ve eşitliğe dayalı ütopik bir sosyal ve siyasi ilişkiler vizyonunu göstermek için kullanıldı. Başka bir deyişle, meydanlar insanların içinde yaşamak istedikleri toplumun idealize edilmiş bir versiyonunun gösterildiği ve alışılagelmiş sosyal ve siyasi düzenin büyük ölçüde değiştirildiği yerlerdi.

Dolayısıyla bu yeni protesto dalgası, geleneksel siyaset ve siyasi protestodan farklı yeni bir aktivizm ve siyasi muhalefet biçimi getirmiştir. Bu bağlamda, bu tez, bu toplumsal hareketlerin yeni aktivizm ve siyasi muhalefet biçimlerini anlamak için protesto repertuarlarını analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu toplumsal hareketler birçok ülkeye yayılmış olsa da uzun vadeli kalıcı örgütlenmelere ulaşamamıştır. Ancak süreç yeni sosyal ve siyasi olasılıklara ilham vermiştir çünkü protestolar sırasında insanların dönüştürdüğü gündelik hayat, göz ardı edilemeyecek bir dönüştürücü irade barındırmaktadır. Bu bakımdan, bu toplumsal hareketlerin protesto biçim ve pratiklerinin araştırılması büyük önem arz etmektedir. Bu çalışmada temel amacım çağdaş toplumsal hareketlerin repertuarlarını ortaya çıkarmanın yanında bunları anlamak ve kavramak için alternatif bir bakış açısı geliştirmeye çalışmaktı. Bu amaçla, Gezi Protestolarının protesto mantığı ve pratiklerini 2008 sonrası küresel protesto dalgasının bir kesiti olarak analiz ettim.

2008 sonrası toplumsal hareketler, meydanların işgal edilmesi ve gündelik hayatın dönüştürülmesiyle karakterize olmuş, böylece zaman ve mekânda bir kırılma yaratmıştır. Della Porta, bazı gösterilerin ani bir değişimi tetikleme potansiyeline sahip olduğunu, çünkü gündelik hayattan bir kopuş olarak statükoya meydan okuyarak önemli bir etki yaratmaya çalıştıklarını iddia etmektedir. Bu nedenle della Porta (2020, s. 560), bu hareketleri "eylemlerin yapılar tarafından kısıtlanmak yerine onları değiştirdiği anları belirtmek için" "olaylı protestolar" olarak adlandırmaktadır. Bu zamansallık ve mekânsallık, insanların fikirlerinde, değerlerinde, davranışlarında ve tipik siyasi pratiklerinde ani bir dönüşüme neden olabilecek alışılmadık bir çatlak açmakta ve böylece bu değişen ve ortaya çıkan unsurlarla deney yapmak için bir alan açmaktadır.

İşgal edilen yerlerde gündelik hayatın yeniden düzenlenmesi, zaman ve mekânla yeni sosyal ilişkiler üretmiş gibi görünüyor. Farklı bir mekânsallık ve zamansallıkla bu karşılaşma, gündelik rutini kesintiye uğratmaktadır. Bu şekilde, yeni bir zaman ve mekân kipliği kuruluyor ve insanlara egemen toplumsal ve siyasi yapılarla normalde karşılaştıklarından farklı ilişki kurma fırsatları sunuyor. Della Porta (2020) "olaylı protestoları" üç sütunlu bir yapı inşa ederek açıklamayı ve anlamayı önermektedir. Bu yapı şu süreçlerden oluşmaktadır: "ani kırılmaların üretimi olarak çatlama; bu kırılmaların olumsal olarak yeniden üretilmesi olarak titreşme; ve kırılmanın mirasının stabilizasyonu olarak tortulaşma süreçleri dizisi" (2020, s. 559). Çatlak aşaması, yapısal kısıtlamaların askıya alınmasını ve beklenmedik, ani bir kitlesel seferberlik patlamasını ifade eder. Titreşim aşaması, bu kopuşu yeniden üretmek için yeni siyasi normların ve sosyal bağların kullanıldığını göstermektedir. Bu olayların günümüze bıraktığı miras ise tortulaşma aşaması olarak adlandırılır. Della Porta'nın 2008 sonrası meydan toplumsal hareketlerini olaylı protestolar olarak tanımlayan çerçevesine uygun olarak bu tez, olaylı bir protesto olarak Gezi Protestolarının çatlama ve titreşim süreçlerini anlamak için repertuarlarını analiz etmeyi etmektedir.

