

Akdeniz University

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Institute of Social Sciences

School of Business, Economics and Social Sciences

Sezgi ERDOĞAN

**2013 GEZİ PARK PROTESTS IN TURKEY AND THEIR EFFECTS ON TURKEY'S
ACCESSION PROCESS TO THE EU: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE
DIVERSE STATEMENTS OF POLITICAL DECISION MAKERS ON THESE
PROTESTS**

Joint Master's Programme European Studies Master Thesis

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Tez Başlığı: 2013 Gezi Park Protests in Turkey and Their Effects on Turkey's Accession Process to the EU: Critical Discourse Analysis of the Diverse Statements of Political Decision Makers on these Protests

Türkiye'deki 2013 Gezi Parkı Eylemleri ve bu Eylemlerin Türkiye'nin AB'ye Katılım Sürecine Etkileri: Politik Karar Vericilerin bu Eylemlerle ilgili Yaptığı Çeşitli Açıklamalarının Eleştirel Söylem Analizi

Onay : Yukarıdaki imzaların, adı geçen öğretim üyelerine ait olduğunu onaylarım.

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SUMMARY

2013 GEZİ PARK PROTESTS IN TURKEY AND THEIR EFFECTS ON TURKEY'S ACCESSION PROCESS TO THE EU: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE DIVERSE STATEMENTS OF POLITICAL DECISION MAKERS ON THESE PROTESTS

This study aims to search on whether the Gezi Park Protests in May and June 2013 in Turkey and the statements of the political decision-makers in Turkey, the European Union (EU) Institutions and the EU Member States have affected Turkey's accession process to the EU. For this aim, the prominent statements of the political decision-makers in Turkey, the EU institutions and Member States about the Gezi Park protests in the Turkish press are analyzed.

In decision making process, political decision makers have a certain degree of importance which depends on the political culture of a country. While political decision-makers in Turkey are quite effective both in the decision-making process in government and their parties with a top down process, the political decision makers in many countries which are member states to the EU are less dominant because of a bottom up process in Western Europe. This difference in the decision-makers in political culture of Turkey also shows itself in her foreign policies and relations. When Turkey's EU journey is also examined, individual dominant effects of prominent political decision makers in their times such as Tansu Çiller, Bülent Ecevit and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan are clearly recognized. During the Gezi Park protests which are analyzed in the scope of the New Social Movements theory in this thesis, the same individual and dominant effects of the prominent decision maker in Turkey who is Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan were also seen despite different manners and statements of other important political decision-makers in Turkey such as Abdullah Gül and Bülent Arınç. These kinds of dominant effects of Prime Minister are analyzed through his statements about the protests with the Critical Discourse Analysis as the methodology of the thesis. After the protests and Turkish political decision makers' statements, decision-makers' statements in the EU institutions and the EU member states are also critically analyzed.

Throughout the thesis, reports from different sources on the Gezi Park protests, news in Turkish mainstream media organizations and the questionnaires that the protestors filled during the events are used as well as reviewing relevant academic writings. At the end, whether Turkey's accession process has been affected by the Gezi Park protests and decision makers' statements are distinctively evaluated in terms of the short and long term.

ÖZET

TÜRKİYE’DEKİ 2013 GEZİ PARKI EYLEMLERİ VE BU EYLEMLERİN TÜRKİYE’NİN AB’YE KATILIM SÜRECİNE ETKİLERİ: POLİTİK KARAR VERİCİLERİN BU EYLEMLERLE İLGİLİ YAPTIĞI ÇEŞİTLİ AÇIKLAMALARININ ELEŞTİREL SÖYLEM ANALİZİ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye’de 2013 yılının Mayıs ve Haziran aylarında gerçekleşen Gezi Parkı eylemleri ile Türkiye’deki, Avrupa Birliği (AB) kurumlarındaki ve AB üye ülkelerindeki politik karar vericilerin eylemlere yönelik ifadelerinin, Türkiye’nin AB’ye katılım sürecine etkisi olup olmadığını araştırmaktır. Bu amaç için, Türkiye’deki, AB kurumlarındaki ve AB üye ülkelerdeki politik karar vericilerin Gezi Parkı protestoları ile ilgili Türk basınında öne çıkmış ifadeleri incelenmektedir.

Karar verme süresince, ülkenin politik kültürüne bağlı olarak politik karar vericiler belli bir öneme sahiptir. Türkiye’deki karar vericiler tepeden tabana yönlü karar verme sürecinde oldukça etkili iken, AB üyesi önemli ülkelerdeki karar vericiler Batı Avrupa’da tabandan yukarıya yönlü karar verme süreci ile politik kültürü dolayısıyla daha az ön plandadırlar. Türkiye’nin politik kültüründeki bu farklılık kendini ülkenin dış politikalarında ve ilişkilerinde de göstermektedir. Türkiye’nin AB yolculuğu incelendiğinde, Tansu Çiller, Bülent Ecevit ve Recep Tayyip Erdoğan gibi kendi zamanlarının önde gelen politik karar vericilerin baskın bireysel etkileri açıkça gözlenmektedir. Bu tezde Yeni Toplumsal Hareketler teorisi ile incelenen Gezi olayları süresince Bülent Arınç ve Abdullah Gül gibi diğer önemli karar vericilerin farklı tavırlarına ve ifadelerine rağmen Türkiye’nin en etkili karar vericisi olan Başbakan Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’ın da benzer bireysel etkileri görülmüştür. Bireysel olarak, Başbakan’ın bu çeşit baskın etkileri, Gezi protestolarıyla ilgili açıklamalarıyla tezin metodolojisi olan Eleştirel Söylem Analizi yoluyla analiz edilmektedir. Protestolar ve Türk politik karar vericilerin açıklamalarından sonra, AB kurumları ve AB üye ülkelerindeki karar vericilerin açıklamaları da eleştirel olarak analiz edilmektedir.

Tez boyunca, ilgili akademik yazıların incelenmesinin yanında, Gezi Parkı protestoları üzerine değişik kaynaklardan raporlar, Türk ana akım medya organizasyonlarındaki haberler ve olaylar sırasında protestocuların doldurduğu anketler kullanılmıştır. Tezin son bölümünde, Türkiye’nin AB’ye katılım sürecinin Gezi Parkı protestolarından ve karar vericilerin açıklamaları sebebiyle etkilenip etkilenmediği kısa ve uzun vadede olmak üzere ayrı ayrı değerlendirilmiştir.

INTRODUCTION

Turkey has been in an ongoing transformation process for Europeanization since she was granted candidate status for European Union (EU) membership at the Helsinki Summit in 1999 and her accession negotiations were started in 2005. As the most important steps to be a western civilization in her republican era, this status and accession talks with opened chapters of the EU *acquis communautaire* gave her a major boost for her domestic reform process. Europeanization process in Turkey includes transformation of her “governing structure, state-society and individual interactions, democratic and cosmopolitan social models, normative ideas, cultural diffusion, institutional adaptation and policy adaptations” (Keyman & Kancı, 2011: 321). However, formal accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU to complete this transformation reached a political and technical stalemate with no or little progress on opened chapters of the EU *acquis communautaire* as well as no additional chapters to open in the last three years.

In February 2013, positive signals came from France to support opening of one new chapter of the EU *acquis* to improve the accession negotiations with Turkey. Nevertheless, very last days of May 2013 brought an unpleasant surprise both for the internal politics of Turkey and the relations between the EU and Turkey. A few environmentalist activists opposed to the construction plans in Gezi Park as a part of pedestrianization project in Taksim which is socio-politically important for İstanbul and the police forces intervened in these few activists in a disputable manner on May 28, 2013. The controversial interventions of police also with other claimed interventions to citizens around the demonstration area, alleged violations of fundamental rights during the nationwide Gezi Park protests and the insistence of the Turkish Government under the ruling of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi or AK Party) to continue its plan in the park frustrated some citizens. This activated many different masses in Turkey and led to spontaneous and restrained uprisings from a wide range of society. In a sudden, few environmentalists’ sit-in protests in Gezi Park turned to be a nationwide protest against the Turkish government and Prime Minister Erdoğan himself. For weeks in June, the public protests in Taksim square and basically Gezi Park and other cities in Turkey, disputed form of intervention by the police forces and the reactions of political decision-makers in Turkey to these protests became the center of harsh criticism towards the Turkish government from the EU institutions and the EU Member States. On June

12, 2013, the European Parliament condemned the interventions of the police on the demonstrations in its resolution with expressing its “deep concern at the disproportionate and excessive use of force by the Turkish police” (European Parliament, 2013a). As a reply, the most effective political decision maker in Turkey preferred tough rhetoric.

They are out of their minds. They have no sense of fidelity. Do you even have the right to make such a decision? You are anti-democratic... I don't recognize such an EU Parliament. [For us] it would be nothing but a name plate. You have to have some spine (Today's Zaman, 17/06/2013).

This tough statement of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan towards the EU divided the EU political decision-makers on interrupting accession negotiations or continuing the negotiations for Turkey's democratic reforms and process. Many EU politicians threatened Turkey with the postponement of the upcoming accession negotiations with one new Chapter. On June 17, 2013, Hannes Swoboda who is the president of the Socialists and Democrats Group in the European Parliament stated:

Mr. Erdoğan has said he refuses to recognize the European Parliament and he refuses to recognize those who protest against him, his government and his policies. Ignoring the European Parliament can only mean he does not want Turkey to become a member of the European Union (Today's Zaman, 17/06/2013).

In diverse political areas, it was discussed that eight-year-accession negotiations which began in 2005 came across with another serious curve after the crisis in Turkey – EU relations for two years beginning in Luxembourg in 1997 until the EU summit in Helsinki in 1999. Nevertheless, Turkey was already tired of waiting for becoming an EU member state since 1963. While Croatia as another candidate country had started the accession negotiations at the same year with Turkey and became the 28th EU Member State on July 1, 2013, Turkey had only 13 open chapters out of 35 chapters. Furthermore, many of these open chapters were blocked because of ideological and political reasons. In this long accession process, to make the public protests in Turkey as another reason to block Turkey's accession could seriously harm the accession talks and even seriously endanger the Turkish 50-year-old dream of joining the EU. Thus, the Gezi Park protests became totally an unexpected examination for the Turkish Government in terms of application of freedoms guaranteed both by the EU and Turkey while Turkey was already struggling with her democratic and judicial reforms, the Cyprus problem, new constitution with more democratic freedoms in harmony with EU criteria in order to become an EU member state at the same time.

Besides the protests and debated interventions of police which all ended with the death of six people including a police officer and thousands of injured people, different reactions of the political decision makers in Turkey to these demonstrations composed the other main reason for Turkish Government's being criticized by many political decision-makers in the EU institutions and the EU member states. For example, in his speech on June 1, 2013 which was in the very beginning of the events, Prime Minister Erdoğan told the Gezi Park protestors: "If you gather a hundred thousand people, I will gather a million" to show his supporting group's power behind him while then Turkish political decision makers were being advised to enter dialogue and to make a compromise with the demonstrators by many global political actors in the world (Milliyet, 01/06/2013a). He also accused domestic extremists, interest rate lobbies and foreign powers as a part of an international conspiracy and he added that they were using live broadcasts of mainstream media organizations in the world, in order to fuel the protests and not to see powerful Turkey at the end (Hürriyet Daily News, 07/06/2013a). These remarks of Prime Minister Erdoğan were not welcomed both by the EU and other global political actors in the world. This led to the question of whether Turkey gave up its European aspirations and necessary steps for her accession into the EU. However, there were also other Turkish political decision-makers who showed different reactions to the protests. On the contrary to Erdoğan's statements and many other prominent AK Party members, President Abdullah Gül adopted a different and conciliatory voice during and after the Gezi Park protests, which is analyzed through this thesis by using the Turkish mainstream printed press and the Progress Report of Turkey on October 16, 2013. Besides Gül, there was also Deputy Prime Minister and government spokesman Bülent Arınç who apologized for the use of excessive force used against the peaceful protests in the very beginning of the protests (Today's Zaman, 05/06/2013). Therefore, analyzing different reactions of Turkish political decision-makers are worth studying in this master thesis in order to make a proper evaluation of the Turkish decision-makers' stance to the protests without focusing on certain actors.

The public protests for Gezi Park in Taksim "in a modest 'occupy style' peaceful resistance" are seen as a quite original movement which was seen for the first time in terms of their duration, participants, reasons and demonstrating style as a whole in such a wide range in Turkey during 11 years of an unrivaled ruling of AK Party with three commanding and successive electoral victories (Kuymulu, 2013: 275). It should be admitted that some protestors from some political affiliations used violence after a certain period and they harmed

the public goods in order to manipulate these movements to diverse aims and results. However, the protests especially in the first weeks were dominantly seen as peaceful, leaderless, decentralized and heterogeneous with the socio- cultural reasons as in the New Social Movements theory. The Gezi Park protests in Turkey lasted almost one month in a nationwide range also with the support of some prominent foreign and domestic academics such as Noam Chomsky (Hürriyet Daily News, 01/06/2013). Furthermore, these protests succeeded the protests against the controversial road construction through the forest of Middle East Technical University in Ankara as the same environmentalist reasons (Hürriyet Daily News, 7/09/2013). In other words, it seems this process which had its origins in Taksim in İstanbul can be ongoing and repeatable. Therefore, it is important to review the facts of the Gezi Park protests for other social movements in the upcoming future of Turkey. In order to analyze these facts, it should be realized that these protests were not different from new tendencies in terms of identity, emotions, visions, morality, legitimation crises in the world (Langman, 2013: 2). As a part of the New Social Movements in the world such as the Occupy Wall Street movements in the USA, the Gezi Park demonstrations are also a good example of the existence of a new middle class in Turkey with its own type of cyber propaganda in social media leading to “global political awakening” and with their different demands based on democratic values, freedoms and rights rather than the reasons of labor movements in the past such as purely equal redistribution of capital (Brzezinski, 2009: 53). On this ground, the protests against construction plans in Gezi Park are needed to be investigated for the sake of understanding new tendencies in the world, their reflections in Turkey and the driving force of domestic policies in Turkey as the trigger for these incidents and hence the future of relations between Turkey and the EU. Consequently, this thesis examines the facts of the Gezi Park protests under the New Social Movement theory.

Throughout this thesis, 3,6 million protestors for Gezi Park not only in İstanbul but also in 80 out of 81 cities in Turkey and their effects on Turkey’s long, difficult and winding accession process to the EU are analyzed by using the comments of political decision-makers in Turkey, the EU institutions and EU member states on these protests (Şardan, 2013: 13). Their comments are of great importance to understand and evaluate how they perceived these protests. Especially the statements of the European decision-makers include many comments on the application of freedom of expression, media freedom and freedom of assembly, which had been claimed to be violated during the protests in Turkey as a candidate country to the EU. Therefore, the research question of this master thesis is: Have the Gezi Park protests in

Turkey in 2013 and the different statements of decision-makers to these protests affected Turkey's accession process to the EU? In order to answer this research question, first of all, the EU history in regards of Turkish accession and the role of political decision-makers in Turkey, the EU and the EU Member States during this process are discussed. This is followed by the methodology of this study, which is the Critical Discourse Analysis of the decision-makers in the EU institutions, EU member states and Turkey. Because, as it was mentioned above, not only the events themselves but also reactions of the political decision-makers can cause a serious tension while waiting for a progress in the relations. In the fourth part, the Gezi Park Protests in Turkey in 2013 are examined in regards to the New Social Movements theory in sociology and the relevant freedoms in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Turkish Constitution, which were claimed to be violated by the Turkish Government during the protests. In the same part, the Critical Discourse Analysis is also applied to statements of the political decision-makers for Turkey's accession process. Lastly, the effects of these protests and subsequently the reactions of the decision-makers into Turkey's accession process to the EU are studied in this master thesis.

CHAPTER 1

TURKEY'S EU ACCESSION PROCESS AND THE ROLE OF POLITICAL DECISION MAKERS IN THIS PROCESS

The relations between the EU and Turkey for Turkey's accession have still been going through ups and downs while the 50th anniversary of Ankara Association Agreement was celebrated on September 12, 2013. This is because Turkey's accession process to the EU is of an original structure due to the candidate's characteristics unlike other EU candidate countries. It is already known that every accession to the EU has become very vulnerable to the candidate country, its political leaders and inner dynamics in the EU. However, the Turkish case undisputedly forms a category of its own in the EU enlargement history. The distinctiveness of the Turkish case for another EU enlargement originates from technical issues such as Turkey's politics, economics, population, geography and emotional issues such as her culture, religion, history and identity. All of these factors are discussed within the EU institutions, EU member states and among the EU citizens and led them to treat Turkey in a different manner. As a result, in addition to the Copenhagen criteria based on the political commitments, the economic requirements and acceptance of the EU *acquis communautaire*, Turkey has to fulfill further requirements specifically prepared for Turkey by the Commission (Redmond, 2004: 310). According to the European Commission's Negotiation Framework in 2005, the accession talks with Turkey are "open-ended" and may end with some arrangement rather than full membership. This wording of the Commission for the first time was expressed for a candidate country in its history and it was not accepted by the Turkish side at all. For these reasons, it is not surprising that the accession process for Turkey seems to be the longest and most ambiguous one for the EU. In the following parts, Turkey's EU story is discussed at first and then the roles of the political decision- makers in this story from both sides are analyzed.

1.1. Turkey's EU History

This part aims to summarize purely the significant events in Turkey's EU journey without the effects of the political decision makers to this journey since the following sections of this part combine the events discussed here with the reported effects of prominent political decision-makers in those times for Turkey's accession process so as to analyze the roles of political individuals to Turkey's accession. This historical summary of the EU- Turkey

relations here does not include the Gezi Park Protests and their effects on the accession since they are separately discussed in the fourth part of this thesis.

The westernization story of Turkey leading to the EU actually starts long before her Republican era. After the long-standing Ottoman Empire which had attempted to make some reforms towards the European values during its ruling, the Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923 as a democratic, secular, unitary and constitutional country with the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Besides her predominant Muslim population, Turkey saved her secular structure and continued her western orientation unlike other Muslim communities. It became members of the Western organizations such as the Council of Europe in 1949, the NATO in 1952, the OECD in 1961, the OSCE in 1973 and the G-20 in 1999. During the Cold War, it was on the Western side as an important player for the defense of the European countries. As another important step for her founding western structure, Turkey applied to the EU in 1959 and became an associate member with the Ankara Agreement in 1963. The Agreement necessitated the establishment of a Customs Union among the parties and the 1970 Additional Protocol detailed how this Customs Union would be founded with the abolition of tariffs and quotas on goods between the EU and Turkey by 1995. However, the 1980 military coup in Turkey temporarily stopped the relations and made the Protocol never fully be implemented. Furthermore, the Turkish intervention in Cyprus in 1974 and the rise of the Kurdish problem beginning in 1980s became other important predicaments for the Turkish accession process and still cause trouble for Turkey at the present time. On April 14, 1987, Turkey applied for full membership to the EU. The European Commission answered with its Opinion in 1989 which made Turkey's accession impossible for that time because of a number of issues such as economic weakness, unstable political situation, poor relations with Greece, the Cyprus dispute, the Kurdish problem and violations of human rights (Müftüler-Bac, 1998: 241). However, as it was foreseen by the 1963 Ankara Agreement and 1970 Protocol, the Agreement for a Customs Union was signed on March 6, 1995 and put into effect on January 1, 1996 in order to make a customs free zone among the Parties.

The 1997 Luxembourg summit is of a negative reputation in Turkey's accession process since it became the beginning of two-year-long stagnation of the relations. This summit of the European Council refused to include Turkey as a candidate state, which was resented with deep anger by Turkey. This Turkish reaction was because none of the other states officially recognized as a candidate in the Summit had a customs union with the EU as Turkey had (Park, 2007: 35). Furthermore, Park adds (2007: 35) that 10 out of 11 states which

were accepted as candidates were former communist countries and the 11th state was Cyprus even though the conflict on the island had not been resolved. On these grounds, Turkey suspended the relations with the EU and began to question loudly the aims of a Customs Union if Turkey would never be an EU member state. This crisis in the relations was overcome when Turkey was granted with the official candidate status in the 1999 Helsinki Summit. The recognition of Turkey in this summit of the European Council without any precondition is named by the Turkish side as a “new beginning” and “a breakthrough” in the EU- Turkey relations, which led to “a process of mutual transformation” (Republic of Turkey Ministry for EU Affairs, 2007).

Morelli (2013: 2) states that in 2001, an “Accession Partnership” with Turkey was adopted by the EU to clear the priorities that Turkey should address for adaptation and implementation of the EU standards and legislation. In the 2002 Copenhagen Summit, the European Council stated that Turkey took big steps in fulfilling the candidacy criteria and if the relevant steps and reforms were actually put into practice, accession talks could be started “without delay” after December 2004 (Morelli, 2013: 2). In 2004, the European Council unanimously reported that Turkey made enough progress to fulfill Copenhagen criteria in order to initiate accession negotiations within a year. In July 2005, Turkey signed the protocol of the Council of the EU to adapt the 1963 Ankara Agreement and a customs union with the new EU member states. However, she refused to recognize the Republic of Cyprus in the scope of this protocol, which initiated a crisis in the relations. On October 3, 2005, formal accession negotiations were opened with Turkey by the EU Council despite the debate over the Cyprus issue of Turkey and concerns of some EU states. Therefore, the “Negotiation Framework” stated that the talks were open-ended and full membership for Turkey was not guaranteed as they were mentioned in the previous section. In 2006, the EU Council stated that Turkey did not fully implement the 1970 Additional Protocol and the 1963 Ankara Agreement with excluding Cyprus and hence the Council decided not to open eight chapters of the EU *acquis* and to close any chapter until Turkey fully implemented her commitments to Cyprus. Thus, it is clear that the Cyprus problem is one of the biggest obstacles for Turkey’s accession process. There was also the unilateral blockade of France on five chapters because the previous President Nicolas Sarkozy was opposed to Turkey’s accession, which softened after the election of François Hollande in 2012.

Three additional chapters in 2007, six additional chapters in 2008 and the 11th chapter of the *acquis* in 2009 were formally opened by the EU despite the disagreement on the Cyprus

issue (Morelli, 2013: 5). In 2011, Turkey declared with her Prime Minister's announcement that she would freeze the relation in the second half of 2012 when Cyprus would have the EU Presidency. Turkey put in effect this decision in July 2012. As a new initiative to refresh the EU- Turkey relations in this situation, the Commission offered a "positive agenda" and Turkey accepted it. Within this agenda, it is aimed to strengthen the reform process in Turkey with debates on "legislative alignment, enhanced energy cooperation, visas, mobility and migration, Customs Union, foreign policy, political reforms, the fight against terrorism and increased participation in people-to-people programs, all issues included in the frozen chapters of the *acquis*" as a complement for the accession (Morelli, 2013: 11).

1.2. Political Decision Makers for Turkey's Accession Process

It is known that effective political decision makers in democratic countries are party leaders in parliaments. Especially the ruling party's leaders are called as the most prominent political decision makers. Sasley (2012: 554) defends that the ruling parties' leaders have a central role in determining policies after consulting to bureaucracies, advisors, domestic political powers and global influences. The researches in the 1970s and 1980s show the importance of party leaders' personality and individual psychological characteristics' effects especially in foreign policy decision making process (Sasley, 2012: 554). In party development, a party leader with an elite leading group as a fraction composes internal factors while external factors consist of independent and environmental variables such as social, economic and political conditions taking place outside the party (Taniyici, 2003: 465). While party formation in new democracies as in Turkey¹ and in established elder democracies as in Western Europe resembles each other in terms of external factors, there are important differentiations in the internal factor's structures with regards to the balance of the power in degree in a party. Parties in the newer democracies, in which civil societal organizations are weak as in Turkey, were created by a certain group of prominent elites in a top-down process (Biezen, 2005: 165 and Taniyici, 2003: 469). Nevertheless, mass mobilization led to the creation of national party organizations in a bottom up process in the late 19th and early 20th century Western Europe. This top-down party development as in Turkey was in the high levels of centralization, concentration around their party leaderships and a tendency towards personalization of the party (Biezen, 2005: 165 and Taniyici, 2003: 469). Namely, political

¹ Turkey made a real transition to democracy with a multi-party system in 1946. However, military interventions interrupted Turkish democracy for three times in 1960, 1971 and 1980. Turkey is still far away from the level of advanced representative democracy and thus it is of a new democracy as a "second wave" democracy according to Özbudun (2000: 1).

decision makers individually and significantly affect the policies and these effects differ in degree in new democracies as in Turkey and elder democracies as in the Western Europe.

Turkish and European political decision-makers whose effects depend on their ideologies and policy preferences have privileged roles in illustrating Turkish accession's benefits and challenges to their people. In order to clear the importance of Turkish and European decision-makers' roles and individual effects on Turkey's accession process, their previous interventions to the process in the past until the Gezi Park protests are discussed in next section.

1.2.1. Political Decision Makers in Turkey

In the Turkish political system, parties, their organization and intra-party political process are leader-oriented rather than intra-party democracy which can be provided with open debate, disseminating views and competitive elections for leadership positions (Taniyici, 2003: 469). Özbudun (2006: 550) states that Turkish people vote according to parties' performance, image and the personal characteristics of their leaders rather than abstract ideologies and political identities, which is well known for Turkish voters. He adds that in almost all Turkish parties, the parliamentary candidates of the parties are nominated "by the central executive committee, where the influence of the party leader is paramount" (Özbudun, 2006: 550). Additionally, the party's parliamentary group and executive committees are also intensively controlled by the party leader and thus political culture in Turkey as second-wave democracy² drives the parties to adopt strong central and personality-based leadership with a highly centralized and hierarchical structure according to him (Özbudun, 2006: 552). Nevertheless, according to Kubicek (2001: 37), Turkish parties themselves give this power to their leaders since they do not let new ideas and leaders to emerge from below, which is as a non-democratic treatment. For example, some party leaders and former Prime Ministers such as Tansu Çiller from the True Path Party, Mesut Yılmaz from the Motherland Party and Necmettin Erbakan from the Welfare Party, who all had been accused of corruption, continued to be leaders of their party and they did not let any inquiry start about each other in the parliament with using their parties (Kubicek, 2001: 37). These make the power of the Turkish leaders in the Turkish political system and their individual effects on relations between Turkey and the EU noteworthy.

² According to Özbudun (2000: 1), Turkey is of a "second-wave" democracy like in the Latin American states rather than a "third wave" democracy like in the post-communist countries in Europe. The most prominent difference is that parties in a second wave democracy as in Turkey is highly institutionalized while parties in a third wave democracy is weakly institutionalized (Taniyici, 2003: 469 and Biezen, 2005: 166).

The first Prime Minister and decision maker who applied for membership and started Turkey's EU adventure in 1959 was conservative Adnan Menderes as the leader of the center-right Democratic Party between 1950 and 1960. However, a number of neoliberal economic reforms in order to prepare Turkey for the EU were brought by Turgut Özal during his premiership between 1983 and 1989 and his presidency between 1989 and 1993. Besides, Turkey applied for full membership to the EU on April 14, 1987 when Özal was Prime Minister. Full membership to the EU was important for Özal so as to provide economic dynamism, development and industrialization in Turkey and to make the EU a political balancing power against Turkey's dependency to the United States of America (Ataman, 2003: 57).

In 1994 and 1995, Prime Minister Tansu Çiller with her conservative True Path Party affected Turkey – EU relations with her campaigns in Europe to find some supports against the Pro-Islamic Welfare Party of Necmettin Erbakan (Müftüler-Bac, 1998: 253). Çiller claimed that to make Customs Union Agreement between Turkey and the EU would weaken the Islamists and strengthen her power against Erbakan. The basic elements of Erbakan's party were Anti-Westernism and Anti-Europeanism which were constitutive and central in his party's identity. His party viewed the EU as a "Christian Club" (Taniyici, 2003: 464). He was in the support of Turkey based on Islamic and nationalist resources which were called as "National Vision Movement" (Taniyici, 2003: 470). According to Taniyici (2003: 470), in 1991, Necmettin Erbakan stated his opinion about the EU with these words: "I regard the application of Turkey for the full membership in the EC as treason to our history, civilization, culture, and sovereignty". Therefore, Çiller convinced the EU to make this agreement in order to stop the Welfare Party of Erbakan and the rise of the political Islam in Turkey. Then French President Jacques Chirac had also supported her and stated: "If we dissuade Turkey from being European, we will strengthen the religious revivalists" (Müftüler-Bac, 1998: 253). However, the 1995 general elections did not bring Çiller enough votes to form a government on her own. Hence, as one of the oddest coalitions in Turkish political history, she made a coalition government with Erbakan who was the major threat for Turkish democracy according to Çiller before the elections. This hypocrisy of Çiller who had represented herself and her party as Western-oriented, secular and modern caused the loss of confidence to her and deterioration of the EU-Turkey relations in those times. As a result, her election strategies and her coalition after the election seriously harmed the reputation of Turkey in the European quarters. Nevertheless, during this coalition with Erbakan, his rhetoric and political opposition

to the EU softened and Erbakan did not show any deteriorating deed towards the EU - Turkey relations. He even changed his stance especially after the 28 February Process³ and said in 1997: “Now we have become Westernists. We want secularism as it has been implemented in the West. We became pro-western because we do not want Turkey to go back to a repressive regime” (Taniyici, 2003: 477).

Since the impetus of the EU’s decision in 1999, Turkish political leaders have fastened Turkey’s journey for accession to the EU. This drives her to become more and more democratic, modernized and economically stable with a number of reforms that were unthinkable without the driving force of full membership to the EU. On the one hand, then-Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit’s efforts from the Turkish side led to this encouraging decision for Turkey and he also kept on bringing a number of necessary human rights reforms, constitutional amendments for freedoms and European Union Adaptation Law (Hale, 2003: 122). Especially in 2001, 34 constitutional amendments under his leadership started dramatically to change the Turkish political landscape when they were intensified with more constitutional amendments in 2004 under the leadership of Erdoğan (Kubicek, 2005: 365). On the other hand, his nationalist stance in Cyprus issue and his attitude to the EU about this dispute did not contribute to Turkish accession to the EU despite Ecevit’s center- left ideology. Bülent Ecevit as Turkey’s first left-wing Prime Minister officially gave the order to intervene into Cyprus in 1974, which led to a serious tension in Turkey’s relations with the EU. Because of the deadlock on the island until the present time, solving the Cyprus issue has become one of the inevitable conditions for Turkey to become an EU member as it was mentioned in the 1999 Helsinki Summit. Ecevit was against the inclusion of the EU into the Cyprus problem⁴. Furthermore, there were also other points that Ecevit did not agree with the EU and took decisions in contrary to its warnings. In the 1970s, Ecevit unilaterally had frozen the Ankara Treaty in 1978 since he wanted the revision of the Association Agreement, which led to the Agreement’s suspension (Müftüler-Bac, 2005: 20). Until he left the power, he also coincided with the EU on the Kurdish problem and territorial disputes with Greece.

³ On February 28, 1997, the National Security Council secretary led by the Turkish Military gave a program with 18 proposals to prevent what the Council found as Turkey’s Islamization to then Prime Minister Erbakan. Erbakan was forced to sign it. Eventually, this led to his resignation and his party’s prohibition by the Constitutional Court in 1997.

⁴ However, it is claimed that Necmettin Erbakan, Deputy Prime Minister in 1974, made the decision to send the Turkish troops while Ecevit was hesitant (Robins, 1997: 87). Besides, Erbakan supported of annexing of the Turkish occupied part of the island, which would deteriorate more Turkey’s reputation in the EU and in the world.

The AK Party led by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has been in power since 2002 and it has been elected more than three times with a larger majority after every election. In last 12 years of its ruling, the party and Erdoğan became one of the most effective parties and leaders in Turkey's political history and also in facilitating her accession process to the EU. Thus, it is shortly worth analyzing the party's and leader's adventure of coming into power before mentioning Erdoğan's deeds for her accession. As it is discussed in the previous section by Taniyici, internal and external conditions in Turkey gave chance AK Party to be the ruling party and its leader Erdoğan to become Prime Minister of Turkey. After the rent-seeking coalitions in the 1990s, the fragmental and fragile political coalitions caused an ineffective supervision, insufficient fiscal policy and weak banking sector, which led Turkey to the 2001 financial crisis (Dervis, 2005: 62). In this period, a deep recession and high unemployment as consequences of the crisis formed a deep loss of public confidence in Parliament and a public awareness against these rent-seeking coalitions in Turkey. This awareness and economic condition became the main external factors for the party and leader change from the National Vision Movement of Necmettin Erbakan and his entourage. When a new elite group with a new leader came together as the internal factors for party formation as well as a new normative structure giving place to the conditions of the Copenhagen Criteria, the AK Party came into power in 2002 as a single party government after a long coalition process in the Turkish Parliament. AK Party government continued and successfully implemented the economic reforms of Kemal Derviş, which were started by the previous Ecevit government in the banking sector. Thus, the AK Party with the leadership of Erdoğan gained both domestic and international trust through political and economic stability in order to meet the Copenhagen criteria for full membership to the EU.

For the case of the AK Party, Erdoğan's conservative leader personality and "man of the people" image are claimed to contribute to party's successive three electoral successes (Özbudun, 2006: 554). However, this also means that his absence can end the existence of his party as it happened to other parties in Turkish political history. Just after the AK Party's victory in 2002, his first activity for Turkey's accession was to travel throughout the EU which was totally contrary to Erbakan, the previous conservative leader from the same movement. According to Sasley (2012: 561), the "soft coup" as the 28 February process against Erbakan taught Erdoğan that only EU membership could actually protect the Islamists from the Kemalists or in other words, the Turkish Military creating the 28 February process. In the 2002 European Council Summit in Copenhagen, Erdoğan succeeded something which

cannot be compared with other Turkish leaders since the Summit decided that Turkey had fulfilled enough of Copenhagen criteria and accession negotiations would begin “without delay”. Afterwards, the European Council summit in Brussels in 2004 determined a certain date as October 3, 2005 to start official negotiations. In addition to his active lobbying efforts in EU member states, two constitutional amendments in 2002 and 2004 and six harmonization packages, which included abolition of the death penalty and disputable state security courts, were adapted in order to prepare the Turkish legislation in accordance with the EU standards during his premiership (Taniyici, 2003: 549). Erdoğan also willingly aimed to solve the Cyprus problem with the reunification of the island in order to end the Cyprus blockage for Turkey’s accession. For this aim, he supported the plan of the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. However, this plan failed in the 2004 referendum since 75 % of Greek Cypriots voted against the referendum.

In the beginning of 2009, Erdoğan appointed for the first time a full time accession negotiator, State Minister Egemen Bağış⁵ who became one of the most important political decision makers of Turkey in her accession process. Furthermore, Erdoğan also started many sensitive and unthinkable reforms for Turkey such as limiting the power of the military and providing education and broadcasting in the Kurdish language which had been harshly opposed by the previous governments and especially center-left leader Ecevit (Kubicek, 2005: 361). The last reforms which were personally announced as the “democratization package” on September 30, 2013 by Erdoğan were also appreciated in the 2013 Turkey’s Progress Report by the European Commission. Besides his contributions, his damages for Turkey’s accession are also stated in recent years. Erdoğan is criticized with non-European applications such as limiting rights and freedoms in practice, intervening into the life styles of the citizens in order to raise religious generations and becoming more and more authoritarian to his citizens, which are also discussed in next sections. Therefore, it is stated that democratization of Turkey with the leadership of Erdoğan has been imposed from outside, the EU as the demands of conditionality for the EU membership in order to respond the “logic of consequentiality” rather than a sincere change based on internalization of democratic norms for the “logic of appropriateness” (Kubicek, 2005: 362). However, democratization should have been imposed

⁵ During the cabinet reshuffle on December 26, 2013, Turkey’s new full time accession negotiator State Minister became Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, who also served as President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Zaman, 26/12/2013).

from inside and consolidated with support from civil society⁶ within Turkey, which has been discussed more since the Gezi Park protests. Furthermore, the tension between Turkey and the EU because of Syria with Erdoğan's different policy to Syria's inner conflicts and Erdoğan's announcement of the decision to freeze certain relations with the EU during Cyprus's 6-month rotating presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2012 damaged the EU-Turkey relations in last years (Morelli, 2013: 8). As it is seen clearly above, political decision makers of Turkey personally are more on foreground with their personal attributes in Turkey's accession process with their own interventions led by their political ideology in both positive and negative way.

1.2.2. Political Decision Makers in the EU and EU Member States

In this part, effects of European political decision-makers in the EU institutions and EU member states are analyzed in order to clear their contributions and damages on Turkish accession. Political decision-makers in the EU institutions differ from the decision-makers in the EU member states since membership in an EU committee imposes additional obligations and thus a secondary character in addition to the national character for these leaders appears (Trondal, 2001: 2). Because of the structure of the EU institutions, these decision-makers are expected to shift their loyalty from a national one to a supranational level in a way. Nevertheless, decision makers in the EU member states are also important since they have considerable effects in European integration and the policy preferences⁷ of the EU (Manow, Schafer and Zorn, 2008: 20). Because of the quite unusual nature of Turkish candidacy, these European leaders in the EU institutions and EU member states pose different manners to Turkey compared to other candidate countries. According to Park (2000: 44), the relation between the EU and Turkey is controlled by conflicting pressures "in a seemingly incremental, directionless and at times contradictory way" and this leads the EU not to develop a coherent policy towards the accession of Turkey. It seems that Turkey's accession has become one of the most highly popularized and politicized issues in the EU. Therefore, the eventual acceptance or failure of the Turkish application for full membership will be a political decision not only based on the progress of Turkey but also on the political references of EU member states' governments. In the following sections on the supporting and opposing

⁶ Kubicek states that Turks' strong bureaucratic-authoritarian state tradition which triggers the paternalism and the image of the state as the father state (devlet baba in Turkish) constricts the civil society and democracy in Turkey (Kubicek, 2001: 36 and Kubicek, 2005: 367).

⁷ According to Pierson (1996: 158), the most important source of policy preference change in the EU is the changes in the governments of the EU member states in a context that even they do not collectively and fully control.

leaders for Turkey's accession, their differentiating reasons and manners are analyzed with their specific effects on Turkey's accession process. According to Akdemir (2012: 221), this discussion is based on the two different opinions which are the Christian Democrats' ideas on constructing a closed and homogenous Europe and the Social Democrats' opinions to form an open and universal Europe.

1.2.2.1. Supporters of Turkey's Accession

Political preferences of the EU member states' governments have become divergent. Each change in their governments in terms of political views between Social Democracy with left wing preferences and Christian Democracy with right wing preferences has affected the positions of these states to Turkey's accession. Akdemir (2012: 221) defends that supporting political view for Turkey's membership is in the line with the Immanuel Kant's guidance written in 1795 as the "Perpetual Peace" which is supported by the Social Democrat parties, the Greens and the Liberals in Europe. According to Kant, there are three Definitive Articles of Eternal Peace which are republican civil constitution of the state, liberal republican's establishing peace among themselves via the "pacific union" and a cosmopolitan law in the harmony with the pacific union limited to the conditions of universal hospitality⁸ (Doyle, 1983: 226-227). In a wide sense, these articles consist of terms such as the rule of law, universal fundamental rights and freedoms, market economy rather than creating otherness towards differentiating groups with various cultures and religions (Akdemir, 2012: 221). This view defends to create a Europe of different cultures and religions via transnational cultural projects. In this direction, Jose Manuel Barroso, the current president of the European Commission, stated on February 16, 2006 that "Islam is part of Europe," and "We have a very important Islamic heritage" (Bowley, 2006). He also added that European political decision makers should differentiate non democratic Muslims with the democratic Muslims who adopt the European values, which refers here to Turkey according to Bowley (2006). Mogens Lykketoft who was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Denmark between 2002 and 2005 and the Danish Social Democrat party leader also stated with his interview with Akdemir that:

Accession to the EU basically relies on the Copenhagen Criteria. Complying with these criteria is enough to be an EU member state for a country. Except these criteria, there is no other criteria based on culture, identity or religion (Akdemir, 2012: 228).

⁸ He asks for the recognition of the right of a foreigner to be treated with hospitality for the exchange of goods and ideas when he/she comes to another country. Nevertheless, this hospitality does not grant the right to citizenship or settlement (Doyle, 1983: 226-227).

In this point, it should also be reminded that the EU has adopted “united in diversity” as its official motto, which supports the existence of this view in the EU for an enriched, universal and open Europe with the continent's many different cultures, traditions and languages. Kylstad (2010: 12-14) also states that the formal set-up and the accession criteria of the EU are in concordance with this Kantian understanding via giving some examples from Articles of the TEU (Treaty of European Union) compatible with Kant’s definitive articles. However, the extent to which the EU follows this Kantian understanding is brought into question when Turkey’s application is discussed in the EU.