Toplumsal hareketlerde protesto repertuarları, esas olarak Charles Tilly'nin ünlü çekişme repertuarları kavramı etrafında geliştirilmiştir (Tilly, 2008). Toplumsal hareketler çalışmalarında repertuar, "şu anda bilinen ve bir dizi siyasi aktörde mevcut olan performans dizilerini" kapsayan geniş bir şemsiye terimdir (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, s. 14). Tilly (1986) genel olarak çekişme repertuarlarını, bir sosyal grup tarafından başka bir grup veya birey üzerinde farklı talep ve iddialarda bulunmak için kullanılan kolektif eylem araçları ve stratejileri olarak tanımlamaktadır. Yani bir repertuar, belirli bir toplumsal hareketin kullanmayı seçtiği strateji ve taktikler bütünü olarak anlaşılabilir. Bu tanım isyan, grev, gösteri, barikat, oturma eylemi, imza kampanyası, gösteri, internet tabanlı eylem çağrıları, kamusal alanların işgali veya imza kampanyaları gibi taktik ve stratejilerin yanı sıra protestocuların kolektif eylem sırasında seçtikleri ve kullandıkları bayrak, maske veya kostüm gibi ekipmanları da içermektedir (Givan vd., 2010).

Protesto repertuarları toplumsal hareketleri anlamamızda etkili olmaktadır. Bu çerçevede, protesto biçimleri ve bu biçimleri şekillendiren temel mantık açısından

2008 sonrasında ortaya çıkan toplumsal hareketlerin önceki toplumsal hareketlerden farklı olduğu savunulmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, karnavalesk formların ve prefigüratif pratiklerin bu dönem boyunca protesto repertuarlarının gelişimine önemli katkılarda bulunduğunu savunuyorum. Çağdaş toplumsal hareketlerin bu biçim ve pratiklerinin meydandaki gündelik hayatı yeniden yapılandırdığını ve mevcut toplumsal ilişkilerin ötesinde bir zaman-mekân ürettiğini iddia ediyorum. Böylece yeni siyasi olasılıklar ve olası toplumsal değişim için bir çatlak yaratıyorlar. Dolayısıyla bu tez, Gezi Protestoları özelinde protesto biçim ve pratiklerini dönemin öne çıkan diğer toplumsal hareketleriyle ilişkilendirerek analiz ederek bu protesto dalgasının çatlama ve titreşim süreçlerine ışık tutmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Türkiye'de 2010'lu yılların en önemli olaylarından birinin Gezi Protestoları olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Gezi Protestolarını bu tezin önerdiği yorumlama kulvarında bir vaka olarak ele almak, günümüz toplumsal hareketlerinin protesto repertuarlarının ortak dinamiklerini kavramamıza ve açıklamamıza olanak sağlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmanın mevcut araştırmalara yaptığı en önemli katkı, meydan toplumsal hareketlerinin kendine özgü çeşitli protesto biçim ve pratiklerinin analizidir. 2008 sonrası dalganın protesto repertuarları üzerine yapılan çalışmalar bu toplumsal hareketlerin karnavalesk ve prefigüratif yönlerini tespit etmiş olsa da hiçbir çalışma bu ikisinin nasıl eklemlendiğini analiz etmemiştir. Dahası, birçok çalışma Gezi Protestolarının karnavalesk atmosferine vurgu yaparken, Gezi Protestolarının prefigüratif mantığına dikkat çeken çalışmalar henüz olgunlaşma aşamasındadır. Gezi Protestolarında prefigüratif politik eylemlerin olası etkilerini belirlemeye yönelik az sayıda çalışma yapılmıştır (Binbuğa Kınık, 2020; Ertuğrul, 2022; Uncu, 2022; Yumuk, 2022).