The governmental change with a powerful Social Democrat group and leader or left-wing party and leader in the EU member states with this view have changed many times their stance towards Turkey and provided important opportunities to Turkey many times in her accession process. For example, the quite tense situation in Turkey- EU relations because of the EU’s rejection of Turkey’s candidature in Luxembourg in 1997 began to improve with the changes in many EU member states’ governments from Christian to Social Democratic governments, especially in Germany with Chancellor Gerhard Schröder’s government in 1998 (Park, 2000: 36). Schröder aimed to improve the relations between Turkey and the EU. When Schröder’s efforts combined with then-Prime Minister of Turkey Ecevit’s letter with Ecevit’s commitment to implement the domestic reforms for the Copenhagen Criteria in May 1999, the attempts of both leaders became one of the influential triggers to gain a positive outcome for Turkey in the 1999 Helsinki Summit (Park, 2000: 37).

As another example of governmental changes, the shift in the French Government in 2012 from the center-right party with the former French President Nicholas Sarkozy’s leadership to social liberal center-left government with the current President François Hollande has also provided considerable contributions to Turkey. Hollande openly stated his support for Turkey’s accession at some point and French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius declared in February 2013 that the new government in Paris was ready to open at least one new chapter of the EU *acquis* (Morelli, 2013: 12). This change of the party and leader in the French government led the recovery of the accession talks between the Turkey and the EU after a three- year serious political and technical stalemate. Thus, the Chapter 22 was officially opened on November 5, 2013. While in many EU member states such as Germany,

France and Greece⁹, this shift in the government and the leader reversed their position to Turkey, the United Kingdom (UK) is seen as the most consistent, positive and encouraging supporter of the accession of Turkey regardless of the shifts in its government among Conservatives, Liberals and Labour and its leaders (Anastasakis, 2004: 14). Different from its German and French partners in the EU, the UK seems less interested in religious and identity arguments. Rather, it takes into consideration technical issues in its evaluation of the Turkish accession. From the UK's perspective, Turkey should be an EU member since it will develop the European market and multiculturalism in Europe according to Anastasakis (2004: 14).

There are also other driving reasons¹⁰ for the European leaders to grant Turkey the EU membership. The geopolitical strategic advantages of Turkey¹¹ as an NATO member are among other main reasons for European security, which has actually been the basic reason of the EU since the Cold War (Guo, 2009: 60). Turkey is also supported by some European political decision-makers and especially British political decision makers because of her secular and democratic governance as being a successful example in the Islamic World (Guo, 2009: 61 and Anastasakis, 2004: 6). Thus, the EU can reach to the Islamic World with an Islamic country with Turkey's accession.

1.2.2.2. Opponents of Turkey's Accession

It is known that the European political decision makers from the Christian Democrat parties in the EU generally use a cultural-base opposition to Turkey's accession (Schimmelfennig, 2008: 418). The view supported by Christian Democrats and right-wing preferences focuses on the cultural and religious factors for the EU membership, which follows the understanding of German poet Novalis's "Christianity or Europe" according to Akdemir (2012: 222). Novalis describes the middle ages as the golden era during which Europe was in a political and religious unity with one common religion, Christianity and under one common ruler, the Holy Roman Emperor (Kleingeld, 2008: 273). This explains the ideal Europe as a homogeneous unity with the same religion and culture and these lead Turkey to be harshly criticized by the supporters of this view since they perceive Turkey as Europe's other or as an alien body to the EU (Verney, 2007: 310). On March 4, 1997, Wilfred

⁹ In 1999, the Greek foreign minister Theodore Pangalos was replaced with George Papandreou who defended a new foreign policy with advocating the accession of Turkey in order to solve the security problems with Turkey in the Aegean Sea (Schimmelfennig, 2008: 418).

¹⁰ Ivanov (2013: 168-171) mentions about many other reasons for Turkey's membership in his article.

¹¹ As the explanation of the security reasons, Turkey has specialized in important activities such as peacekeeping, counterterrorism and counter-proliferation (Guo, 2009: 61).

Maartens, then Belgian Prime Minister and President of the European People's Party¹² stated in a meeting in Brussels that:

Turkey is not a candidate to become a member of the European Union, short term or long term... We want the closest cooperation possible, but we are creating a European Union. That [EU] is a European project. (Kinzer, 1997).

There are also other opposing views based on the culture, identity and religion of Turkey. After 1999 Helsinki decision about Turkey, then President of the European Parliament Nicole Fontaine mentioned about the problem of cultural integration of Turkey and the issue of limitations of Europe's new borders (Park, 2000: 42). Former French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing also focused on the same points with classifying Turkey as an Asian country rather than a European one and he concluded Turkey's application for full membership as an impossible bid (Park, 2000: 42). Even if Turkey's accession comes true, Giscard believes that the accession of this Islamic country would bring "the end of Europe" (Anastasakis, 2004: 6).

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's and former French President Nicholas Sarkozy's position is also same with their citizens' opposition to Turkish accession (Müftüler-Bac, 2008: 221). However, these leaders as well as Valery Giscard supported the idea of "privileged partnership" instead of Turkey's full membership to the EU. This idea was first verbalized by Merkel in her visit to Turkey in 2004 and during her election campaign in 2004, too (Insel, 2012: 4). However, the replacing of Sarkozy with François Hollande in 2012 and Merkel's removing the term "privileged partnership" for Turkey in her election campaign in 2013 point out that this idea does not come to the fore for the current EU- Turkey relations (Hürriyet, 24/06/2013).

These arguments on her culture, identity, geography and religion are factors that Turkey can hardly change. There are also other opposing views based on the requirements originating from the Copenhagen criteria that Turkey has promised to meet. Greek-Turkish dispute on Cyprus, the Kurdish problem, violations in fundamental freedoms, adaptation of the EU *acquis communautaire* with other problems in democratization and political

¹² European People's Party founded by the Christian Democrats and the centrist parties, forms center-right political parties from different countries and it is the largest groups in the European Parliament. AK Party was also a member of this party until November 8, 2013. But, she joined to the European Conservatives and Reformists part in the Parliament.

liberalization process in Turkey¹³ are other factors which can be improvable. Their improvement totally depending on Turkish will and diligence will provide Turkish accession according to the EU's official documents (European Commission, 2005: 1-9).

¹³ Ivanov (2013: 171-181) lists in details the shortcomings of Turkey for the EU membership in his article.

CHAPTER 2

MEYHODOLOGY: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The methodology of this thesis is the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of the political decision-makers' statements in the EU institutions, EU member states and Turkey about the Gezi Park protests in Turkey. The first CDA studies were launched by Van Dijk's journal on Discourse and Society in 1990 and a small symposium in Amsterdam to discuss the theories and methods of the CDA in 1991 (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 3). According to Fairclough and Wodak's (1997: 258) explanation of discourse in the CDA studies:

CDA sees discourse – language use in speech and writing – as a form of social practice. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectic relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it. The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as social conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people.

To be more precise, discourse both is affected by the social practices and also affects these social practices. This makes discourse the cause and the consequence of social practices at the same time. Furthermore, the role of ideology for discourse should also be mentioned since discourse is produced and shaped by ideology, which makes discourse a material form of ideology. The CDA deals mainly with analyzing and understanding social issues with revealing strategies for justification and hence uncovering hidden meanings in a specific discourse. For this aim, the CDA focuses on the linkages among discourse, in other words language use, ideology and society.

According to van Dijk (1993: 254), “one crucial presupposition of adequate CDA is understanding the nature of social power and dominance” in order to explain ideas on the contributions of discourse to their reproduction. Social power means privileged access to socially valued sources including wealth, income, status, position, education, force or group membership, which supplies the control of one group over another (Van Dijk, 1993: 254). This group having social power not only limits the powerless group's freedom in a way, but also affects their minds. For this aim, this powerful group controls the powerless group's action either directly by force such as police violence to the protestors and the male violence against women or indirectly by persuasion, manipulation or dissimulation as a more modern

and effective way of changing mind of the other for someone's interests (Van Dijk, 1993: 254). In other words, talk and text fundamentally are used as a tool to control and manage the mind of others by the powerful group. In this point, discourse and the critical analysis of discourse meet to reveal how this powerful group conceives or manipulates the powerless masses in society. As the other term to understand the CDA, dominance means a hierarchy of power because some members or "power elites" of the dominant groups have a significant effect in decision-making, planning and the control over the processes and relations of the enactment of power (Van Dijk, 1993: 255). These elites are of a special access to discussion and literally they have most to "say" according to Van Dijk (1993: 255). Many forms of dominance such as the male dominance over women, rich over poor and White over Black are continuous. This makes them look normal in the society until they are challenged. Therefore, Van Dijk especially uses the CDA to reveal and prevent power abuse leading to the injustice and inequality in society as well as the violations of laws, rules and principles of democracy by the ones who own power.

Between discourse access and social power, there is a surprising relationship considerably affecting each other. Because, "the more discourse genres, contexts, participants, audience, scope and text characteristics they (may) actively control or influence, the more powerful social groups, institutions or elites are" (Van Dijk, 1993: 256). Conversely, the lack of power is assessed by the lack of access to discourse such as an ordinary citizen who has access just to talks among family members, colleagues or friends rather than public discourse. Hence, a group's control over access to discourse which results in the control over the minds and preferences of people and social representations, measures this group's social power and dominance. In this point, the media is used with the press officers, press conferences and other ways for "the control the public opinion and for the manufacture of legitimation, consent and consensus needed in the reproduction of hegemony" (Van Dijk, 1993: 257).

Political power and legitimacy which are always at risk for the power group are tried to be challenged by civil institutions such as the press and the non-governmental organizations, political opponents and large populations at protests such as the Gezi Park protests in Turkey. Especially in a crisis, the acts of legitimization are more crucial since the institutions giving power, the State, the law, social order and shared values under the control of power groups are at risk then (Martin Rojo and Van Dijk, 1997: 524). Therefore, in political discourse, legitimization is indispensable for a politician in order to justify his/her policies and actions "as the right thing to do" for the society's support and normative approval

and to maintain their hegemonic power over society as a result via his/her argumentations (Reyes, 2011: 782-783). Thus, it is aimed to show that the society's moral order which refers to laws, norms, agreements and aims accepted by the majority, is consistent with such actions of the politicians (Martin Rojo and Van Dijk, 1997: 528). According to Cap (2008: 39), legitimization accomplished by persuasive and sometimes manipulative discourse is the principle discourse goal of politicians, which save and strengthen their power over society. Successful legitimization both supplies the endorsement of specific actions proposed by the politicians and strengthens the dominant political group or institutions as well as their position and leadership in society.

Since "the context of language" is quite important for the CDA, strategies for the legitimization in political discourse are taken into consideration in this thesis (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 3). Reyes applies Van Leeuwen's strategies for the analysis of the discourse of politicians and improves them in political discourse (Van Leeuwen, 2007: 91-98). For the legitimization of the proposals, claims and decisions of the politicians, Reyes points five crucial strategies that these political actors use in their statements. These strategies are legitimization through emotions, legitimization through a hypothetical future, legitimization through rationality, legitimization through voices of expertise and legitimization through altruism, which are the basic criteria for the analysis of the politicians' statements in this thesis (Reyes, 2011: 785-788). Emotions are the most frequently used strategy since they are key factors in every kind of legitimization process. This is because they prepare audience to receive and perceive proposals that speaker aims to convey in order to make their proposals accept and to take support of audience (Reyes, 2011: 790). Generally, emotions are predictable according to the meaning of the words preferred in a speech. Thus, emotions have the potential of distorting the same cognitive understanding of reality with some evoking words that the audience likes or does not like. Legitimization through emotions aim to affect citizens from the negative or positive representation of social actors and their actions with creating a "we" group and a "they" group. Van Dijk (1993: 264) explains this strategy as positive self-representation and negative other-representation. For example, the usage of the words "terrorist" and "terrorism" for others evoke a number of feelings and remind previous experiences and tragic events in collective memory of listeners and readers such as the attacks on September 11, 2001. In this way, politicians try to trigger the emotional mode of society such as anger, fear, insecurity and revenge in order to legitimize their political actions. As a result, politicians conceive citizens for the solutions they propose in order to prevent the

events evoking these feelings. In parallel with this strategy, Tekin (2008: 735-738) uses referential/nomination strategies for the discursive construction of in- and out-groups such as the French political discourse's equating the EU with Europe, EU membership with Europeanness and the Turkish Prime Minister with a Caliph while discussing Turkey's EU membership to emphasize Turkey's otherness from its perspective.

Legitimization through a hypothetical future necessitates the imminent action of the citizens for the threat claimed by politicians in the future, which is also named as proximation by Sowinska (2013: 797). Politicians state that the present time is the period to make an important decision about a problem which has occurred in the past. This decision will also affect the future and actually destiny of the country according to them. If the citizens approve the proposal of the specific politician, they will be safe and enjoy liberty, freedom, happiness and others (Reyes, 2011: 793). In this point, moral evaluation of Van Leeuwen is seen here with making reference to discourses of desired and common values of a society such as liberty, freedom, happiness, peace, compromise and democracy.

Legitimization through rationality refers to a process in which politicians' decisions are claimed to be presented after an evaluated and thoughtful procedure and after consulting other institutions and actors in order to show politician's decisions or proposals as rational. For this aim, the social and rational constructs within a cultural group are exploited by politicians to justify actions that make sense as the right thing to do and consist of the claimed sacrifices for the society (Reyes, 2011: 797). As the third strategy which is voices of expertise or authorization, politicians use experts or legal authorities in that specific area to support their proposal with the experts' knowledgeable remarks. According to Martin Rojo and Van Dijk (1997: 536), authorization means the reference of involvement of a number of reputable and credible agencies and people such as lawyers, police officers, military and others. For this aim, direct or indirect quotations from authoritative actors sometimes verbatim with the verbs such as say, announce and report are used to gain the confidence of citizens and ultimately to legitimize their decision supported by the experts.

Lastly, altruism means legitimization of a proposal or a decision as a beneficial action to others and a common good for improvement of a particular group or society such as a "remote society" in the need of "our help" in the speeches of the USA's former President George W. Bush and current President Barack Obama for their decision to multiply troops in Iraq and Afghanistan (Reyes, 2011: 787). Martin Rojo and Van Dijk (1997: 528) indicate this

strategy as describing institutional actions and policies for the benefits of a group or the whole society. Helping or doing good things for others such as the poor, the unprotected, the innocent, the vulnerable and the weak people is exploited for both justification of the decisions and the representation of politicians with a thoughtful and helpful image via the altruistic motivations. In other words, this strategy is benefited from people's well-being with using Western values to better other people's lives which are lack of equality, security, democracy, freedom of expression and others. In this strategy, it is crucial to form all actions only on a pure altruism and not to state any self-interest (Reyes, 2011: 803).

According to Tekin (2008: 749), usage of rhetorical figures such as repetitions, metaphors, metonymies, hyperboles, irony, euphemisms, litotes, disclaimers and synecdoches is also seen in the political discourse in order to reinforce the strategies explained above. At semantic level, their roles are noteworthy so as to edit forms of comprehension, to manipulate meaning and to provide social representation of in- and out-group (Tekin, 2008: 749). Among these rhetorical devices, metaphors are one of the oldest and most prominent concepts for the sake of the production of meaning in discourse. Metaphors enable politicians to make listeners and readers visualize the image politicians assert to any event or actor. In this direction, they draw the ways of thinking on their target to provide proofs in order to support their statements. For example, in French political discourse, the metaphors of "disaster", "aggression" and "war" are the most frequently used ones for Turkey's accession to the EU by the French opposition to Turkey (Tekin, 2008: 750).

In addition to the usage of the CDA with necessary strategies of legitimization for this analysis explained above, the news and articles in the printed mainstream Turkish media, the resolution of European Parliament on June 12, 2013, reports from the European Commission and academic writings related about Gezi Park protests are also used. The Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet*'s English daily version *Hürriyet Daily News* is often used in this thesis since it is seen that it publishes in English not only news in its media group as Doğan group but also news in other media groups in Turkey such as Doğu Group, Çalık Holding and Çukurova Group. Furthermore, New Social Movements theory and relevant fundamental rights of the EU claimed to be violated during the Gezi Park protests in Turkey are also mentioned in this thesis to examine the protests in a wider scope.

CHAPTER 3

THE 2013 GEZİ PARK PROTESTS IN TURKEY AND THEIR EFFECTS ON TURKEY'S ACCESSION PROCESS TO THE EU

Before critically analyzing the political decision makers' statements for Turkey's accession, it is important contextually and theoretically to frame the Gezi Park protests in May and June 2013 in order to understand the events in Turkey in a wider scope and to reach a better analysis. For this aim, this part consists of the analysis of the protests, which explains their reasons, profile, participants and role of social media with regards to the theory of New Social Movements (NSMs). However, it should be clarified that the protests in Gezi Park and Taksim Square in Istanbul especially until the police's disputable intervention on June 11, 2013 are examined in terms of the theory of NSMs. This is because after evacuating Gezi Park and Taksim Square on June 11, police forces did not let any other protestors in these areas which were the centers of the Gezi Park protests in Turkey. This is followed by the analysis of the demonstrations in terms of freedom of expression, media and assembly as the freedoms guaranteed both by the EU and Turkey. It is important to examine these freedoms since it has been claimed that they have been violated during the protests in Gezi Park and hence these regional protests in Istanbul have spread to the whole country. After the analysis of the Gezi Park protests in terms of the theory of NSMs and relevant EU freedoms, the analysis of the statements of the political decision makers is presented.

3.1. The 2013 Gezi Park Protests in Turkey Regarding New Social Movements

3.1.1. "New Social Movement" Theory

In sociology, social movements referring to large and popular groups mean "the expressions of protests or programmes for change from below" with social groups, strata and classes which have been repressed, exploited, disrespected or marginalized in a way (Olofsson, 1988: 17). Dominant social structures in the societies shape and determine the social movements whose key concepts are activity, participation, engagement, responsible and conscious action. Social movements are analyzed from two different approaches which are the old paradigm, in other words Classic Social Movements and the new paradigm or New Social movements (NSMs) (Ertan, 2008: 1). The old paradigm for classic social movements is based on the working class and the struggle for the fair redistribution of economic sources with labor movements associated with classical Marxism. However, this approach was not

sufficient for the explanation of especially students' movements in the late 1960s, environmental movements, women's movements, anti-war movements, human rights activism, cultural, ethnic and sexual preference movements such as gay and lesbian movements and others. This necessitated a new theoretical approach for the analysis of these movements which emerged in the 1960s and significantly in the 1980s. For this need, contemporary critical theorists began to examine the new social movements in the world.

In general, New Social Movements as authentic representatives of post-industrial social forces and a recent additional paradigm to social theory are regarded as a new social transformation in society rooted in continental European traditions of social theory and political philosophy (Buechler, 1995: 441). As a reaction to the state's attempts to control the civic sphere, the NSMs have emerged "as an extra- institutional phenomena rooted in civil society that point to the recovery of civil society" (Boggs, 1986: 47). The NSMs as a major form of social activism engage in "cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization" (Habermas, 1987: 392). They develop new forms of mobilization which is based on anti-violence, peaceful and civil disobedience models of action (Şimşek, 2004, 115). Because of their goals and structure with apolitical or anti political stance, these movements cannot be channeled by political parties. The conflicts with the NSMs can cause the larger legitimization crisis, which will be also seen in the case of the Gezi Park protests in Turkey (Buechler, 1995: 446).

According to Habermas (1987: 392) who is the most referred contemporary critical theorist for the NSMs, the main issues of the NSMs are "quality of life, equal rights, individual self-realization, participation and human rights". He states that the bureaucratic and instrumental structures in everyday life challenge the autonomy and separation of action orientations of the individuals in the life-world¹⁴ and this "colonization"¹⁵ of the life-world endangers settled values for identity's definition (Habermas, 1987: 349 and Tucker, 1991: 77). Especially from the 1950s onward as the post-industrial period, crisis of civilization and the reactions to the colonization of the life-word began to be seen in a wider scope and the reasons for the NSMs were placed to the society (Olofsson, 1988: 24). The consumerists and

¹⁴ This life-world involves the "culturally transmitted, prereflexively certain, intuitively available, background knowledge" (Habermas, 1982: 271). Furthermore, the life-world necessitates communicative rationality which means that norms are justifiable through discussion and debate (Buechler, 1995: 445).

¹⁵ The state's and market's permeating more and more areas in daily life with exercising surveillance and regulatory role is called as the colonization of the life-word by Habermas (Crossley, 2007: 294).

clients as the result of welfare capitalism¹⁶ brought new values and new problems different from previous issues of the working class. Based on empirical observations of changes in public opinion, this value- shift moving from economic to non-economic concerns were seen within the “new middle” class (Pichardo, 1997: 422). For Habermas, the basic problem is that in post-industrial society; system imperatives not only intervene into economic and political transactions but also identity formation, normative regulation and other issues in the life-world. The new middle class¹⁷ in society which questions more and more the roles of consumer, client and citizens as a result of rationalization realized this intervention of the system¹⁸ into the life-world. This drove the NSMs to adopt a defensive character to defend life-world against the colonizing intervention of the system. For this aim, the communicative action¹⁹ and rationality which coordinates the social interaction via consent instead of administrative manipulations were needed (Habermas, 1987: 391-392). Thus, these gave rise to the New Social Movements.