Bu arka plan çerçevesinde, araştırmayı yönlendiren spesifik araştırma sorularım şunlardı: Meydan sosyal hareketlerinde ne tür protesto biçimleri ve pratikleri tipiktir ve bunlar kendilerini nasıl gösterir? Bu repertuarların arkasındaki faktörler nelerdir? Coğrafi, kültürel, tarihi ve dilsel farklılıklara rağmen hangi teorik yaklaşım bu ortak protesto repertuarlarını açıklayabilir? Gezi Protestolarını karakterize eden protesto biçimleri ve pratikleri nelerdir? Bu soruları yanıtlamak için Gezi Protestoları sırasında ortaya çıkan formları ve pratikleri analiz ettim. Duvar yazıları, pankartlar

ve sloganlar gibi dilsel ve metne dayalı araçların yanı sıra doğrudan demokrasi pratikleri ve komünal yaşam gibi kolektif eylem pratiklerini de analiz ettim. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmada benimsenen metodolojik yaklaşım, söylem ve çerçeve analizine dayalı birleşik bir metodolojidir (Lindekilde, 2014).

Bu bağlamda, ikinci bölümde, çağdaş toplumsal hareketlerdeki karnavalesk protesto biçimlerinin ayrıntılı ve eleştirel bir analizini sundum. İlk olarak, Bakhtin ve Lefebvre'e referansla karnavalın tarihsel ve politik dokusunu analiz ettim. Mikhail Bakhtin (1984b) karnavalı, toplumun tüm kesimlerini otorite ve iktidara karşı bir araya getiren kolektif bir festival ve deneyim olarak tanımlar. Ona göre karnavalın temel işlevi, egemen gerçeklikten ve kurulu düzenden geçici bir özgürleşme sağlamaktı çünkü tüm hiyerarşik rütbelerin, ayrıcalıkların ve normların askıya alınmasını sağlıyordu. Bakhtin'e göre bu geçici zaman ve mekân, neşeli bir görelilik atmosferi yaratır. Böylece karnaval, insanların gülmeye dayalı ikinci yaşamı olarak belirir. Bu bakımdan karnavalesk kahkaha her şeyden önce bir özgürlük iddiasıdır. Bu anlamda Bakhtin, karnavalesk mizahı ve kahkahayı, egemen ideolojinin ve düzenin altını oyan ve ona meydan okuyan eleştirel, özgürleştirici, muhalif bir güç olarak kutlar. Ayrıca Bakhtin kamusal kahkahayı bireysel kahkahadan ayırır çünkü karnavakesk kahkaha kolektif olarak deneyimlenir. Ek olarak, Lefebvre de (1991a) festival ya da karnaval biçimlerinin özgürleşme ve toplumsal değişim için önemine değinir. Bu noktada Lefebvre, festival deneyimlerinin gündelik hayatı radikal bir şekilde yeniden yapılandırma kabiliyetleri açısından önemine işaret eder. Lefebvre'e göre "karnaval gündelik yaşamın yeniden yapılandırıldığı bir andır" (1991a, s. 202).

Toplumsal hareket çalışmalarında, protesto eylemleri esnasında gündelik hayatın karnavalesk dönüşümü, başka bir deyişle, karnavalesk biçimlerin bir direniş taktiği ve stratejisi olarak kullanılması, sıklıkla gündeme gelen bir konudur. Bruner (2005, s. 139) karnavalesk toplumsal protesto biçimlerinin özelliklerini ve işlevlerini şu şekilde özetlemektedir: "(1) tüm resmi sözlerin ve hiyerarşilerin güçlü, popülist, eleştirel bir şekilde tersyüz edilmesi; (2) tüm hiyerarşik rütbe, ayrıcalık, norm ve yasakların askıya alınması; (3) pozitif aşağılama ve küçük düşürme ve yaratıcı bir saygısızlık tutumu ve (4) toplumsal oluşumların "kurgusal" temellerini açığa çıkaran geçici bir yeniden metinleştirme." Bu anlamda karnavalesk, bir protesto biçimi

olarak yaratıcı bir taktik ve strateji sunar. Çünkü karnavalesk formlar "politik bir eylem, şenlikli bir kutlama, katartik bir rahatlama, statükonun vahşi bir şekilde terk edilmesi, ağ kurma aracı, yeni bir dünya yaratmanın bir yolu" olarak işlev görür (Ainger vd., 2003, s.180). Bu bağlamda, bu tezde karnavalesk formlar, sıradan yaşamın geçici olarak askıya alınmasını temsil eden, dünyayı şakacı ve neşeli bir şekilde alt üst eden ve hiyerarşileri tersine çeviren bir ihlal örneği olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Çalışma, karnavalın protesto hareketleri sırasında gündelik yaşam üzerindeki dönüştürücü yönlerinin siyasi muhalefeti ifade etmenin etkili bir biçimi olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Sonuç olarak, karnavalesk formların gündelik hayatı festival formunda yeniden canlandırdığını ve bir muhalefet dinamiğine dönüştürdüğünü iddia ediyorum.

Üçüncü bölümde karnavalesk formlarla birlikte 2008 sonrası toplumsal hareketlerin protesto mantığı ve biçimlerini şekillendiren prefigüratif siyaseti tartıştım. Prefigüratif siyaset, genel olarak, gelecekte arzu edilen toplumu yansıtmaya çalışan örgütlenme biçimleri ve sosyal ilişkileri ifade eder. Kavramın kullanımı 70'li yıllara dayansa da 21. yüzyılda meydana gelen toplumsal hareketlerin farklı yönlerini tartışmak için yenilenen bir ilgi söz konusu olmuştur. Bu bağlamda, anti-küreselleşme, Occupy hareketleri ve Arap Baharı gibi hareketler bağlamında farklı prefigürasyon kavramları tartışılmıştır. Bu kavramlar yaşam tarzı aktivizmi gibi bireysel eylemleri ve karşı-kurumlar oluşturmak ve örgütlerde yatay ilişkiler geliştirmek gibi kolektif eylemleri içermektedir. Bu çalışmada, prefigürasyonu deneysel siyasal repertuar olarak ele aldım ve "prefigüratif siyasetin, gelecekte arzu edilen ilişkilerin ve pratiklerin şimdi ve burada kasıtlı olarak deneysel bir şekilde uygulanması" olarak anlaşılabileceğini ifade ettim (Raekstad ve Gradin, 2020, s. 11).

Dördüncü bölüm, Holloway'in siyaset teorisi çerçevesinde karnavalesk ve prefigürasyon arasındaki bağlantıları ortaya koymuştur. Radikal değişimin nasıl sağlanabileceği sorusunu gündeme getiren Holloway (2010), kapitalizmin egemenliğine meydan okumanın sistemde çatlaklar yaratarak gerçekleştirilebileceğini savunur. Çatlaklar, aynı anda hem kapitalizmin yapılarını olumsuzlayan hem de yeni toplumsal ilişkiler yaratan biçim ve pratikleri ifade eder. Holloway'in çatlaklar yaratma yönteminin ilk eylemi, kapitalizm tarafından

karakterize edilen toplumsal ilişkilerin olumsuzlanmasıdır. Başka bir deyişle, Holloway'in önerdiği sürecin ilk uğrağı, kapitalizm tarafından üretilen toplumsal ilişkilerin yok edilmesidir. Ancak sadece mevcut kabulleri yıkmak ya da altüst etmek yeterli olmayacaktır. Olumsuzlama "bir başka eyleme biçimi" ile desteklenmelidir. Holloway'e göre bir başka eyleme biçimi, olumsuzlamanın yarattığı çatlakları doldurabilecek haysiyet temelli toplumsal ilişkilerdir. Dolayısıyla, olumsuzlama bir son değil, "farklı bir etkinliğe açılan bir kapı, farklı bir mantığa ve farklı bir dile sahip bir karşı-dünyanın eşiğidir" (Holloway, 2010, s. 19). Bu açıdan çatlak, bir olumsuzlama ve yaratım alanı olarak belirir (Holloway & Susen, 2013, s. 24).

Peki, bu çatlaklar nerede ve nasıl ortaya çıkar? Holloway'e göre bu sorunun yanıtı, insanların emeğe karşı isyan ettikleri zaman ve mekânlarda yatıyor. Holloway 'emek' ve 'yapmak' arasında bir ayrım yapar. İlki, yabancılaşmış, soyut ve güçsüzleştirici insan pratiği biçimlerine atıfta bulunur; ikincisi ise tam tersine, haysiyete dayalı 'özgür, bilinçli bir faaliyettir.' Ona göre kapitalizm, duvarlarını yapmayı soyut emeğe dönüştürerek inşa eder. Duvarlar, soyut emeğe dönüştürülemeyen yapma biçimleri yaratılarak çatlatılabilir. Bu çatlaklar mekânsal, zamansal ya da yapısal olabilir.