For Cohen, new social movements did not adopt the “productivism” or productivist concerns of the previous traditional labor movements²⁰ and they improved new identities’ realization with developing democratic organizations in civil society through democratic form of politics besides a particular interest group’s interests (Cohen, 1983: 99 and Cohen, 1985: 670). Without the bureaucratic structure of the state, the grassroots self-help showed up and grew stronger. According to Cohen, the contemporary movements cannot be defined without “dialogue, consensus and unconstrained non-hierarchical interaction” (Tucker, 1991: 79). Cohen states that the new social movements are open to any rational argumentations with communicating and reasoning publics, which leads to the relatively unconstrained consensus creation, individual emancipation and hence rationality. This atmosphere in these movements creates solidarity among the relevant people and reconstitution of collective identities and

¹⁶ According to Crossley (2003: 299), Welfare capitalism as a response to socialist threat emerged from the crises of laissez-faire and early interventionist forms of capitalism. But, welfarism’s crises shifted to the neoliberalism in the present time and anti-corporate movement in the NSMs showed up as a result of the crises in neoliberalism.

¹⁷ Buechler (1995: 456) defines it as a modern and group-aware group whose aims are more general based on the non-economic values such as democracy (1995: 454). He adds that this new middle class’s construction is still underway in advanced capitalism.

¹⁸ Habermas defines the system as an arena of administrative rationality with states, markets and the large corporations (Tucker, 1991: 82). Buechler adds that the system necessitates “an instrumental logic that detaches media like money and power from any responsibility and accountability” (1995: 445).

¹⁹ As its converse term for Habermas, strategic action coordinates social interaction by force or influence (Johnson, 1991: 191).

²⁰ Unions, parties, communism and social democracy as old labor movements’ organizational and political forms are criticized as too imbricated in the structures, institutions and dilemmas of the past based on old interests and social relations (Olofsson, 1988: 16).

new public spaces (Cohen, 1983: 105). Identity formation and emotional insight are indispensable for these contemporary movements such as radical feminists' base of their views on a reasoned explication of moral principles (Tucker, 1991: 79). According to Tucker, solidarity develops from "free attachment to universal values such as equality, autonomy and participation" and these new movements aim to implement them in society with decentralized consciousness raising groups, bookstores, communes and other "free spaces" (Tucker, 1991: 79).

Pichardo (1997:414) states that the main aims of the NSMs focus on the quality of life and life style concerns with questioning the wealth-oriented materialistic goals of post-industrial societies and the structure of representative democracies. Actually, questioning of everything with a self-reflexive character is an indispensable component of the NSMs. Therefore, conscious choices of structure and action in a decentralized management with the democratic principles and the rotation of leadership are achieved during the movements. In addition to a decentralized management, Pichardo (1997:414) also states that they are anti-institutional, anti-bureaucratic, pluralistic, open and non-hierarchical although some woman and environmentalist organizations have some traditional centralized and hierarchical structures as the exceptions in the NSMs. In this point, it should be emphasized that the ultimate aim of the NSMs is "not to seize the power in order to build a new world, but to regain power over their own lives by disengaging from the market rationality of productivism" (Gorz, 1982: 75). Langman (2013: 516) also agrees that the NSMs are neither attempts to change elected political representatives nor supporting particular political strategies, but they are more to change the nature of the society by challenging meanings and values as well as changing identity. Therefore, what Pichardo (1997: 418-419) finds "new" in the NSMs is that they are not political but socio-cultural in order to separate society from the hegemony of state domination and its diffusion of social conflict into other areas.

According to the first empirical investigations on this movement, the base social groups for the NSM are students, white-collar, professionals and especially the people in public employment as the new middle class or the new layers in the middle class rather than only workers in the Classic Social Movements (Olofsson, 1988: 28). In terms of explanations of these participants, there are two views (Pichardo, 1997: 416-417). From the first view, a new social stratum employed in nonproductive sectors of the economy has emerged and this stratum does not depend on the corporate profit motive and on the corporate word for their sustenance. Rather, this highly educated stratum is employed based on state expenditures such

as academia, the arts and human service agencies and its main conflict is on the control of their work. However, the other view, which is more supported, defines the participants without any ethnic, religious and class-based community and it sees them as the people who have a common concern over social issues. In this same way, there are other views based on no longer social classes or stable groups with the specific social condition and culture to define the participants in these movements (Barker and Dale, 1998: 72). Therefore, participants are different from each other in terms of qualifications, income level, property ownership and power in work organizations (Olofsson, 1988: 30). The West German Greens who are defined by common values as a “catch-all” party are given as an example for the second view (Barker and Dale, 1998: 72). It is also suggested that there are three groups for the NSMs which are new middle class, elements of the old middle class with the trade unions and “decommodified” groups outside the labor market (Buechler, 1995: 454).

The most famous movement in the NSMs, which is also associated with the Gezi Park protests, is the occupy movement whose roots originate from the beginning of neoliberalism in the 1980s. They are triggered by anger, indignation and resentment to both the capitalism’s structural crisis with alienation, marginalization, exclusion and the denial of recognition from a society where some few individuals’ wealth and power surpass the collective good and prevent genuine democracy (Langman, 2013: 520). The occupy movement meaning encampment in the target area is seen as the implosion of global capital, unexpected, unpredictable and the legitimization crises of the political economy. Arab Spring, M15 movement in Spain, the Indignados and American Fall/ Occupy Wall Street are shown as the last examples for this new occupy trend in the world (Langman, 2013: 510). The occupy movements depend on computer-based “virtual public spheres” and computer-mediated social connections that link distant actors via the internet (Langman, 2013: 517). Especially college educated and generally unemployed or underemployed youth with computer access and good computer knowledge are seen as catalysts to ignite these masses and mobilizations. This youth dominantly uses social media such as Facebook and Twitter with smartphones in order to maintain communicative actions and to give power to the small and weak groups to access to the masses for the occupy movements.

There are also criticisms directed to the NSMs since these modern movements are claimed to explain just left-wing movements of the post-modern time (Pichardo, 1997: 413). The movements such as “urban social struggles, the environmental or ecology movements, women’s and gay liberation, the peace movement, and cultural revolt linked primarily to

student and youth activism” basically examined by the NSM researchers are defined as the result of economic and social change in the society (Boggs, 1986: 39-40). However, the populations in support of conservative groups, the militia, right-to-life²¹, wise use movement²² in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s as an anti-environmentalist movement and Christian right movements are not offered a rationale from the NSMs’ perspective (Boggs, 1986: 39-40). This missing of the theory of NSMs is marked as an important flaw in its reasoning.

3.1.2. The Case of the Gezi Park Protests

In Turkey, the most prominent social movements since the 1980s until the Gezi Park protests have been Islamism²³, feminism, the Alevi movement and the Kurdish movement²⁴ which are claimed to have some characteristics of the NSMs in some respects especially based on culture, identity-formation and adopting a certain way of life (Şimşek, 2004: 111). However, the Gezi Park protests differ from them as it is the one which reflects most the characteristics of the NSMs. The case of the Gezi Park protests is associated with the occupy movements under the NSMs. As one of the top political decision-makers in Turkey, President Abdullah Gül also approves that the protests in Turkey are similar to these occupy movements in the world with these sentences:

“During revolts in Spain due to the economic crisis, people filled the squares. The Occupy Wall Street movement continued for months in the United States. What happens in Turkey is similar to these countries” (Hürriyet Daily News, 04/06/2013a).

In this part, the most prominent events of the Gezi Park protests in Turkey are summarized before analyzing this civil disobedience in terms of the theory of NSMs.

The story of the Gezi Park protests started in the midnight of May 27 when bulldozers came to the historical Gezi Park as an urban commons in order to start the “Pedestrianization Project of Taksim” (Annex 1). This project included the building of a replica of the 19th

²¹ This term is generally used as a rhetorical device for the abortion debate by the people who believe abortion is morally wrong and unacceptable (Tooley, 2013: 2604).

²² The wise use movement related to the property rights attack to environmental movements “as harmful to economy and job creation, insensitive to the needs of desires of the local communities, and inconsistent with certain traditional American values, including constitutionally protected property rights” (Ferrier: 1995: IX)

²³ In terms of Islamism, it is focused on the Fethullah Gülen’s community and his movement especially because of this movement’s investment to education and culture in terms of creating a new Islamic identity and way of life in Turkey in harmony with new identity building in the NSMs (Şimşek, 2004: 123).

²⁴ Şimşek (2004: 133) evaluates the Kurdish movement in a more ambiguous stance for its compatibility with the NSMs because of the movement’s usage of violence and hence the losing potential support from the Turkish middle classes for a long time.

century Ottoman barracks, Topçu Kışlası²⁵ instead of the Gezi Park, which involved the construction of a shopping center and a mosque in it according to the remarks of the Prime Minister Erdoğan (Amnesty International, 2013a: 5). However, workers of the municipality in the Park came across angry inhabitants of the area and other people who had concerns about this project. This anger was because the destruction of the Park in the Taksim Square²⁶ in Istanbul as one of the most iconic urban centers of Turkey had been launched without negotiation and consensus with the civil society's actors. Furthermore, the legal permission of this redevelopment and pedestrianization project had been taken in a complicated and controversial way. These acts of the municipality were understood as the Turkish authorities' unwillingness to listen and to make a compromise with the opposing views and to its increasing authoritarianism towards counter opinions. However, for the urban transformation, decision-making processes which evolve among the partnerships of state, market and civil society actors with negotiation and cooperation are needed according to the approach of "historic urban landscape" (Dinçer, 2013: 40). After the protests, it was also accepted by the report of the Eurasia Global Research Center (AGAM) chaired by İbris Bal as an AK Party deputy that the redevelopment project of Taksim was not handled in a democratic way (Hürriyet Daily News, 12/08/2013). The project should have been consulted with the civil society according to the report. In other words, the AGAM report from an AK Party deputy also accepts that dialogue and consensus with the civil society actors were necessary for this kind of decision in Taksim.

After bulldozers began to demolish the wall of Gezi Park near the Asker Ocağı Street and to uproot the trees in the park "to move them somewhere else" on May 27, a number of representatives from the Taksim Solidarity, a coalition of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), political groups and professional bodies who were actively against the regeneration project of Taksim started to gather in the Park (Amnesty International, 2013a: 54). A group around fifty or sixty people occupied Gezi Park and camped at the Park with around fifteen tents on that day to protest the arguable project. They began to call more people by using social media: Facebook and especially Twitter in order to stop the bulldozers to uproot the

²⁵ Topçu Kışlası was one of the centers for March 31 case in 1325 according to Hijri calendar, which is on April 13 in 1909 in the Common Era. This case is known as an Islamic and obscurantist movement in the Ottoman history as an attempt to change the Ottoman government to Islamic regulations. An army from Thessaloniki came to Istanbul to stop the revolt. The Chief of the staff of this army was Mustafa Kemal Atatürk who was firstly recorded with this case in the Turkish history (Aysal, 2006: 16, 27 and 35).

²⁶ In the collective memories, the historical and social Taksim Square as one of the most important strategic spaces such as Tiananmen Square in Beijing, Rabin Square in Tel Aviv and Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires strategic symbolizes the changing socio-political modes of operation in Turkey, which necessitate a consensus among the state, market and the civil society for any change there (Baykan and Hatuka 2010: 50-51).

trees for the next three days (Kuymulu, 2013: 275). Sırrı Süreyya Önder, a member of the parliament from Peace and Democracy Party intervened and managed to block the bulldozers by using his parliamentary immunity on May 28 while the photos of a woman in a red dress²⁷ whose face was directly sprayed by a police officer²⁸ on the same day were shared in the social media as an evidence of the police's mistreatment of the protestors (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013) (Annex 2). Thus, May 28 became the start of police forces' intervention to the demonstrators. On May 29, Prime Minister Erdoğan reacted to the protests with stating that "Whatever they do, we have made up our minds and will do it." (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013). On the same day, the police forces continued to use tear gas and pepper spray on the protestors in a way and amount which was alleged as "excessive use of force" in order to clear the park and to stop the protests. However, the breaking point of the Gezi Park protests was the "operation dawn" at five in the morning of May 30 when police tried to clear the park and to disperse the protestors occupying the Park with tear gas and water cannons and by setting fire to their tents (Kuymulu, 2013: 275; Amnesty International, 2013a: 54 and Işık, 2013: 22). The news and photos of this intervention were shared on social media and by the evening of that day, the number of protestors as an exceptional and spontaneous act of collective mobilization significantly increased to thousands²⁹. In other words, it is clear that the way of the police's actions against the protestors acted as a catalyst and more and more people gathered around the Gezi Park and the Taksim Square. This unexpectedly made this small-scale protest into a wide-range regional demonstration in Istanbul.

On May 31, the biggest dawn operation of the police forces was occurred with the injuries of three reporters (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013). The controversial actions of police with tear gas, water cannons and other alleged treatments³⁰ continued across Istanbul while more and more news and photos of the police "actions" circulated through social media. As a result, mass protests in Istanbul spread to Ankara, İzmir, Antakya, Eskişehir, Edirne, Bursa Kocaeli, Samsun and Adana on the same day (Amnesty International, 2013a: 54). Some

²⁷ The image of a woman in red directly sprayed by a police officer with a tear gas became the icon and the poster child of the Gezi Park protests. This image was also used by other women from other countries who wore red dresses to support Turkish woman in the protests (Hürriyet Daily News, 12/06/2013 and 21/06/2013).

²⁸ Because of the abuse of the profession, this police officer's trial goes on with the prosecutor's request which is to discharge and sentence him to imprisonment up to 2 years (Radikal, 15/01/2014).

²⁹ The number of the people there at that day by the evening of May 30 is predicted as around 100.000 (Kuymulu, 2013: 275). According to Hürriyet Daily News, the number was between 4,000 and 5,000 (31/05/2013a).

³⁰ It is claimed that police used excessive force to the protestors with beating unarmed people and shooting the individuals' heads with tear gas canisters (Kuymulu, 2013: 275). As an example, the death of Ethem Sarısülük among other deaths was allegedly caused by a gas canister to his head from a police officer (Today's Zaman, 02/06/2013a).

people in Istanbul and other cities also joined the protests from their houses with “flipping their house lights on and off and banging pots and pans to make noise” and honking while driving on May 31 (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013). Thus, the regional demonstration in İstanbul turned into a national uprising against the Turkish government, which was exclusively organized through social media. In other words, the conflicts with Gezi Park protests caused a larger legitimization crisis as in the NSMs. Meanwhile, Turkish mainstream media is claimed to block the relevant news about the protests, which is analyzed in detail in the next chapters about EU freedoms in this thesis. The effect of social media for the spreading of these protests can also be seen from the remarks of Prime Minister Erdoğan when he called twitter as the “plague” of the society during these events (Hürriyet Daily News, 11/06/2013a). Furthermore, Cem and Ümit Boyner as some prominent actors from the business world stated that they would not participate into a shopping center in Taksim because of this increasing nationwide uprising against the government (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013).

Upon the spreading of the protests as a kind of nationwide demonstrations as well as the reactions also from the business world stated above, on June 1, the police forces withdrew from Taksim Square and Gezi Park. These events were closely followed both by Turkish citizens and the international media and actors. Nevertheless, the police continued to act against the protestors in other parts of Istanbul and more than 40 Turkish cities such as Adana, Edirne, Samsun, Antakya, Trabzon, Bursa and Kocaeli in the debated manner and toughness (Amnesty International, 2013a: 54). Masses of people who crossed the Bosphorus Bridge toward the European side in the early morning of June 1, 2013 so as to arrive to the Taksim Square were also blocked near the Beşiktaş district by the police with tear gas and water cannon (Hürriyet Daily News, 31/05/2013a). Despite protests, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan stated his insistence on the government’s decision to rebuild the Ottoman Barracks in the area and added that building a shopping mall was not certainly decided (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013). On the same day, Interior Minister Muammer Güler declared in the sixth day of the protests that 1,730 people had been detained in the 235 protests which were held in 67 cities (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013). On June 2 as the second day of the occupation, protestors in the Park and the square were reported with cleaning the area and sharing images of the cleaned square in Twitter as a goodwill gesture (Hürriyet Daily News, 02/06/2013). Furthermore, again on June 2, Prime Minister Erdoğan defended the interventions of police forces before leaving the country for a four-day trip to Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria while

President Abdullah Gül was using more reconciliatory statements about the protests (Hürriyet Daily News, 02/06/2013). This manner of Erdoğan can be commented as ignoring the seriousness of the events with leaving the country in such a complicated situation.

Turkey's Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç apologized for any possible mistreatments by the police while the Turkish Doctors' Union (TTB) declared 4,177 injured people and 2 deaths on June 4. In addition, the military's help was also requested by the police because of the heavy protests in Adana which is on the Syrian border on the same day (Hürriyet Daily News, 02/06/2013). On June 6 as the 11th day of the protests, Prime Minister Erdoğan stated in Tunisia that he still insisted on the construction of the Ottoman Barracks in the area no matter what happened, which led to a severe drop at Turkey's stock exchange (Hürriyet Daily News, 02/06/2013). Additionally, the Istanbul Sixth Administrative Court decided to suspend the construction of the Ottoman Barracks on the same day upon the application of the Association of Protecting and Developing Taksim Gezi Park on May 31 (Hürriyet, 04/07/2013). Prime Minister Erdoğan returned from his four-day-trip in North Africa on June 7 and began to give several public speeches in order to solve this legitimization crisis in Istanbul and many other cities in Turkey.

June 11 was another breaking point of the Gezi Park protests in Turkey when police marched on Taksim Square and used tear gas and water cannons in a disputable manner and amount (Annex 3). Therefore, this intervention ended the 11-day-occupation of the Taksim Square, which had been dominantly reported as a peaceful occupation by the Resolution of the European Parliament on June 11, 2013, other international observers and even a Turkish public prosecutor discussed later in this thesis (Amnesty International, 2013a: 55). Although Istanbul Governor Hüseyin Avni Mutlu stated in his account on Twitter that there would not be a police intervention in Gezi Park on the same day, police also intervened into the Gezi Park in the evening by using tear gas, plastic bullets and water cannon and also ended the occupation of Gezi Park (Hürriyet, 11/06/2013). On June 15, the police prevented the occupiers of Gezi Park from re-entering the park in order to clear the area, which finished the 11-day-long occupation of the park and square. On June 17, a new protesting style was seen in Taksim with the "standing man"³¹ who preferred a silent stationary protest on the square without moving for eight hours (Amnesty International, 2013a: 56) (Annex 4). However,

³¹This type of protest was appreciated by the protestors and used both in Istanbul and other cities of Turkey (Verstraete, 2013: 2-5). Thus, very day, approximately 50 people standing silently for long hours in different city centers in Turkey were reported for weeks.

mass protests and some clashes between the police and protestors continued until the end of June both in Istanbul and some other cities of Turkey.

Four months after the Gezi Park protests, a researcher from one of the mainstream newspapers in Turkey, *Milliyet* achieved these remarkable numbers about the protests from the security forces and published them as the last data (Şardan, 2013: 13). According to his research, 5.532 protests were held during 112 days in the scope of the Gezi Park protests in 80 out of 81 cities in Turkey with the exception of Bayburt. Approximately 3.6 million people³² participated into the events while 5.512 people were detained by the police forces and were included into the investigations about the protests. 189 people were arrested in regard to the criminal investigations of the incidents while 4.329 protestors were injured. 6 people who are 5 protestors and one police officer died and 697 police officers were injured during the demonstrations. Lastly, the value of the devastation caused during the Gezi Park protests to public goods is 139 million Turkish Liras, which is around 49.276 million Euro. Because of all these results, it is widely accepted that it was a very crucial period for Turkey and was also approved in this way by Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu (*Hürriyet Daily News*, 20/06/2013). In the next four sections, the protests especially around Gezi Park and Taksim Square in Istanbul are examined in terms of the profile of the protests, participants, reasons of the protests and role of social media in order to point out the demonstrations' conformity with the theory NSMs.

3.1.2.1. The Profile of the Protests

The profile of the Gezi Park protests is one of the main points to understand and analyze this civil disobedience and legitimation crisis, which succeeded to get the support of 3.6 million people in Turkey. For this aim, the deeds of the protestors and their statements to define themselves are focused in this part. Except the police forces' usage of water cannons and tear gas and the provocative groups' counteractions³³, the groups in the Gezi Park and the Taksim Square especially during the occupation days were reported in general as “carnival-like qualities” with the groups of people who were dancing, drinking and doing other peaceful activities (Şener, 2013: 41). These people were also seen with using unique humor and sharp

³² According to Turkey's statistical profile in OECD's website, total population of Turkey in 2012 was approximately 75.176.000. Considering this data, the percentage of the protestors in the total population of Turkey is 4,7.