Holloway için karnaval zamansal bir çatlak olarak görülebilir. Karnaval, tipik hiyerarşik bağların sadece tersine çevrilmekle kalmayıp ortadan kaldırıldığı bir zamandır. Çünkü çatlak, "tahakküm ilişkilerinin kırıldığı ve başka ilişkilerin yaratıldığı bir andır" (Holloway, 2010, s. 31). Ayrıca, Holloway'e göre, araç amaçtır. Çünkü artık yaratmak istediğimiz dünyayı 'toplumsal pratikleri ve buna tekabül eden ilişkileriyle' yaşamak gerekir. Bu anlamda Holloway'in yöntemi prefigüratiftir. Prefigüratif siyaset, vizyonu mücadele yoluyla gerçekleştirme taahhüdüyle ilgilidir. Yani araçlar, amaçları yansıttığı ölçüde önemlidir. Dolayısıyla Holloway'in yöntemi hem karnavaleski hem de prefigürasyonu içerir. Mevcut sosyal ilişkilerin neşeli bir şekilde olumsuzlanması ve yeni yapma biçimlerinin deneyimlenmesi olarak şenlikli-prefigüratif pratiklerin çatlak kavramı üzerinde eklemlendiğini iddia ediyorum. Ayrıca, Holloway'in çatlak yaratma yönteminin, tüm tarihsel ve kültürel farklılıklara rağmen meydan sosyal hareketlerinin ortaklıklarını anlamak için kritik olduğu sonucuna vardım.

Beşinci bölümde, meydan toplumsal hareketlerin protesto repertuarlarını açıklamak ve kavramak için, mevcut sosyal gerçeklikte çatlaklar açan karnavalesk-prefigüratif dinamikler olarak inşa edilen alternatif perspektifi değerlendirmek için Gezi Protestolarını inceledim. Bakhtin (1984a, s. 123) karnavalesk formları karakterize eden dört kategori tespit eder. Bu sebeple, Gezi Protestolarının karnavalesk dinamiklerini dört alt başlık altında inceledim. Birinci kategori, insanlar arasındaki özgür ve tanıdık temastır. Karnaval insanlar arasında özel bir iletişim biçimini teşvik eder. Eşitlikçi ilkeleri savunur. Gezi Protestoları heterojen ve çoğulcu bir yapıya sahipti. Ancak insanlar kendi aralarında eşitlikçi bir yapı geliştirdiler. Bu da aralarında özel bir iletişimin oluşmasına yol açtı. Gezi Parkı'nda Cuma namazı kılan dindar protestocuları korumak için daha seküler kişiler tarafından bir güvenlik çemberi oluşturulması bunun çarpıcı bir örneğidir. İkinci kategori karnavala özgü uyumsuzluklardır. "Kutsal" ve "dünyevi", "yüce" ve "aşağı", "önemli" ve "önemsiz", "bilge" ve "aptal" gibi alışıldık düşünce kategorileri altında bir araya gelemeyecek zıtlıklar karnavalesk formlarda yan yana gelir. Başka bir deyişle, zıt kutuplar, taraflar arasındaki çatışmanın göreceli doğasını vurgulamak için kasıtlı olarak yan yana getirilir. Ayrıca, karnaval hayatın farklı kesimlerinden insanları bir araya getirir. Gezi Protestoları normalde birbiriyle etkileşime girmeyecek insanları bir araya getirmiştir. Kemalistler ve Kürtler, homofobikler ve LGBT bireyler ya da cinsiyetçi futbol taraftarları ve feminist kolektifler gibi geleneksel olarak karşıt gruplar arasında bir iş birliği gelişmiştir.

Üçüncüsü kategori ise eksantrikliktir. Karnavalesk, birçok tuhaflık biçimine izin veren özel bir karnaval yaşamı kategorisini teşvik eder. Bu bileşen, kostüm ve maskelerin yanı sıra yaratıcı şakalar, sloganlar ve grafitiler aracılığıyla kendini göstermiştir. Dahası, Gezi mizahı bir ifade ve arzu patlamasıdır. Gezi sırasında ortaya çıkan tutku, heyecan ve neşe atmosfere, duvar yazılarına ve pankartlara yansımıştır. Bunlar dışarıdan bakanlar için tamamen eksantrik ve tuhaf bir görüntü yaratmıştır. Dördüncü kategori ise saygısızlıktır. Karnavalesk eylemler güçlülerin 'kutsal' otoritesini ortadan kaldırır ve bunun yerine onlara karşı direnişi teşvik eder. Bu anlamda karnavalesk, kontrolü elinde tutanların otoritesinin altını oyar ve sonuç olarak ironi, hiciv, parodi ve grotesk yoluyla kitleleri onlara karşı harekete geçmeye

teşvik eder. Bu karnavalesk kategorisi, Gezi Protestosu'nun mizahı aracılığıyla ortaya çıktı ve protesto sırasında önde gelen bir repertuar oldu. Protestocular başbakan, polis memurları, biber gazı ve tazyikli suyun yanı sıra ideolojiler ve popüler kültürle de dalga geçtiler. Sonuç olarak, insanlar mevcut sosyal ilişkileri şakacı ve neşeli bir şekilde alaşağı etti. Bu neşeli bir olumlama hali yaratmıştır.

Gezi Protestolarının prefigüratif dinamiklerini iç içe geçmiş üç özellik açısından değerlendirdim: şimdi ve burada pratikleri, deneysellik ve araçlarla amaçlar arasındaki uyum. Bunları örneklendirmek için Gezi Parkı'nda yaratılan komünal yaşamı, alternatif medya deneyimlerini ve doğrudan demokrasi pratiklerini inceledim. Gezi Parkında hayata geçirilen komünde tüm pratikler kullanım değeri etrafında şekillenmiştir. Gündelik hayat dayanışmacı yaşam tarzı üzerine inşa edilmiştir. Yiyecek, battaniye gibi ihtiyaçlar paylaşılmıştır. Gezi market, Gezi kafe, Gezi restoran, Gezi kütüphane gibi karşı kurumlar kurulmuş ve ücretsiz işletilmiştir. Ayrıca ana akım medyanın protestolara karşı tepkisizliği ve dezenformasyonu nedeniyle alternatif medya deneyimleri ortaya konmuştur. Bu medya deneyimleri gönüllüler tarafından kolektif olarak yürütülmüştür. Gezi Protestolarında ayrıca doğrudan demokrasi fikrinden esinlenen karar alma süreçleri geliştirilmiştir. Karar alma süreçleri forumlar aracılığıyla yürütülmüştür.

Tüm bu pratikler bir arada düşünüldüğünde prefigüratif bir mantığa işaret etmektedir. Öncelikle tüm bu pratikler şimdi ve burada fikriyle yapılmıştır. Yani, insanlar Gezi Protestolarında alternatif bir toplum idealini şimdi ve burada gerçekleştirmeye çalıştılar. İkincisi, bu süreç doğası gereği deneyseldi: yeni siyasi ideallerin formüle edilebildiği, gerçekleştirilebildiği, test edilebildiği, doğaçlanabildiği ve sürekli tartışılabildiği bir ana denk gelmektedir. Son olarak, uygulanan araçlar sadece bir amaca ulaşmak için araçsal bir vasıta olarak hizmet etmemiştir. Aynı zamanda arzulanan hedefleri de yansıtmışlardır. Yani, gerçekleşen, yapılan pratikler bir amaç için araç olmaktan çok daha fazlasıydı. Sonuç olarak, insanlar deneysel olarak yeni sosyal ilişkiler, bağlar ve yapma biçimleri geliştirdiler. Bu da bir deney ve deneyim hali yaratmıştır.

Gezi Protestolarının repertuarı karnavalesk formlar ve prefiguratif pratiklerle karakterize edilmiştir. Ancak bu iki pratik birbirinden tamamen bağımsız değildir. Aksine, iç içe geçmişlerdir. Bu iç içe geçme iki özellik etrafında şekillenir: neşeli sınır aşımı ve deneysellik ve deneyimsellik. Bu bağlamda karnavalesk bir prefigürasyon içerir çünkü karnavalın gündelik hayat üzerindeki dönüştürücü yönü, arzulanan ve istenen ilişkilerin gerçekleşmesine alan açtığı ölçüde prefiguratif bir mantığa evrilir. Karnavalesk pratikler, geçici de olsa, sadece gündelik hayatı aşmak ya da ahlaki kodları neşeyle kırmak için yapılan bir pratik değildir. Aynı zamanda bir deney ve deneyimdir. Bu anlamda prefigürasyon da karnavalı da içerir. Protestolar sırasında gündelik hayat karnavalesk formlar aracılığıyla neşeyle tersyüz edilir. Bununla birlikte, protestolar gündelik hayatın tersine çevrilmesiyle sınırlı kalmamış, alternatif bir tahayyül de sunmuştur. Daha da önemlisi, bu alternatif tahayyülün de neşeyle gerçekleşmiş olmasıdır. Farklı olanın, alternatif tahayyülün ifade edilmesi, daha da önemlisi bunun açık alanlarda gündelik hayatın içinde yaşanabilir kılınması sonucunda neşeli bir olumlama hali ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu aynı zamanda gündelik hayatın verili normlarını aşmak anlamına geliyor çünkü protestocular bunu aşan bir şey yaptılar. Dolayısıyla söz konusu olan bunun sağladığı neşe halidir. Dolayısıyla, böyle olduğu ölçüde, prefiguratif olarak nitelendirdiğimiz olgunun içinde bir karnavalesk olduğu söylenebilir. Dolayısıyla, karnavalesk ve prefigürasyon arasındaki mekânsallık ve zamansallık, gündelik hayatı yeni siyasi olasılıklar yaratacak şekilde yeniden yapılandırarak Gezi Protestolarında neşeli ve deneysel olarak çatlaklar yaratmıştır.