³³ It is claimed that these provocative groups are the outlawed Revolutionary People's Liberation Party Front (DHKP-C), the Turkish Communist Workers Party (TKIP), The Turkish Communist Party- Marxist and Leninists (MLKP) and the Maoist Communist Party (MKP) (*Hürriyet Daily News*, 15/07/2013).

satire³⁴ with their street writings and shares in the social media during the protests in order to draw attention to the police's debated intervention, the alleged authoritarianism of the AK Party and Erdoğan and other reasons for protesting in a peaceful way (Arat, 2013: 808). Furthermore, the protestors in the area were reported as quite sensitive and respectful to the religious values and activities of others. On June 5, the protestors with the Anti-Capitalist Muslims' group³⁵ as another supporting group of the demonstrations celebrated the holy Muslim night of Lailat al-Mi'raj with several activities and made a call on no consumption of alcohol at the Park during that day (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013). Three days later, on June 8, it was seen that the left-wing youth protected the ones who were praying during the Holy Friday Prayer against some provocations by forming a human chain (Hürriyet, 08/06/2013). These acts of the protestors point out that there was not a specific group of protestors which can be called as right-wing or left-wing. As it is also discussed in detail in next section, this shows the diversity and considerateness of the protestors in the areas toward each other's values and choices. Due to this diversity of people, views and activities, the protests were seen decentralized and non-hierarchical as in the NSMs (Gezgin, 2013). According to Gezgin, being decentralized provided the protests outmaneuver flexibility and speed to suddenly spread to other cities in Turkey while this also caused a certain type of weakness because of the absence of an interlocutor to contact with the Turkish authorities.

During the occupation days, the protestors placed a "market of revolution" at the entrance of the Gezi Park, where the volunteers brought food or other things and the people in need met their needs for free in this market (Akşam, 05/06/2013). Protestors also organized a free library in the Gezi Park and the number of the books in this library increased day by day with the contributions of the citizens (Akşam, 05/06/2013) (Annex 5). This "free scape" in the Gezi Park with a free library and market and peaceful events in the occupied area until the police's intervention on June 11 clearly corresponds to the theory NSMs with creating its own scape and culture as they were discussed before as its characteristics.

From the perspective of the EU, the Gezi Park demonstrations in Turkey were also called for many times as peaceful demonstrations. On June 7, the European Union's commissioner for enlargement Stefan Füle said that the demonstrations "constituted a

³⁴ For example, a popular graffiti in Istanbul was "You banned alcohol and people have sobered up", which also means "waking up to something" in Turkish (Dikeç, 2013). "That's it, I'll call the police", "Do you want three kids like us?" and "Welcome to the Istanbul Gas Festival" and "Pepper gas is good for skin" are other popular graffiti during the protests (Akaltan, 2013).

³⁵ They are seen as a left-leaning Islamic group led by theologian İhsan Eliaçık against the "neo-liberalism," or crony capitalism followed by Prime Minister Erdoğan according to them.

legitimate way of expressing the needs” of a group of society who felt that they were underrepresented in the parliamentary majority (Hürriyet Daily News, 07/06/2013b). It was also reported by the European Parliament in its resolution on June 11 that the main protests in the Gezi Park were seen as peaceful occupation movement in the scope of the NSMs. Lastly, according to the Progress Report on Turkey in October 2013, “Overall, the demonstrations were peaceful, despite the involvement of a small number of violent protestors” (European Commission, 2013a: 5). Furthermore, even a Turkish public prosecutor ruled that the demonstrations were peaceful despite the absence of prior notification (Radikal, 16/01/2014). This emphasizes that the Gezi Park protests were based on anti-violence and peaceful models of action as the mobilization in the NSMs (Şimşek, 2004: 115).

The protestors were careful not to base their demonstrations on a common political ideology or political party, which also suits with the theory of the NSMs as an apolitical or non-political stance. This is because; they wanted neither toppling of the elected ruling party nor changing political and economic system in Turkey (Arat, 2013: 809). Rather, they came together for their rights, freedoms, lifestyles and autonomy, which were thought to be endangered by the political system. In other words, as it was also stated as characteristics of the NSMs by Habermas in the previous sections, they came together to defend life-world against the colonizing intervention of the system. In this direction, both in the social media and in the protesting areas, they warned the protestors not to come to the protesting areas with the flags of any political party, group or ideology. They called themselves ordinary citizens³⁶ who feared of a meddling in their lifestyles by the political powers. According to the KONDA Institute for Research and Consultancy (2013: 8)³⁷, 93,6 % of the protestors in the Gezi park identified themselves as simple citizens rather than members of some groups. While 41 % of the protestors voted for the main opposition Republican Party (CHP) in 2011, only 31 % of them said that they would vote for the CHP again in the present time. This even shows a decrease of support to this political party which was alleged to be the leader of Gezi Park protests. The survey of KONDA (2013: 14-15) also pointed out that one out of every three citizens did not support any political party in the elections in 2011 and 47 % of the protestors said that either they were undecided or they would not vote for any political party in the next

³⁶ In the resolution of the European Parliament on June 11, the participants of the protests are also categorized as ordinary people (European Parliament, 2013a).

³⁷ This company is the one which has been frequently used and referred in Turkey by the Turkish media and the politicians for the elections and social researches such as women in politics, religion, secularism and the veil in daily life and others. The survey of KONDA institute for research and consultancy was applied in the Gezi Park in Istanbul on June 6 and 7, 2013 in 30 hours on 4,411 protestors in the area.

elections. In other words, this clarifies that the protestors had no common specific political stance except opposing to the Government and Erdoğan because of their violation of rights and freedoms. As a result, they remained as a unique period and movement of the apolitical masses' anti-governmental protests in the collective memories in Turkey.

3.1.2.2. The Participants

In this part, more specific data about the participants is examined. The predominant group of the protests was ordinary people such as bankers, lawyers, academics and other private-sector employees according to the resolution of the European Parliament on June 11 and the survey of the KONDA Institute for Research and Consultancy, as it was stated in the previous section. When it is examined in detail, the profile of the participants are seen quite diverse with the supports of notably high numbers of women³⁸, students³⁹, artists, academics⁴⁰ such as Chomsky, the Turkish Alevis, Kurds, LGBT activists⁴¹, the group of anti-capitalist Muslims, environmentalists, professionals, different civil societies, political groups and even the football teams' fan clubs especially the Çarşı group. Interestingly, for the first time, one of the biggest Turkish football team fan clubs, Çarşı was one of the most active groups in the protests, which is needed to be examined in detail in another study. The Beşiktaş football team's fan group, Çarşı as the frontrunner during the protests was so active that it agreed with the police forces in İstanbul to a truce on June 3 (Hürriyet Daily News, 31/05/2013b). After the football team Beşiktaş's Çarşı group, Galatasaray's well-known UltrAslan group and Fenerbahçe's Vamos Bien fan club also announced through social media to support these protests in Taksim because of the "police's brutal raid filled with tear gas at dawn" on May 30 (Hürriyet Daily News, 31/05/2013b). In other words, anger towards the police forces because of their wrong intervention to the protests was also their reason to join the protests. This diversity of the participants also hints that the participants were without any ethnic, religious and class-based community, which concurs with the theory of the NSMs. However, there was only one similarity of the protestors which was that 91,2 % of the protestors did not vote for

³⁸ As it was mentioned before, the image of a woman in red directly sprayed by a police officer with a tear gas became the icon and the poster child of the Gezi Park protests. There are also other iconic photos of women resisting to the police forces during the protests. Therefore, the support of Turkish women to the protests with its reasons should also be examined in detail as a women's movement in another study.

³⁹ According to KONDA (2013: 8), the half of the protestors in the Gezi Park is student and 92% of these students declared that they came to the areas as simple citizens.

⁴⁰ 125 Academics from Bilkent University in Ankara declared their support for the Gezi Park protests with a written declaration on June 5 (Hürriyet Daily News, 05/06/2013a). They aimed to make the government take the demands of the protestors seriously. Some Turkish academics from abroad also declared their support for the Gezi Park protests with a solidarity statement (Hürriyet Daily News, 23/06/2013a).

⁴¹ During the protests, the LGBT activists were recorded as one of the very active groups in the Gezi Park (Hürriyet Daily News, 23/06/2013b).

AK Party in the last elections according to the questionnaire of Istanbul Bilgi University (Hürriyet Daily News, 05/06/2013b). This means that the other 50 % of the population which did not vote for AK Party in last elections united against AK Party and its leader Erdoğan in the protests.

The questionnaire of Istanbul Bilgi University states that 39,6 % of them were among the ages of 19 and 25 while 24 % of the participators were between the ages of 26 and 30 (Işık, 2013: 23). In this questionnaire, 53.7 % of the protestors declared that they had never been in a mass demonstration in their lives before the Gezi Park protests. According to the researches of the security forces on 5000 suspects of the protests, 56 % of them were among the ages of 18 and 25, 26 % of them were between the ages of 26 and 30, 17 % of the suspects were among the ages of 31 and 40 and lastly, the rest of them 1 % was more than 40 (Şardan, 2013: 13). KONDA's results (2013: 18) also show that the average age of the Gezi park protestors was 28. These results of the surveys clearly reveal that more than 50 % of the participants are young people as in the NSMs. In addition, KONDA's Gezi Park Survey data (2013: 19 and 21) adds that 56 % of them had university⁴² or even higher education while 37 % of them were still students. During several university graduation ceremonies in July 2013, graduated students' slogans and banners supporting the Gezi Park protests were also witnessed (Hürriyet Daily News, 09/07/2013). Thus, the participants were dominantly well-educated young people constituting a new middle class in Turkey similar to youth activism in the NSMs.

The half of the suspects apprehended by the security forces were women, which signifies again the support and effect of women⁴³ for the protests. According to the earnings per month, 39 % of the suspects earn between 0 and 499 Turkish lira; 15 % of them have between 500 and 999 Turkish lira per month; 31 % of the suspects earn between 1000 and 1999 Turkish Lira and lastly, 20 % of them have more than 2000 Turkish lira per month (Şardan, 2013: 13). Consequently, no social class can be asserted for these protestors. As a result of this diversity of the protestors, it can be stated that Turkey also has an active and new middle class whose combinations of positions are different from each other in terms of qualifications, income level, property ownership, power in work organizations as in the NSMs (Olofsson, 1988: 30).

⁴² During several university graduation ceremonies in Turkey, slogans and banners supporting the Gezi Park protests were witnessed (Hürriyet, 04/07/2013).

⁴³ This result is also supported by KONDA's results (2013: 18) which also showed that 50,8 % of the protestors in the Gezi park were women .

3.1.2.3. The Reasons for the Protests

As it was reported by the European Parliament in its resolution, the construction of the Ottoman Barracks in the Gezi Park became a catalyst rather than the only cause of these protests in such a wide scope in Turkey. This can be clearly examined with the reasons of the participants. According to the “#direngeziparki”⁴⁴ questionnaire of Istanbul Bilgi University conducted on June 3 and 4 for the sociological profile of the people in the protests, 81.2% of demonstrators call themselves as “libertarian” and the choice “police violence and the violation of the democratic rights” is their most effective reason to support the protests (Işık, 2013: 23). 92.4 % of the protestors strongly agree that the authoritarian manners of Prime Minister Erdoğan are effective for their support of the protestors while 91.3% of them also strongly agree that police’s disproportionate use of force towards the demonstrators led them to participate in the protests (Işık, 2013: 24). Furthermore, 91,1 % of them strongly agreed that the violation of the democratic rights was influential, 84,2 % of the protestors strongly agreed that silence of the national media was also a factor for their support, 56,2 % of them strongly approved that the cutting of the trees in the Gezi Park was one of their reasons for their participation and lastly, 7.7 % of the demonstrators strongly confirmed that the political parties led them to support the protests (Işık, 2013: 24). According to KONDA (2013: 13), 79% of the protestors in the park have no membership to any political party, association, institution, foundation, platform or non-governmental organization. These results of the questionnaire of Istanbul Bilgi University and the survey of KONDA clearly show that the protesting group was apolitical, in other words, without any common political ideology. Their dominant reasons were the authoritarian manners of Prime Minister Erdoğan, unbalance force of the police towards the demonstrators, the violation of the democratic rights and silence of the national media about the events rather than their political parties’ leading.

According to the survey of KONDA, 49,1 % of the participants decided to come to the park because of the police violence, 19 % came to the protesting areas after the cutting of trees in the park, 14,2 % of them decided to come to actively support the demonstrations after the statements of the Prime Minister Erdoğan and 10,2 % decided to come to the park because of the Taksim pedestrianization project (KONDA, 2013: 4). As their reasons to support these protests, 58,1% stated limitation and violation of freedoms as a reason, 37,2 % declared that their reason is AK Party and its policies, 30,3 % were dissatisfied with Prime Minister

⁴⁴ This is a twitter hashtag. In general, 3000 people participated in answering this questionnaire. It was conducted with the help of social media and was available for 20 hours (Işık, 2013: 23).

Erdoğan's statements and manners, 20,4 % expressed the cutting of trees as their reason and 19,5 % generally stated "opposition to the state" (KONDA, 2013: 10). According to the questionnaire of Istanbul Bilgi University for the protestors' aims, 96.7 % demanded an end to police violence and while 96.1 % of the participants wanted the government to respect liberties from now on (Hürriyet Daily News, 05/06/2013b). Only 37 % of the answerers demanded a new political party to be founded. Lastly, 79.5 % of them did not want the military to intervene in Parliament, while 6.6 % of respondents were in favor of a military coup (Hürriyet Daily News, 05/06/2013b). The report of the Euroasia Global Research Center (AGAM) chaired by İbris Bal, an AK Party deputy also states that the Gezi Park protests as the environmental concerns of a small group in the beginning started with the police intervention and the lack of dialogue (Hürriyet Daily News, 12/08/2013). This transformed a small environmental protest to nationwide demonstrations with anger at the Prime Minister primarily and the Government secondarily (Hürriyet Daily News, 12/08/2013). This indicates that the report chaired by an AK Party deputy also accepted that the Prime Minister and Government had made some serious mistakes with the handling of the Gezi Park protests. The Ombudsman's report delivered to the Interior Ministry, Istanbul Governorship and Istanbul Mayor also ascertained the police's wrong intervention with disproportionate force towards the protestors (Hürriyet Daily News, 31/12/2013). These pointed out that the police' intervention style was clearly wrong and one of main aims of the protests as a non-economic aim in the NSMs was naturally to stop this wrong intervention causing violations of rights and freedoms.

Manners and statements of Prime Minister Erdoğan and the policies of the AK Party were seen as one of the main real factors of the protests or the only real reason by some researchers. These researchers claim that the authoritarian manners of Prime Minister Erdoğan were the main factor and caused other reasons which are the unbalanced force of the police towards the demonstrators, the violation of the democratic rights and the silence of the national media about the events. According to Atay (2013: 39), the driving force for the nation-wide Gezi Park protests was "cultural and rooted in the worries of the secular people of the country about the shrinking ground of their lifestyles as a result of government pressure". Dikeç (2013) claimed that the Gezi Park protests were against state-led neoliberalism, state-led Islamisation, and ever-increasing repression of the AK Party Government and Prime Minister Erdoğan. Since the third electoral victory of AK Party under the leadership of Erdoğan, the party began to adopt a monopolist approach and to construct a new identity and

culture based on religious rules and hence the secular groups felt that their non-religious lifestyle was in danger according to some observers (Atay, 2013: 39-40). The AK Party's and Erdoğan's attempts to bring the new regulations on many private issues such as abortion, alcohol consumption and even public display of affection are commented as their desire to shape a new culture and identity in Turkey. Especially Prime Minister Erdoğan's public statements such as "we do not want a drunk youth", "go, drink at home, not outside", "have at least three children per couple", "ban their children from attending rock concerts" and others got reactions from some citizens (Atay, 2013: 41 and Sözalın, 2013: 147). These attempts and statements of Prime Minister Erdoğan indicate that they attempt to systematically intervene not only in politics and economics but also in identity formation and other issues in the life-world of the citizens as it was stated in the previous sections for the NSMs by Habermas.

There are also other claimed reasons which are different from these views. According to some other researchers, the predominant party phenomenon with a strong AK Party Government and a weak opposition, a security problem in Turkey manipulated by external forces and tension in Turkey because of the Syria crisis are also reasons for these protests (Sandıklı and Kaya, 2013). These researchers found it interesting that the Gezi Park protests occurred just after the Reyhanlı attacks⁴⁵. They claim that Syrian and Iranian activists with the help of western countries were provoking the protests (Sandıklı and Kaya, 2013). In the same way, Prime Minister Erdoğan claims in his public statements that the reasons to explain the mass protests in Turkey are "the interest-rate lobby" of foreign investors, provocations by the opposition parties, the foreign media, some people who wants to hamper the ongoing Kurdish peace process, efforts of illegal extremist groups, attempts of the remnants of coup-seekers in order to return to the regime of military tutelage and the "laicist" nationalists who made demonstrations in 2007 in different Turkish cities (Atay, 2013: 41).

3.1.2.4. The Role of Social Media

Media is the main means to understand and evaluate the events in modern societies. Basically, it is used to attract the attention of millions of people to some specific social issues and to put pressure on the administrative or other units in the state or to legitimize the aims of the politicians as an integral part of political persuasion and political socialization. According to Bhatia (2006: 174), media and politics are quite interdependent since one needs the other to progress despite mutual considerable hostility. According to him, political strategy makes use

⁴⁵ Two weeks before the protests on May 11, 2013, two bombings were carried out in Reyhanlı's city center in Hatay in Turkey, with leaving behind 53 dead and many injured people (Hürriyet Daily News, 03/10/2013).

of media to ensure political efficacy and trust for legitimization (Bhatia, 2006: 174). As it will be discussed in the next section, Turkish print and electronic media is a clear example of being a tool of political strategy and hence, it has been criticized for not performing its watchdog function by showing the mistakes of the political sovereign powers. Therefore, with the developments in technology, citizens have turned towards alternative means such as social media networks which have a rich variety of sources. Because of the dissatisfaction of the citizens with censored and missing information in the Turkish media, alternative communication means as blogs, web forums, photo and video sharing sites and especially networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Myspace have filled the gaps. Thus, the citizens have composed their own media by their personal contributions and they have become volunteer journalists presenting uncensored news of the events in the country. This power of social media was witnessed in the last NSMs in the world such as Arab Spring and also during the Gezi Park protests (Işık, 2013: 28). According the Interior Ministry's report, 39 million tweets in total and 2 million of them in English were shared during the incidents while 150 different hashtags were created about the demonstrations (Star, 20/09/2013). The censorship of the protests in Turkish media made the protestors so angry that they only used the social media or foreign media broadcasts to be informed about the protests (Huffington Post, 06/09/2013). They also overturned the Turkish TV channels' news crews' cars in the protesting areas and gathered outside the Istanbul offices of these channels to protest them as a part of the Gezi Park protests (Huffington Post, 06/09/2013).

According to the KONDA Institute for Research and Consultancy's results of the Gezi Park survey (2013: 3), 69 % of the people in the Park were informed about the protests for the first time via social media while 15,4 % of them by friends and acquaintances, 8,6 % of the protestors in the area through news sites on the internet and 7,0 % of them as the smallest part through television channels were informed about the protests. Furthermore, the same research revealed that 84,6 % of the protestors are active users of social media and they shared news about the park during the protests (KONDA, 2013: 9). It was recorded on these groups that the earlier they protested for the Gezi Park, the more their usage of social media increased in those days (KONDA, 2013: 9). These results mean that the main communication means during Gezi Park protests was the social media so as to inform the masses about the events in the Gezi Park and to mobilize them in such a wide scale, which shows its remarkable role for the Turkish uprising. As a result, it can be clearly said that social media networks gave power to the small and weak environmentalists in the Gezi Park and helped them to gain access to

the masses. Thus, the occupy movements of the Gezi Park protests were launched as it was discussed in the theory NSMs. However, it should also be reminded that, disproportionate use of misinformation and fabricated news with provocative news⁴⁶ and photographs⁴⁷ taken at different occasions unrelated to the events were also used in social media by provocative groups during the protests (Şener, 2013: 42). Since there is no source to guarantee the truthfulness of information in social media during the protests, they could be quite dangerous means in order to manipulate people and the events. Therefore, citizens should take into consideration of this possibility before taking the shares in it serious.