Genel olarak bu çalışma, Gezi Protestolarını, protesto biçimleri ve pratikleri aracılığıyla yeni toplumsal ilişki biçimleri geliştirerek iktidar ilişkilerine meydan okuyan ve bu ilişkileri zayıflatan olaylı bir protesto olarak analiz etmiştir. Gezi Protestoları, yeni toplumsal ilişki biçimlerinin denenmesine, geliştirilmesine ve dönüştürülmesine olanak tanıyan yeni bir zaman ve mekân yaratmıştır. Karnavalesk atmosferde ortaya çıkan yeni toplumsal ilişki biçimleri prefiguratif pratiklerle denenmiştir. Başka eyleme biçimlerinin ortaya konduğu bir protesto eylemi olarak geleneksel zamandan bir kopuş yaratılmış ve karnavalesk bir zamansallık üretilmiştir. Daha da önemlisi, zamansallığı ve mekânsallığı prefiguratif pratiklerle

destekleyerek ve derinleştirerek, meydan ve park başka bir dünyanın geçici bir mikrokozmosu haline gelmiştir.

Kısaca özetlemek gerekirse, bu çalışma, çağdaş toplumsal hareketlerin repertuarlarını anlamak ve kavramak için mevcut toplumsal gerçeklikte çatlaklar açan karnavalesk-prefigüratif dinamiklere dayanan alternatif bir bakış açısı geliştirmeye çalışmıştır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmanın en güçlü yönlerinden biri, 2008 sonrası toplumsal hareketlerin protesto mantığı ve biçimlerinin benzersizliğini ortaya koymasıdır. Ayrıca bu çalışma, Gezi Protestoları repertuarlarının kapsamlı bir incelemesini temsil etmektedir.

Bu tez, çağdaş toplumsal hareketlerin repertuarlarına dair daha derin bir kavrayış sağlamıştır. Bu bulgular, toplumsal hareketleri anlamamıza katkıda bulunmakta ve çekişme repertuarlarına dair bir kavrayış inşa etmek için bir temel sağlamaktadır. Dolayısıyla, burada sunulan sonuçlar Gezi Protestolarının biçim ve pratiklerine yeni bir ışık tutmaktadır. Bu açıdan bu çalışma, hareketin karnavalesk ve prefigüratif yönlerini ortaya koyarak Gezi Protestoları hakkındaki mevcut bilgilere katkıda bulunmaktadır. Böylece, Gezi Protestolarının Türk siyasi tarihindeki rolüne dair kavrayışımızı da genişletecektir. Ayrıca bu yaklaşım, insanların nasıl protesto ettiklerine dair bilgimizi artırmada da yardımcı olacaktır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmadan elde edilen kavrayışlar Türkiye'deki toplumsal hareket çalışmalarına yardımcı olabilir. Bu çalışmanın doğal bir ilerlemesi, karnavalesk-prefigüratif deneyimlerin ortaya çıkardığı deneyimlerin tortulaşma sürecine odaklanmaktadır. Bu nedenle, gelecekteki çalışmalar Gezi Protestoları repertuarlarının günümüzdeki etkisini değerlendirmelidir. Mevcut sosyal gerçeklikte çatlaklar açan karnavalesk-prefigüratif dinamiklerin analizi, toplumsal hareket repertuarları üzerine yapılacak daha ileri araştırmalar için faydalı olacaktır.

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