3.2. The 2013 Gezi Park Protests in Turkey Regarding the Fundamental Rights and Freedoms

During the Gezi Park protests, many international and domestic organizations such as the Union of Turkish Journalists and Taksim Solidarity warned the Turkish authorities not to violate fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed in her constitution (Amnesty International, 2013a: 57-58 and 5). The Resolution of the European Parliament on the 11th of June 2013 reminded that freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and freedom of the media are fundamental principles of the EU and Turkey is not only a candidate country for accession to the EU, but also a NATO member and an important ally. This means that Turkey cannot ignore fundamental rights and freedoms as the EU principles for her accession to the Union and the EU cannot ignore Turkey's violations of fundamental rights and freedoms for her membership to the EU. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called the Turkish authorities to calm and respect the right to assembly and the freedom of expression as the fundamental principles of a democratic state on June 11 when the police ended the occupation in the Gezi Park and Taksim (Hürriyet Daily News, 11/06/2013b). The President of United States of America Barack Obama called Prime Minister Erdoğan on June 24 after the protests and the White House⁴⁸ reminded Erdoğan the importance of non-violence and of the rights to free expression, assembly and media (Hürriyet Daily News, 24/06/2013a).

These warnings of both domestic and international actors point in the direction that it is certainly worth taking into consideration whether there were violations of these freedoms

⁴⁶ According to one of the provocative news, the Turkish government would be overthrown by the Turkish army with the decision of the European Union in 48 hours if the protests go on. (Aktif Haber, 03/06/2013).

⁴⁷ Some of the provocative photos were the photo of a police officer who sting tear gas a dog and the photo of the thousands of runners on the Bosphorus Bridge in the Euro-Asian Marathon which was shared as the protesters in the Bridge (Aktif Haber, 03/06/2013).

⁴⁸ During the Gezi Park protests, Washington wanted many times Turkey to respect especially the freedom of assembly (Hürriyet Daily News, 24/06/2013a).

for the goodness of the Turkish citizens, reputation of Turkey in international area and especially Turkey's bid to become an EU member state for this thesis. Besides, the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014 of the European Commission declared that "Further changes are needed in the Turkish legal system, especially to strengthen freedom of expression and of the media and freedom of assembly and of association; judicial practice should systematically reflect European standards" (European Commission, 2013b: 4). In order to understand the reasons of these necessary changes, the following two sections examine some claims and the judgments on the violation of these freedoms in Turkey before the protests. This follows the current claims about the abuses and violations of the guaranteed freedoms during the Gezi Park protests which were the main reasons of the participants of the protests according to the questionnaires mentioned before.

3.2.1. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly

As a fundamental right in democratic societies, the right to freedom of peaceful assembly is both guaranteed by the Constitution of Turkey and international law standards that Turkey adopted. Article 34 of the Constitution, entered into force in 1982 and amended in 2001, protects the right to demonstrate peacefully without taking prior permission and with some limitations based on protecting national security, public order, prevention of crime and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. Article 3 of the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations No.2911 in Turkey also guarantees the right to hold peaceful and unarmed demonstrations without taking prior permission. However, Article 10 of the Law necessitates the organizers of meetings and demonstrations to notify the Turkish authorities in detail in the nature of the protest, its time and location. As international law standards, there are the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)⁴⁹ and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights to which Turkey has to respect as a signatory country of the Convention and a candidate country to the EU. Additionally, according to Article 90 of Turkey's Constitution, there is superiority of international law standards that Turkey adopts in scope of rights and freedoms. While Article 11 of the ECHR guarantees the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, Article 11(2) of ECHR also states some limitations on this freedom for specific reasons and conditions such as times of emergency, national security, public safety, the prevention of disorder or crime, the protection of health or morals and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights Article guarantees this freedom for assembly in its Article 12.

⁴⁹ Turkey ratified the European Convention on Human Rights in 1954 and thus she has to comply with it.

As a similar situation during the Gezi Park protests, the case of *Oya Ataman v. Turkey* was based on the evaluation of the absence of the legally required prior notification before the demonstrations for the police's forceful intervention. In the case of *Oya Ataman v. Turkey*, Turkey had been found guilty because of the violation of the right to freedom of assembly in Article 11 of the ECHR by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) despite the absence of the legally required prior notification of the protests. The Court decided that the absence of prior notification was not enough to impose limitations on a peaceful assembly in this case even if it was also accepted by the Court that it was unlawful to protest without notification (*Oya Ataman v. Turkey Case*, Judgment of the Court Paragraph 39). However, the protests were peaceful and hence public authorities should have showed a certain degree of tolerance towards the peaceful demonstrations for the freedom of assembly (*Oya Ataman v. Turkey Case*, Judgment of the Court Paragraph 42). In this judgment, the forceful intervention by the police was also found disproportionate and unnecessary for the prevention of disorder (*Oya Ataman v. Turkey Case*, Judgment of the Court Paragraph 43).

During the Gezi Park protests, one of the most discussed topics were whether the freedom of assembly was violated or not by the Turkish authorities. The Turkish authorities defended the police's controversial actions because of the alleged violent protests in Gezi Park and Taksim and the absence of the notification as their reasons to stop the protests. However, according to Article 34 of the Constitution, Article 3 of The Law on Meetings and Demonstrations No.2911 and the judgment of the ECtHR in the case of *Oya Ataman v Turkey* which are mentioned above, the absence of prior notification is not a reason to disperse peaceful demonstrations at all. Conversely, the state should not only actively protect peaceful assemblies but also facilitate the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly according to Maina Kiai as the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR, 2013: 15). Furthermore, on January 16, 2014, a Turkish prosecutor also took a decision in this direction. With reminding the mentioned judgments of the ECtHR in this paragraph, public prosecutor Hüseyin Aslan concluded that the demonstrations were peaceful despite the absence of prior notification and to sue against 74 suspects who were not reported in any violent actions was against the judgments of the ECtHR (Radikal, 16/01/2014). He added that the demonstrators used their democratic right against the Taksim project. As a result, he ruled for the dismissal of all the charges against 74 protestors. These

judgments show that Turkish authorities are guilty of intervening in the peaceful protests in Gezi Park and Taksim despite the absence of prior notification.

As they were stated by various observers, the ECtHR and even a Turkish prosecutor in the previous paragraph, the Gezi Park protests were dominantly recorded as peaceful demonstrations despite some provocative groups and some violent reactions to the police's intervention. However, Turkish authorities have made the mistake of over-generalizing the protests by declaring all of them violent and ignoring the peaceful ones which constituted the majority of the events. The Special Rapporteur Maina Kiai had also stated before the Gezi Park protests that "acts of spontaneous violence or other punishable acts committed by others do not deprive peaceful individuals of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly" (OHCHR, 2013: 15). Furthermore, the OSCE⁵⁰ guidelines (2010: 81-82) also state that

"The use of violence by a small number of participants in an assembly (including the use of inciting language) does not automatically turn an otherwise peaceful assembly into a non-peaceful assembly, and any intervention should aim to deal with the particular individuals involved rather than dispersing the entire event. [...] Similarly, if agent provocateurs infiltrate an otherwise peaceful assembly, the authorities should take appropriate action to remove the agents provocateurs rather than terminating or dispersing the assembly or declaring it to be unlawful".

The report of Amnesty International (2013a: 12) also defends that a small majority of persons or agent provocateurs engaged in violent acts while the predominant majority were seen as peaceful in the protest. The report also states that the clashes with police and violent acts such as throwing stones, bottles and other objects at the police and damaging public and private property were after every intervention of police in the debated manner (Amnesty International, 2013a: 12). According to the Ombudsman Nihat Ömeroğlu's report, there was wrongdoing by the security forces with disproportionate force against the protestors and advised adoption of the EU norms for mass protests such as Gezi Park protests (Hürriyet Daily News, 31/12/2013). Upon these reports and some individual complaints, 43 police officers using disproportionate force against the protestors had disciplinary penalties while investigation about 169 other policemen and 32 high ranking officials in the incidents still continue (Hürriyet Daily News, 18/09/2013a). These point out that there was violation of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly with the arbitrary denial to peaceful protest in Taksim Square, Gezi Park and other cities in Turkey with the police's wrong interventions, which was

⁵⁰ OSCE means Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and Turkey is a participating state to this organization.

approved also by national authorities in Turkey. Thus, the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey of the European Commission (p.53) pointed to the need for far-reaching reforms in Turkey in harmony with the European standards in order to ensure the freedom of assembly because of “the deaths, disruption of demonstrations and disproportionate use of force by the police against demonstrators” during the Gezi Park protests. In other words, the Turkish authorities and Government have to regulate the Turkish laws and the security forces in line with the European norms for the promotion of rights and freedoms in Turkey and her accession to the EU. However, it should be reminded that laws and security forces are under the leadership of the political authorities in Turkey. For example, Prime Minister Erdoğan defended the discussed interventions of the police by stating that he personally gave the order to the police to stop the Gezi Park protests (Radikal, 24/06/2013). He also blessed the Turkish police forces for the “heroic saga” they wrote during the Gezi Park interventions (Hürriyet Daily News, 24/06/2013b). Therefore, these show that political authorities in Turkey have to internalize the EU norms at first in order to adopt them in Turkish laws and to apply them with the security forces.

3.2.2. Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media

The right to freedom of expression is also both guaranteed by the Turkish Constitution and international law and it can only be restricted under special conditions. Both Article 10 of the ECHR and Article 11 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Right guarantee the right to freedom of expression. Article 25 of the Constitution in Turkey also guarantees the right to freedom of expression and saves the individuals from the intervention of the state on their expression of thought. However, there are many unclear laws especially from the penal code in Turkey allegedly applied in violation of the right to freedom of expression according to Andrew Gardner as Amnesty International’s expert on Turkey (Amnesty International, 30/04/2013b). For example, Article 301 on “denigration of the Turkish nation”, Article 125 on criminal defamation, Article 215 on “praising a crime or a criminal” and Article 318 on “alienating the public from military service” and some other laws in Turkish penal code are needed to be abolished or amended in a way to prevent further violations of the right to freedom of expression according to Andrew Gardner (Amnesty International, 30/04/2013b). Furthermore, the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights also states that the spirit of the Constitution and state-centrist approach in Turkey cause major obstacles to the freedom of expression and pluralism in Turkey (Kurban and Sözeri, 2012: 35).

Freedom of the media is also guaranteed by national and international laws, which entails Turkey's respecting this freedom, too. Article 11 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights protects the freedom of the media while this freedom is also guaranteed by the ECHR in the scope of Article 10 on freedom of expression. Article 28 of the Constitution in Turkey guarantees freedom of press and brings positive obligation on the state to ensure the exercise of this freedom. Turkish laws regulating freedom of the media are compatible with the nationalism and conservation in the Constitution in Turkey. Aside from the progress on the media freedom in Turkey with the EU process, there are also restrictions on it so as to protect the principles of national unity, national security, and the reforms and principles of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk who is the founder of Turkish Republic according to Article 8 in Broadcasting law no 6112, Article 3 in Press Law and Article 8 in Internet law in Turkey (Kurban and Sözeri, 2012: 35). The Press Law and the Broadcasting Law no 6112 are known as the main Turkish laws to protect the freedom of media and to regulate it. However, the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey from the European Commission states that the Internet Law in Turkey limits freedom of expression and restricts citizens' right of access to information and it needs to be revised in harmony with the European standards (p. 52). Furthermore, Anti-terror Law no. 3713 and especially Article 301 of the Penal Code as in freedom of expression cause main obstacles and violations of the freedom of media in Turkey according the judgments of the ECtHR in the relevant cases (Kurban and Sözeri, 2012: 43).

The freedom of media with the freedom of expression in media organizations in Turkey have been one of the most controversial topics in Turkey's agenda, long before the Gezi Park protests. The liberalization during the 1980s as the breaking point for the Turkish media brought new actors into the Turkish media sectors and changed the profile of the owners of the media (Kurban and Sözeri, 2012: 23). The media sector was attractive for investors to affect the public opinion and hence to gain revenue from advertising (Kurban and Sözeri, 2012: 26). In the 1990s, the monopoly of the state over broadcasting ended with the entry of new channels and a few conglomerates began to dominate the Turkish media. The aim of this domination was to enhance their economic power with advertisements and promotions in their visual and printed media organizations. After the 2001 economic crisis in Turkey, media organizations whose owners had also investments in banking and financial sector were affected by this crisis also with the seizure of some of their enterprises by Savings Deposit Insurance Fund established by the Turkish government (Kurban and Sözeri, 2012: 23). Therefore, these conglomerates through their media groups began to compete with the

government for political power and interests to affect political and economic decisions in the country for the benefit of their business interests as their ultimate aim. In other words, public interests which should be saved by media's performing watchdog function were sacrificed for the business interests of a few conglomerates who regulate broadcasting and publication in their media group according to the relations with the government. At the end, Turkish media has become the weapon of certain groups for their non-media investments. To save Turkish media from this situation and to make it a real watchdog of the sovereign powers, there are no legal restrictions to own a media group in Turkey (Kurban and Sözeri, 2012: 23).

During the Gezi Park protests, there were evidences on the restrictions on the freedom of the media based on the result of the ownership of the Turkish media by some certain conglomerates. As one of the major news channels in Turkey, CNNTürk's documentary broadcasting on penguins in the hours that the most crowded and dynamic protests were seen especially in Istanbul became the most significant evidence for the claims on the violations of the media freedom in Turkey while CNN international was broadcasting these protests live in the same hours on May 31 (Oktem, 2013). Despite the calls for better coverage to the Turkish media, seven Turkish newspapers which are Bugün, Sabah, Star, HaberTürk, Türkiye, Yeni Şafak and Zaman used the same headline for a front page story which was "Democracy Demands Sacrifice" to support Prime Minister Erdoğan on June 7 (Huffington Post, 06/09/2013 and Bianet, 2013). On August 1, columnist Can Dündar was fired from one of the mainstream newspapers of Turkey, Milliyet for his coverage of the Gezi Park protests (Amnesty International, 2013a: 57-58). Additionally, the union of Turkish journalists reported that 81 journalists were forced out of their jobs as a result of their coverage of the Gezi Park events (Amnesty International, 2013a: 57-58).

The draft report prepared by the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee also addresses the same issue on the domination of a few conglomerates in the Turkish media. The draft report states that there is a widespread self-censorship in the Turkish media as a result of the high concentration of Turkish mainstream media ownership in the hands of industrial conglomerates for the benefit of their business interests rather than public interests (Hürriyet Daily News, 05/12/2013). Likewise, the European Parliament in its resolution on June 11, 2013 also expressed its deep regrets since the Turkish media channels did not provide enough news coverage about the protests. Therefore, it tried to encourage the mainstream Turkish television stations on broadcasting the fullest possible coverage of the events. The Progress Report on Turkey of the European Commission (2013a: 52) added that

“in particular, the mainstream media hardly reported on the Gezi Park protests in early June”. The Report (p.52) also states that the Turkish political decision-makers started “suits against critical journalists and writers” to prevent their criticism on the government. These show the discontent of the EU with the Turkish media and Turkish decision-makers because of their pressure on journalists and writers during the events.

When the statistics on the media freedom in Turkey in 2013 are examined, the results are not also optimistically seen for the current situation in the Turkish media. According to the Press Freedom Index, Turkey is in the 154th rank out of 179 countries in 2013 in media freedom while it was in the 148th rank in 2012. This clearly points to worsening of the media freedom in Turkey with a six-slot fall in a year. According to the Press Freedom Index (2013), Turkey is currently the world’s biggest prison for journalists especially for those who criticize the Turkish authorities on the Kurdish problem, which makes Turkish state a threat to independent journalism. These criticisms of the index are confirmed by the results of the Committee to Protect Journalists. While the numbers of the prisoned journalists are 32 in China and 35 in Iran in 2013, Turkey is seen in the first rank in the world in terms of the number of the journalists in prison with 40 journalists (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2013a). In its letter to Prime Minister Erdoğan, the Committee states that the crisis in freedom of press in Turkey gets worse and worse in the post-Gezi period and it wants Turkey to take specific precautions to prevent this crisis (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2013b).

In terms of the freedom of expression except the context of the media, there were also prominent cases in Turkey such as the case of Orhan Pamuk⁵¹ because of his statements before the protests. During and after the Gezi Park protests, some people were detained because of their shares in social media. In İzmir, police forces detained 29 social media users with claims of “encouraging people to revolt via social media” for statements they had written on Twitter (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013). On June 11, 45 lawyers were detained at the Çağlayan Courthouse in Istanbul while protesting another group of lawyers who tried “to make a press statement condemning the police against Gezi Park protestors” (Amnesty International, 2013a: 55). Because of these detains, the resolution of the European Parliament stated that freedom of expression consisted of social media online and offline (European Parliament, 2013a). The 2013 Progress Report (p.52) also expressed that Turkish political

⁵¹ Orhan Pamuk as the Nobel laureate was sentenced to pay around 2,500 Euro with his statement which was that Turks “killed 30,000 Kurds and one million Armenians” because of the violation of Article 301 of the penal code in Turkey (Kurban and Sözeri, 2012: 41).

decision-makers' statements analyzed in the next sections created "a chilling effect" over freedom of expression in Turkey. All in all, these evidences and argumentations mean that there are serious evidences that show violations of the freedom of media and the freedom of expression in the media organizations and in the digital world in Turkey.

3.3. Statements of Decision Makers in Turkey on the Protests

The manners of Turkish political decision makers and especially Prime Minister Erdoğan were one of the main reasons of the Gezi Park protests according to the questionnaires mentioned before. Therefore, the following parts focus on their statements as the representation of their manners which caused anger of many citizens and led them to protest against Erdoğan and the government. As it was mentioned before in the part about the Critical Discourse Analyses (CDA), the main aim of political discourse is to maintain the power of politicians over society through their statements (Reyes, 2011: 782-783). For this purpose, Turkish political decision makers preferred different strategies and manners during the protests. Some Turkish decision makers and especially Erdoğan were seen in using insistent and authoritarian manners⁵² according to the protestors in the questionnaires. They tried to create psychological pressure over the protestors with using different strategies in order to legitimize their decision about Taksim project, to justify the incorrectness of the nationwide Gezi Park protests and hence to stop the events and to maintain their power. However, there were also some other Turkish political decision-makers in conciliatory manners to calm these angry people down. With their own strategies in their statements, they tried to create an atmosphere of dialogue in order to stop the protests and hence to maintain the power of government. These statements by decision makers as well as their effects over the events are analyzed in the following parts according to Reyes's five crucial strategies, which were explained in the methodology part as legitimization through emotions, a hypothetical future, rationality, voices of expertise and altruism (Reyes, 2011: 785-788). Since it is not possible to analyze their statements sentence by sentence in every rally or meeting, their most prominent statements which caused heated debates in Turkey and the EU are examined below.

⁵² According to the Eurasia Global Research Center (AGAM), Prime Minister Erdoğan was misled and misinformed about the Gezi Park protests. This caused wrong reactions from Erdoğan and this gave opportunity to the provocative groups to benefit from chaos (Hürriyet Daily News, 12/08/2013).

3.3.1. Legitimization through Emotions

The legitimization through emotions is the most commonly used strategy by a number of politicians in the world as well as the Prime Minister Erdoğan. During the nationwide Gezi Park protests, Erdoğan used this legitimization strategy with different sub-strategies. His first sub-strategy to use legitimization strategy through emotions is clearly based on triggering the emotions of the audience with generally creating “us, we” and “they, them” rhetoric.

We cannot sit and watch **a few looters** coming to the square and **provoke** the people. Because when the nation voted for us, they voted for us to guard our history... We will demolish Atatürk Cultural Center (AKM) and we will build an opera house and **a mosque** there instead (Hürriyet, 02/06/2013).

It is seen that Erdoğan here underestimates the protestors as “a few looter” provoking people in a “they” group. The words “looter”, “provoke” and especially “mosque” in this paragraph aims to evoke a number of feelings in the readers’ and listeners’ minds in this context. Especially, showing the construction of a mosque as one of the purposes of the Taksim project aims to trigger the audiences’ and readers’ religious feelings which are analyzed as the next sub-strategy of Erdoğan in this part. This underestimating approach towards the protestors annoyed the protestors and ignited the demonstrations in the very first days. After this statement, looter or “çapulcu” in Turkish was adopted by the protestors to define themselves. The word “chapull” was passed to English and its meaning was changed to “resistance to force, demand justice” and “seek one’s right” by these people (Kılıç, 2013: 132). As a result, the protestors widely began to call themselves as “chapullers”, which clearly reveals dominant effects of statements of Erdoğan over the protestors.

In the name of what are **they damaging** the shops? Is this relevant with law? Is this relevant with democracy? Is this relevant with struggling for rights? Who will pay for this damage? Again, **we, this government will repair the damage**... [They say] Tayyip Erdoğan is dictator. If they call one who **serves** the people a dictator, I cannot say anything (Hürriyet, 02/06/2013).

In this statement of Prime Minister Erdoğan, there is a clear creation of “we” and “they” with negative other-representation and the positive self-representation. He shows the protestors as the source of destructiveness and the government as the source of constructiveness in society. This destructiveness of the protestors is declared with argumentative strategies by describing their damaging activities. This approach prevents any dialogue with the protestors to make a consensus, which increased the tension between the state and the protestors during the events. At the end of the paragraph, he presents himself as the server of the people in a humble

manner while mentioning about the other group unfairly trying to cause disrepute of him. Likewise, in his reply to the reporter of Reuters about the Gezi Park protests, he was in the same emotional manner and asked her: “What haven’t we done in this country that [led the protestors to] take such a step?” in a self-sacrificing manner of “we” group (Hürriyet Daily News, 03/06/2013a).

These hundreds of thousands of people are not the ones who have burned and destroyed; these hundreds of thousands of people are not **traitors** like those who throw Molotov cocktails at my people. Whatever we do, **we**’ll remain within the frame of democracy and the rule of law. We have never pushed the limits of legality (Hürriyet Daily News, 16/06/2013a).

To call somebody as a traitor is quite an effective and emotional way of attacking on this person and putting him or her in a “they” group by using national feelings. As it was mentioned before, Erdoğan claims that these protests were initiated by “foreign powers” which basically reminds the audiences and readers the USA and the EU as the most powerful foreign powers for Turkey. This shows two situations. Firstly, this can mean that Erdoğan is particularly angry because of criticism from Washington and Europe about the events. Secondly, it can indicate that he is also angry to the protestors taking the support of these powers and creating pressure on the Turkish government. If they are supported by “foreign powers”, they can be these powers’ players and hence traitors as a possible reasoning of him in this paragraph. With the usage of “traitor”, he leads the people supporting the AK Party to dislike and even hate the protestors, which can cause polarization in society. In this direction, civilian groups carrying hand sticks and walking after the police forces were recorded and 19-year-old protester Ali İsmail Korkmaz died after being beaten by such a group in Eskişehir during the events (Zaman, 19/08/2013). These can be counted as some implications of polarization in society, which is needed to be discussed in detail in another study. Furthermore, the paragraph above is also another example of the positive self-representation and negative other-representation in Erdoğan’s statements. Negative others burn, destroy and throw Molotov cocktails while positive “we” are still in the right way with democracy and rule of law in his description of “we” and others.

Don't you see this? How can you attack my police? There are those who side with those swearing against the prime minister of this country. **We** are going to show patience, but **patience has a limit as well. Those** who hide behind the protestors should first learn what politics is (Hürriyet Daily News, 09/06/2013).

There is a clear attempt to frighten the protestors in this statement of Erdoğan. He represents his “we” group whose patience has a limit and can be run of out anytime. “They” group as the protestors and “those” behind them will take lesson from Erdoğan. This means a threat on demolishing “they” group. However, threats and frightening in order to quash social movements generally cause kickbacks as in the Gezi Park protests.

The EU Minister Egemen Bağış also solidified this “us and them” rhetoric of Erdoğan with one of the harshest descriptions for the protestors in the paragraph below.

I am specially calling on all **our citizens who have been giving support** to these protests. They should return to their homes. Unfortunately, at this stage the state will **unfortunately** have to consider every individual there [Taksim] as **a member of a terror organization** (Hürriyet, 16/06/2013).

In line with Erdoğan’s approach, Bağış also follows the same sub-strategy of creating “we” and “they” as it can be seen above. He firstly called the protestors as “citizens” in an inclusive manner and warned them not to go on the demonstrations in a thoughtful manner. With using “unfortunately” as an emotional word to show his concern, he states the judgment of the state for every protestor as “a member of a terror organization” which aims to intimidate both the protestors and other civilians apart from the events. Undoubtedly, the term “a member of a terror organization” here is to evoke many feelings of citizens such as fear, concern, insecurity and other emotions in the collective memories about terrorism. As the 2013 Progress Report (p.64) on Turkey stated, these “intimidating statements by politicians” in Turkey are to stop the protests through creating psychological pressure on the protestors. Additionally, calling the protestors as “looters”, “traitors” and “member of terror organization” are called as nomination strategies in order to frighten and silence the opposition emerging from the protests against the government.

It was seen that Erdoğan frequently uses religious terms in his speeches, which can also be identified as the second sub-strategy of legitimization strategy through emotions. After Prime Minister Erdoğan turned from his four-day-trip in the North Africa on June 7 as one of the most intensive days of the protests, he began to hold “Respect for National Will” rallies in Istanbul, Adana, Mersin and other cities in Turkey. In these rallies, many religious terms were observed.

No power but **Allah** can stop Turkey’s rise.[...]May **Allah** preserve our fraternity and unity. We have nothing to do with **fighting and vandalism** (Hürriyet, 07/06/2013).

In this speech at 03:00 am at Istanbul Atatürk Airport after his trip in North Africa, he refers to a spiritual unity and power under preservation of God with his supporters for the rise of country. He also indirectly refers to the protestors as the ones dealing with “fighting and vandalism”. In other words, he uses here religious words for positive self-representation and destructive words for negative other-representation.

Nobody can intimidate us. We don't take orders or instructions from anybody except from **God** (Hürriyet Daily News, 16/06/2013a).

In this paragraph of Erdoğan, he draws attention again to religious image of his group as the justification of his group's acts. He also gives the message that his group is spiritually powerful enough to handle with this crisis. There is also an indirect reference to the people who take orders from “foreign powers” and cause the protests from his perspective.

They have entered the Dolmabahçe **Mosque** with their **beer bottles and their shoes on**. They have **insulted my headscarf-wearing daughters and sisters**. And they haven't stopped at that (Hürriyet Daily News, 09/06/2013).

This paragraph above has been one of the most discussed statements of Erdoğan since it was a quite serious accusation towards “they” group, which could also move the religious groups in Turkey against the Gezi Park protestors. To drink beer in a mosque and to come in it with shoes are disrespectful manners hurting people's religious sensitiveness in Turkey. This claim evoking religious feelings can never be ignored by not only conservative individuals but also other segments in Turkish society. Thus, Erdoğan aims to have the support of the majority of the society against the protestors. However, this accusation has not been proved especially after the different statement⁵³ of this mosque's imam about the protestors in the mosque. Furthermore, the claimed insult towards a certain group of religious women is another way to trigger the disliking or even hatred of the society towards the protests and hence to demonize the demonstrators with an image of assaulter. In another speech of him, he established correlation again with the beer and protestors: “The hostels in Taksim are now 80 percent empty, the shopkeepers in Taksim are suffering- except the beer seller” (Hürriyet Daily News, 11/06/2013c). Therefore, he indirectly gives the message of protestors' irreligious manners to the conservative masses with the usage of beer.

⁵³ About this accusation, the imam of the mosque said that “a large group to which police was chasing forced the doors and came inside. For two days, the wounded protestors were cured here. The ones who escaped from the police's tear gas came in the mosque. They broke the cameras inside the mosque” (Radikal, 03/06/2013).

As the third sub-strategy, the rhetoric based on paternal attitude or familial terms is recognized in Erdoğan's statements to justify himself in the scope of strategy for legitimization through emotions during the Gezi Park protest. As it is seen in the previous paragraph, he calls headscarf-wearing women in Turkey as "daughters and sisters" to show his sincerity and closeness to this religious group. On the meeting at his party headquarters on June 11, he calls a part of protests as "these youngsters" (Hürriyet Daily News, 11/06/2013c).

Our patience is coming to an end. I'm making my last warning: **mothers, fathers** please withdraw your **kids** from there.[...] I am telling my **sincere** environmentalist, **honest brothers**: Do not upset us any longer, withdraw and leave us alone with those extremist terrorist organizations (Hürriyet Daily News, 13/06/2013).

In the beginning of the statement, there is an intimidating and threatening approach to the families of the protestors. However, it gets softer with calling some protestors as "brothers" to make them end the protests at the end of the paragraph. In other words, Erdoğan here accepts "sincere" and "honest" protestors in the demonstrations.

Prime Minister Erdoğan's last sub-strategy in scope of legitimization strategy through emotions during the protests was "majority" vs "minority" rhetoric with management of the dominant group over the other groups. This is also another way of legitimizing through emotions with in- and out-groups. In his statements, it can be understood that "we" are the majority with almost 50 % of the votes in the last elections. Thus, "we" have the right to give the last decisions on everything. Actually, one of the reasons of the anger of the protestors was this "We have right to do everything since we have the vote support" attitude and decisions of the government and Erdoğan in this way, which affected his image both in Turkey and the EU as well as Turkey's accession to the EU.

I will take its permission [for Taksim project] from neither the chairman of CHP⁵⁴ nor a few looters. **The ones who voted for us already gave this authority** (Hürriyet, 02/06/2013).

This rhetoric of the Prime Minister can be commented as ignoring different segments in society and the opposition in the government for the decision-making process.

Instead of [occupying] Gezi Park or Kuğulu Park [in Ankara], there are seven months [until the elections]. Be patient and let's face off **at the ballot box**.[...] Everybody should know that today is not May 27, 1960. Today is not September 12, 1980. It is not February 28, 1997, (Hürriyet Daily News, 09/06/2013).

⁵⁴ CHP as the Republican People's Party is the main opposition part in the Turkish Government.

In this statement of Erdoğan, he again emphasizes his perspective about the owner of power which is gained “at the ballot box”. This gives the rights to decide on everything in this perspective. At the end of the paragraph, he reminds the readers three coup d’états in Turkey as tragic events and says that the government is not weak anymore and powerful enough against any intervention. Therefore, he makes a strong impression of the government to solidify the trust of his supporters in an emotional way with reminding previous interventions.

There is **50 percent of** [the country who voted for the ruling Justice and Development Party - AKP], and **we can barely keep them at home** [and prevent them from coming onto the streets for counter-protests]. But we have called on them **to calm down** (Hürriyet Daily News, 03/06/2013b).

Clearly, Erdoğan’s statements in this paragraph are here to create fear on the protestor with an intimidating approach as another evidence of the fourth sub-category in legitimization through emotions. While Erdoğan tried to do another positive self-representation as the appeasing side of a bigger conflict in the country, it also gives the message that protestors will have to suffer the consequences if they do not stop as soon as possible. In other words, there is an indirect threat to the demonstrators in Erdoğan’s sentences. This is not a true strategy in order to calm down angry people within demonstrations. Conversely, it increases the tension of these people as it can also be seen from the Gezi Park protests’ intensifying and spreading to other cities after these statements of Erdoğan. As an overall evaluation of Erdoğan’s strategies based on legitimization through emotions which have been analyzed until this point, there are four sub-strategies which are the sub-strategy of creating “us, we” and “they, them”, the sub-strategy based on religious terms, sub-strategy of paternal attitude or familial terms and lastly the sub-strategy of “majority” vs “minority” rhetoric.

Conversely, President Abdullah Gül was against these statements of Erdoğan using the power of majority with the 50 % of the votes for AK Party in last elections.

If there are objections, there is nothing more natural than voicing them. Everyone should show restraint. All the **messages with good intentions** were received, and what is necessary will be done. **Democracy is not just about elections** (Hürriyet, 03/06/2013).

This reveals that there is a conflict between Erdoğan and Gül on the legitimization manner and strategy as a whole to stop the protests. In these statements of President Gül, he even shows empathy to the demands of the protestors with a conciliatory manner while he tries to calm down the protestors after the statements of Erdoğan in this way. These statements of Gül

disturbed Erdoğan who replied that he was not aware what the mentioned message was after Gül's statement (İdiz, 2013). In addition to President Gül, the report of AGAM chaired by an AK Party deputy indirectly also criticized this approach of Erdoğan on "ballot box democracy" (Hürriyet Daily News, 12/08/2013). The report stated that winning elections do not mean omnipresent powers and "the luxury to act as they desired until the next election" (Hürriyet Daily News, 12/08/2013). It is clear that there is a clear opposition in the AK Party against Erdoğan's majority vs minority sub-strategy. This can be also understood from report's calling Erdoğan as the first responsible, the AK Party as the second, the Turkish government as the third and the state as the fourth responsible for all the incidents (Hürriyet Daily News, 12/08/2013). According to the report, the state is also guilty since the municipality did not implement democratic methods for the acceptance of the project.

Instead of intimidating and threatening the protesting groups, during the events, Gül used more conciliatory statements to act reasonable for the future of the country. In his statement below, he talks about more economic problems and the absence of the investments because of the damaged reputation of Turkey during the protests.

Nobody realizes but these **hurt the economy**. I also told the first day. There is a certain image of Turkey that we composed all together. **We** all should protect this image... There are serious doubts from the outside world. In particular, from the investors. At the end, these are for the interest of **all of us** (Milliyet, 18/06/2013).

Contrary to Erdoğan, Gül avoids the creation of "we" and "they" groups. He identifies both the protestors and other citizens as "we" and "all of us" in an inclusive manner for the sake of everybody in Turkey. He has also supported the protestors later on with his statements below in the USA.

Actually, **I can even feel proud about the start of these and similar incidents**. I reason I feel proud is that those who are familiar with Turkey know what kind of news about Turkey was brought to the world's attention 10 or 15 years ago or they know what Turkey's problems were in that period. And look what Turkey's problems are now. The events in İstanbul started with environmentalist concerns, just as it starts in Washington, London and New York. The incidents in İstanbul began with concerns whether a building was appropriate in a certain place (Today's Zaman, 24/09/2013).

In this statement, he compares Turkey with Washington, London and New York and he finds similar reasons for the protests. This makes him feel proud of the protests in order to show

how far Turkey developed. Thus, there is an emotional strategy of Gül in order to lessen the negative reactions toward the Turkish authorities from the international authorities.

In this process, everyone needs to act **responsibly and restrained**. I will not allow a **witch hunt** over Twitter. I will be following **the judicial and executive investigations** (Hürriyet Daily News, 07/06/2013c).

President Gül here involves every citizen to act responsibly and restrained without making the negative representation of protestors or positive representation of the supporters of the AK Party as Prime Minister Erdoğan did. He states his objection to any unfair trails to innocent people or smear campaigns over twitter during the events with the metaphor “witch hunt” in order to prevent any intervention to the demonstrators and their sympathizers in the online world. As a statesman, he lays emphasis on “the judicial and executive investigations” to judge fairly and properly with the evidence, which is a right manner and statement to avoid confusion and to prevent the opportunists from using these events to accuse someone unjustly. While this metaphor causes emotion of fear through its semantic field, President Gül adopts a defensive attitude to this unfair practice and hence he gives confidence to citizens. There are also other statements of Gül about the investigation of any extreme use of tear gas against the protestors, hindrance of polarization in society and the right to peaceful assembly during the Gezi Park protests. They are all mentioned and appreciated by the Progress Report on Turkey from the European Commission (2013a: 8).

Deputy Prime Minister and Government Spokesman Bülent Arınç was the other political actor who tried to calm down the protestors by apologizing for police violence on the very first day of the protests in the Gezi Park (Hürriyet, 04/06/2013). Even though Erdoğan stated that he was sorry for police’s possible wrong methods, he did not take any step back about the Taksim project and he insisted on the Taksim project with the power of half of the votes on the 15th day of the protests: “Our determinacy with regard to Taksim Square and the Gezi Park will continue” (Hürriyet Daily News, 11/06/2013c). Thus, this “sorry” was not counted as a sincere apology while Arınç were declaring some facts of the protests generally ignored by many Turkish decision-makers. This seemed more sincere to the protests and could have calmed the protestors down a bit if Erdoğan had also adopted this stance.

We accept that there are people who are sensitive to environment. Some of them are artists, some are commoner, some are writers and some are painters. They opposed to turn the green area of Istanbul to turn into a shopping center. **This should be appreciated...** I find it more

beneficial to do **persuasive speeches** to the ones against shopping center here [in the Gezi Park] instead of using tear gas (Milliyet, 01/06/2013b).

In this statement on the very first days of the protests, Arınç shows a similar approach in line with President Gül and preferred empathy and appreciation to the environmental demands of the protestors as an emotional strategy. He also advises dialogue with “persuasive speeches” as an individual view, which would prevent such a nationwide protests and crisis in Turkey. Despite these efforts of basically Arınç and Gül, continuance of police’s controversial intervention and the accusing statements of other political decision-makers and especially Prime Minister on the demonstrators triggered the protests to be bigger and wider. As a result, demonstrations spread to other cities of Turkey. Therefore, as it also mentioned so in the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey, the Turkish Government preferred “an uncompromising stance” and an unwillingness to take the demands of these masses into account, which led to a polarizing manner toward “citizens, civil society organization and businesses” (European Commission, 2013a: 8). This was the main mistake of the government, which negatively affected Turkey’s accession process in the long process, which is also discussed in the next sections. This mistake is needed to be corrected with the adoption of missing European norms based on the dialogue and consensus among the different segments of society in the decision-making process.

3.3.2. Legitimization through Other Strategies

Compared to legitimization through emotions, there are also other strategies which were less preferred for legitimization by the Turkish political decision-makers during the protests. They are legitimization through rationality, a hypothetical future and altruism.

You **cannot** make an AVM [shopping mall] familiar to the international ones in this area. There is **no conclusive AVM project** here. Maybe we will make a city museum there or an architectural work that will put different activities in place. Is there any **certain document**? No (Hürriyet Daily News, 02/06/2013).

In this paragraph, Erdoğan refers to the absence of a legal document with a conclusive project and the improperness of a shopping center in Gezi Park in a reasonable way. This implies that if there is no legal decision and no project on a claimed action, this claim is falsified then. This strategy is called as the legitimization through rationality according to Reyes.

They have **insulted my headscarf-wearing daughters and sisters**. And they haven't stopped at that (Hürriyet Daily News, 09/06/2013).

In this statement mentioned in the previous section, there is also the strategy of altruism since he puts forwards the claimed mistreat towards the headscarf-wearing women as a vulnerable group. Therefore, it is indirectly tried to legitimize the intervention towards the protestors as a beneficial and necessary protection for doing good thing for this vulnerable group.

Violent actions that took place in many cities of Turkey have camouflaged themselves behind the Gezi Park protests. I request all activists to **see the big picture**, understand **the plot**, and withdraw from the streets (Hürriyet Daily News, 11/06/2013c).

During the protests, this claim was one of the main reasons of the Gezi Park protests according to the Turkish Prime Minister as the most influential decision-maker in Turkey. In order to make the protestors leave their demonstrations, Erdoğan refers to a plot of foreign forces which can affect the future of Turkey as a result if the protestors do not stop the demonstrations as soon as possible. This strategy is called as legitimization through a hypothetical future according to Reyes. Instead of focusing on the demands of the protestors, politicians deviates the attention to a different side which looks irrelevant to the events. This statement of Erdoğan means that we were attacked by these protests, the attacks were plotted by the evil powers and the attacks will go on if the protests as our citizens do not understand the hidden aim and “see the big picture”. Therefore, hypothetical assumptions are presented as factual realities and the citizens are tried to be terrified in order to act as the politicians propose in order to save the future of the country. This strategy is interrelated with legitimization through emotions since it is also based on emotions because of frightening people.

Regarding all the legitimization strategies explained above, it is clearly seen that the Turkish political decision-makers dominantly preferred the legitimization through emotions as their main strategy to end the nationwide protests in Turkey. However, they could neither decrease the frustration of the discontented groups nor terminate the demonstrations for more than a month, which did not contribute to the relations with the EU for the Turkey’s accession process. As a result, the image of pro-democracy and pro-EU reputation of the Turkish government since 2002 has been damaged in the eyes of the international community and the EU because of the disputable intervention of police and the reply of the government to the protestors (Hürriyet Daily News, 05/06/2013c). However, a softer tone apologizing for police violence, guaranteeing dialogue and promising consensus with opposition and civil society on the Taksim Square plans would be the correct reaction in this case.

3.4. Statements of Decision Makers in the EU and EU Member States on the Protests

While Prime Minister Erdoğan defended the actions of the police with this sentence: “The practice is in accordance with the European *acquis*”, decision-makers in the EU institutions and the EU member states did not agree with Erdoğan (Ergin, 2013). The decision makers both in the EU institutions and EU member states expressed their displeasure and harshly criticized the methods the government used against the demonstrators. The next two sections analyze their statements on the protests and the handling style of the Turkish government for these demonstrations.

3.4.1. Statements of Decision Makers in the EU

During the Gezi park protests, political decision-makers in the EU institutions made statements on warning the Turkish decision-makers and especially police forces to respect the rights and freedoms of the Gezi Park protestors.

I express **deep concern** at the violence that occurred in Istanbul and some other cities in Turkey, and **regret** disproportionate use of force by members of the Turkish police (Hürriyet Daily New, 03/06/2013b).

With the statement above, Catherine Ashton as the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and the Security Policy expressed her “deep concern” and “regret” in terms of controversial actions of the police, which was an emotional approach to justify her discontent.

Martin Schulz as President of the European Parliament assessed the events and said that: "severity with which the police responded is completely disproportionate and will lead only to expansion of the protests" contrary to Erdoğan's statement above (Hürriyet Daily News, 03/06/2013b). Schulz's attitude can be called as legitimization through hypothetical future. It is because he refers to the present mistake as the disproportionate intervention of police forces and foresees the expansion of the protests because of this mistake. Therefore, he wants the Turkish decision makers to end the wrong intervention of the police.

The co-chairwoman of the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee Hélène Flautre sent a letter to Turkish Interior Minister Muammer Güler and stated her deep concerns with the statement below.

As you know, freedom of assembly is a fundamental right as well as part of [the] political criteria of Copenhagen. For this reason, and to avoid further escalation of violence, I **deeply hope** that you will carry out an independent and impartial investigation into those serious allegations to ensure that the principles of necessity and proportionality have been ensured.

Any arbitrary or abusive use of force by law enforcement officials should be prosecuted (Today's Zaman, 02/06/2013b).

She begins her letter with reminding some facts such as the Copenhagen Criteria and indirectly questions the commitment of Turkey to adapt herself to these criteria as well as freedom to assembly as a result. While she deeply hopes for investigation as an emotional approach, she dominantly describes legal steps for the serious allegations. Therefore, there is a legitimization through rationality in this paragraph to state what Turkey should do “as the rights thing to do” for justice.

During the protests, The EU's Commissioner for Enlargement, Stefan Füle who investigated the protests on their side in Taksim and Gezi Park was seen as the most active figure of the EU about the evaluation of the protests. Thus, he represented the EU's most detailed evaluation on the events. After meeting with the representatives of the Taksim Solidarity Platform on June 6 and 7, he stated that the protests “constituted a legitimate way of expressing the needs” of a part in the society that had the opinion that they are not represented “in the parliamentary majority” (Hürriyet Daily News, 07/06/2013b). With this statement, Füle means that there is the minority's reaction to this situation in a legitimate way because of feeling the majority's dominance in the decision-making process in Turkey. This approach is called as legitimization through rationality since a reasonable relationship is represented between the cause as the underrepresentation of the minority and the consequence as the legitimate protests for the minority's reaction.

Before speaking about **our common future**, we should speak about the present. There is no place for police brutality in **democracies**. [...] I call on Turkey not to give up on its values of **freedom and fundamental rights**. [...] Democracy requires **compromise** and debate, underlining the importance of **respecting the rights and freedoms** of citizens. [...] I imagine a Turkey which is more democratic with **peaceful coexistence** of different lifestyles (Today's Zaman, 07/06/2013).

In Füle's statement above, there is an intensive usage of moral evaluation which means reference to desired and common values of the society such as “freedom”, “democracy”, “fundamental rights”, “respecting”, “compromise” and “peaceful coexistence”. In the beginning, he draws attention the present status quo in Turkey. He describes what Turkey is advised to do and not to do to be a democratic country and to have a common future with the EU. This indirectly means that if Turkey does not do what the speaker proposes, Turkey will not be a democratic country and hence not be an EU member state. This indirectly leads us to

the legitimization through a hypothetical future which also involves the moral evaluation in it. Through this legitimization, Füle gives negative messages to the Turkish authorities as long as they continue their wrong handling style over the events.

The European Commission is **concerned** at reports of the detention of members of Taksim Solidarity - and other members of the public wishing to exercise their right to free assembly - in Istanbul yesterday.[...] It is **not clear on what grounds** the detentions have been made. We **are closely following measures taken by the** authorities in follow up to recent protests, and underline the importance of respect for fundamental freedoms (Hürriyet Daily News, 09/07/2013).

In his statement above, Füle states the concerns of the Commission and indirectly warns the Turkish authorities with the words “closely following measures” on any unfair detention of Taksim Solidarity Platform members causing violation of the right to free assembly. While the statement begins with an emotional approach as being “concerned”, it ends with questioning the rationality and legality of the detentions with waiting for the “grounds”. In other words, there are both legitimization through emotions and rationalization in this statement to examine the appropriateness of legal procedures. Hence, these clearly indicate that the EU supports the demands of protestors and finds approach of Turkish political decision makers and police forces wrong towards the protestors, which clearly shows some effects on Turkish accession in the long term. The next section focuses on the reactions of the EU member states’ decision-makers over the incidents.

3.4.2. Statements of Decision Makers in the EU Member States

Decision makers in the EU member states also made similar statements criticizing Turkish decision makers’ handling style of the nationwide incidents in Turkey generally via their foreign ministers except Germany. As the first EU country to discuss, Germany’s State Secretary and government spokesman Steffen Seibert made the first statement about the events in Turkey in a news conference on June 3 in the name of the Federal Government of Germany.

In the current heightened situation, it's **important** that all parties **demonstrate calm**. [...] **Berlin** is following events with **concern**.[...] Freedom of expression and assembly is a basic right in a democracy and that security authorities **must** also act proportionally and appropriately (Hürriyet Daily News, 03/06/2013b).

In the beginning of the statement, Seibert states the right and important thing to do in this case, which is to “demonstrate calm” for all parties. This sounds more like the strategy of

rationalization for legitimization. The second sentence, which reminds Turkey that German main political decision-makers in Berlin follow the events with concern, involves both intimidation towards the Turkish government to take care their decisions about the events and displeasure for the government's handling style until then because of the usage of "concern" in the statement. Therefore, this short sentence adopts a strategy based on emotions for legitimization. Furthermore, the word "Berlin" in this sentence is a metonym for the German main political decision-makers in the capital city of Germany. The last sentence benefits again from rationalization with making a cause and effect relationship. Since freedom of expression and assembly is a basic right in a democratic state, the security forces in Turkey as a democratic state must act proportionally and appropriately in order to save and respect this freedom. However, the events went on in Turkey with the same misconduct according to him and hence he made another statement below in his Twitter account.

The German government has warned **several times**: freedom to demonstrate and freedom of expression must be guaranteed and peaceful citizens respected. [...] There **should** be a **continuation of dialogue** in Turkey. The German government again calls on all parties **to reason** (Hürriyet Daily News, 16/06/2013b).

In this paragraph, he expresses the increasing discontent of the German government with the words "several times" and reminds the Turkish decision-makers what the right and reasonable things to do in this case. Thus, there are both legitimizations through emotions and rationality in this sentence. The following two sentences describe again what "should" be and what all parties in the protests should do according to German government. Thus, their strategy can be called more as rationalization what to do as right things, which is to continue of dialogue and to reason in his perspective. In addition to Seibert, German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle also evaluates the case with a bitter language.

Through **its regrettable behavior**, the Turkish government is sending **completely wrong signals** to the world and **to us in Europe**. I hope the Turkish government will contribute to calming the situation down and it will reach out to those who want to exercise their right to demonstrate (Hürriyet Daily News, 16/06/2013b).

Westerwelle begins with describing the handling style of the Turkish Government as "its regrettable behavior" and evaluates its manner as "completely wrong" messages especially to Europe. This gives the first clue of Germany's attempt to block the opening of a new chapter for Turkey's accession, which is discussed in the next section. Thus, German minister implies the negative effects of the statements and manners of Turkish decision-makers over the

events. However, the harshest criticism was seen from Chancellor Angela Merkel among the German decision-makers as one of most important decision makers in the EU member states:

I expressed that I was **shocked** over the latest incidents. I **hope** the Turkish people will have the chance to use their rights to protest inclusively. [...] There were **horrible images** in which one could see that the approach was much too **harsh** in my view. [...] What is happening in Turkey **does not meet with our ideas** of freedom of assembly or freedom of expression (Hürriyet Daily News, 19/07/2013).

Merkel firstly states her “shock” about the events and then her “hope” for protestors’ using their rights. This follows “horrible images” which were “too harsh” in her view. These terms clearly show her strategy based on triggering a number of feelings to explain her disappointment because of the responding style of the Turkish government. She ends this paragraph with her evaluation on Turkey and concludes that Turkey “does not meet our ideas” as a negative effect of the protests and the following incidents. This indirectly means that Turkey has not currently enough qualification to promote the EU values and hence to access to the EU because of disrespecting the freedoms according to this view. Parallel to her statements, Germany was seen as the main opposition to open a new chapter and to halt accession negotiations with Turkey.

Paris is hoping for **calm** and **restraint** in Turkey. In democracy, **dialogue** is a must. This is what [Turkish] president Abdullah Gul called for and what I hope will be implemented (Asharq Al-Awsat, 2013).

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius in this statement above also states what the reasonable things to do in this case, which are “calm”, “restraint” and “dialogue” according to decision makers in Paris. He indirectly advises Turkish authorities to perform in that way while he appreciates the manners of Gül with showing the similarity among the remedies that Gül and Fabius preferred for this crisis in Turkey. When his statement above is analyzed as a whole, it can be seen as a legitimization strategy through rationalization with advising reasonable things to do in this case. It should also be added that there is not any statement of French President François Hollande on the Gezi Park protests in Turkey contrary to German Chancellor. For this stance of Hollande, his political ideology and positive policy preferences over Turkey’s accession to the EU can be effective.

The Foreign Office of United Kingdom repeats the importance of rights and freedoms in a democratic state with “We encourage the Turkish authorities to respect the right to peaceful protest and freedom of assembly, which are fundamental human rights in any

democratic society” (Today’s Zaman, 02/06/2013b). In this statement, the attempt of the UK to “encourage” Turkish decision-makers is emphasized. The office also “condemns” Turkey because of the “indiscriminate use of tear gas” (Today’s Zaman, 02/06/2013b). Encouraging and condemning in this short statement are inclined to the legitimization through emotion since they also show the discontent of the UK because of the last incidents in Turkey.

Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomija also emphasizes on democratic standards and freedoms as well as investigating of disproportionate use of force with bringing the responsible people to account for this. He also adds that:

Turkey, as a candidate country for EU accession, **needs to aspire** to the highest democratic standards and practices which include the freedom of all media (Hürriyet Daily News, 18/09/2013b).

In these statements, Tuomija also mentions about the right actions that the Turkish authorities “needs to” do, which leads to the legitimization through rationalization. Thus, he also thinks that the Turkish political decision makers misconduct the protests and hence they have to correct this implementation.

Bulgaria’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs also expresses its concern over the incidents.

Bulgaria is closely monitoring the events of recent days in Turkey, **our neighboring country and a friend**. We are concerned about **the violence** and express **our concern** about the **excessive use of force by police against the protesters** (Hürriyet Daily News, 03/06/2013b).

In this official statement of Bulgaria, there are the words “our concern” because of “the violence” and “excessive use of force by police against the protesters”, which points out Bulgaria’s disapproval of the handling style of the Turkish government. Instead of explaining what to do to the Turkish authorities, Bulgarian government prefers to show its attention to the events with the first sentence and its discontent with this intervention of police forces. Furthermore, it describes itself as a “neighboring country and a friend” to show its sincere “concern”. Therefore, the Bulgarian government’s strategy can be seen as legitimization through emotions. All in all, the political decision makers neither in the EU institutions nor in the EU member states approve the police debated intervention and the government’s and Turkish decision-makers’ uncompromising manners during the Gezi Park events. They emphasize on the importance of fundamental rights for Turkey as a candidate state to the EU, investigations on their violations, enhancing of dialogue and compromise with the protestors at the end as the solution of these protests in Turkey.

3.5. The Effects of the 2013 Gezi Park Protests and the Statements of Decision Makers on these Protests on Turkey's Accession to the EU

Turkey began accession negotiations with the EU in 2005. However, it could open only 13 out of 35 chapters and temporarily close one chapter on science and research until the Gezi Park protests. Before the demonstrations, there was a plan of opening Chapter 22 in June 2013, which had been decided and planned months ago as a long-awaited-progress in the accession process after three years. However, unexpected exploitation of anger towards the police, the government and Prime Minister Erdoğan caused the EU's revising of its plans about Turkey's accession. Main reasons of the protestors according to the questionnaires were to save their rights and freedoms, to end the wrong interventions by the police and to be seriously taken into account and heard by the Turkish authorities in a more calming manner rather than being ignored or underestimated since they did not vote for the AK Party⁵⁵.

The first serious tension between the EU and Turkey was the resolution of the European Parliament on June 11 about these protests and the negative reactions of the Prime Minister Erdoğan on it. This tension showed the possibility of some irreversible decisions about the relations between the EU and Turkey. The second friction happened with the EU's concerns on whether to open talks on Chapter 22 because of the protests. Especially, the Netherlands and Germany⁵⁶ as main opposition which can be understood from Merkel's statements⁵⁷ above insisted on halting accession talks with Turkey because of the police's wrong actions against the Gezi Park protestors, the violation of fundamental rights during these interventions and the Turkish decision-makers' uncompromising manners and statements (Hürriyet, 19/06/2013). For a possible negative decision about the opening of this chapter after a negotiation in the EU, a Turkish official stated to a Turkish newspaper that Turkey would definitely and appropriately reply even though there was no certain plan to be applied for this case (Today's Zaman, 20/06/2013). This meant that any destructive reaction from the Turkish side could have been seen upon a negative reply of the EU, which could have even made the EU-Turkey relations worse than two-year-period of no interactions of Turkey with the EU after the 1997 Luxembourg summit. Furthermore, some Turkish intellectuals such as world-renowned pianist and composer Fazıl Say wanted the EU member

⁵⁵ As it was mentioned before, according to the questionnaire of Istanbul Bilgi University, 91,2 % of the answerers did not vote for AK Party in the last elections (Hürriyet Daily News, 05/06/2013b).

⁵⁶ According to the EU minister Egemen Bağış, this reaction of Merkel having the long-standing opposition to Turkey's accession was because of parliamentary elections in autumn 2013 in Germany as a campaign (Hürriyet Daily News, 22/06/2013).

⁵⁷ Merkel also stated that to open a new chapter can be seen as a reward for the Turkish government despite its mistakes during the protest (Today's Zaman, 20/06/2013).

states not to abandon these protestors in Gezi Park by blocking a new chapter since they struggled for their fundamental rights, freedoms and democracy which are European values (Hürriyet Daily News, 20/06/2013).

Despite these tensions in the relations between Turkey and the EU, the Ministers of the EU states came together on June 24 and decided to open a new chapter in fall 2013 with the help of Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and his German counterpart Guido Westerwelle to overcome this chapter crisis (Demirtaş, 2013). They also added that the path to Turkey's accession was still open despite harsh criticism over the events. As a result, the 22nd Chapter on "Regional Policies and Coordination of Structural Instruments" was opened on November 5, 2013 not to fully suspend Turkey's already long-awaited EU accession process. When the research question of this thesis which was "Have the Gezi Park protests in Turkey in 2013 and the different statements of decision-makers to these protests affected Turkey's accession process to the EU?" is brought into memory, it should be evaluated in terms of short term and long term in Turkey's EU story. In the short term, it has not been seen any direct negative effect on Turkey's accession yet except a-few-months-delay for the opening of a new chapter as the Chapter 22, which would actually should have been opened in June 2013. Furthermore, any other possible negative direct effect on her accession in near future is not foreseen as long as any other serious events⁵⁸ are not reported in Turkey. Nevertheless, there was a positive effect of the protests to its accession due to the progress in civil society in Turkey. The Gezi Park protests showed the evolution in the Turkish society based on the Turkish youth and hence growing and vibrant civil society in Turkey as it is also appreciated by the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey from the European Commission (2013a: 11). The Gezi Park protests helped to develop civil society "with holding of peaceful and legitimate demonstrations", which contributes to Turkey's accession to the EU in terms of increasing awareness of Turkish citizens on the European values as a positive effect of these protests (European Parliament, 2013b). The progress in civil society in Turkey is of vital importance since civil society is "a legitimate stakeholder in democracy" (European Parliament, 2013b). Without including civil society and opposition in the decision making process, the majority cannot reach to an inclusive and pluralistic democracy (European Parliament, 2013b). Therefore, the Gezi Park protests are important since they empowered the

⁵⁸ The process which began with the December 17 operation with corruption and bribery allegations and the following events with alleged intervention to the judicial system in Turkey can be main challenges of Turkey which can affect her accession in the short term (The Guardian, 17/12/2013).

civil society in Turkey for enhancing its participation into the decision-making process in Turkey, which is an inevitable element of democratic societies and also an EU member state.

In the long term, the violations of fundamental rights and freedoms, wrong interventions of police forces and insistent and uncompromising manners and statements of the Turkish decision makers and especially the Prime Minister Erdoğan towards the protests as the obstacles of dialogue and compromise in a democratic way are expected to be reminded and taken into consideration by the decision-makers in the EU while evaluating reforms and progress on fundamental rights, freedoms and democracy in Turkey. This can lead to more dubious stance from the EU authorities to the Turkish political decision-makers on their sincerity about the progress of European values in Turkey during her accession negotiations as an indirect and negative effect of the Gezi Park protests to Turkey's accession. However, positive effects in the short term can be increased and spread to the long term with supporting the progress in civil society in Turkey and hence promoting inclusive and pluralistic democracy in Turkey. Turkish decision makers are seen willing to work on these positive effects both in the long and in short term. After the positive decision of the EU to open a new chapter, on December 16, Turkey accepted and signed the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement⁵⁹ obliging Turkey to accept illegal migrants crossing into EU territory via Turkey for visa-free travel of the Turkish citizens to EU countries in around three years (European Commission, 2013c). On September 30 which is two weeks before the 2013 Progress Report of Turkey from the European Commission, Prime Minister Erdoğan also announced a "democratization package" including significant reforms for Kurds and important acts of liberalization in society (Hürriyet, 30/09/2013) These attempts of the Turkish authorities can be perceived as steps to give positive signals both to the Turkish citizens and the European citizens and to better Turkey's international reputation after the tensions because of the demonstrations.

⁵⁹ Whether this agreement was a right step for Turkey's accession is another important discussion topic which should be discussed in another study. In this thesis, the agreement is evaluated in terms of its effects on the relations among the EU and Turkey.

CONCLUSION

Political decision makers are influential individuals whose effects in decision making process differ in degree in new democracies such as Turkey and elder democracies such as the Western European countries. While parties in Turkey are managed by a certain group of prominent elites and a party leader in a top down process, parties in Western European countries which remarkably affect the EU take decisions in a bottom up process under the less influence of a party leader. However, during the Gezi Park protests in Turkey in 2013, this top-down process in decision making in Turkey was seriously challenged by the civil society since the Taksim project including the destruction of Gezi Park was launched without negotiation and consensus with civil society. This was followed by wrong intervention of police at 5 am on May 30 against the protestors with the burning of their tents in the park, using tear gas and water cannons towards these people, which can be summarized as the breaking point of the Gezi Park protests. Besides, the insistence of Turkish decision makers on the project and the continuation of police interventions in the following days caused so much anger of some masses that Gezi Park in Istanbul was occupied and millions of people in Turkey joined this occupy movement and protests in different ways. In other words, the conflicts with the protests as in the NSMs caused a larger legitimization crisis of the Turkish government. Additionally, because of the Gezi Park demonstrations' participants, reasons, profile and the role of social media during the protests, it is seen in this thesis that they are a part of the New Social Movements in the world. In terms of their demands, increasing importance of fundamental rights and freedoms came to the front and showed the progress of European values in the middle class in Turkey as well as the dynamism in civil society. This is a positive side of the protests for Turkey's accession to the EU in terms of the awareness of her citizens.

During the events, the uncompromising and even some polarizing statements of the Turkish political decision-makers and especially Prime Minister Erdoğan were seen based on four emotional strategies which are the usage of "we and "they" statements, the usage of religious terms, the usage of majority vs. minority rhetoric and lastly the usage of paternal or familial terms. These statements of Erdoğan increased the tension of the protestors and spread the protests to other cities of the country despite some conciliatory attempts of President Abdullah Gül and government spokesman and Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç as other

political decision makers. Thus, the dominant effectiveness of ruling party leaders in Turkey has been proved again when the effects of statements of Erdoğan on the protests have been examined on the protests. Insistence and uncompromising manner and statements of Erdoğan clearly and negatively affected the events and put fire on them, which was indicated by the questionnaires of protestors discussed in this thesis. However, Prime Minister Erdoğan has showed that the EU is still Turkey's priority contrary to his statements against the EU because of the Union's supporting approach to the Gezi Park events. After the positive decision of the EU to open a new chapter which was in danger because of the demonstrations, Turkey approved the Readmission Agreement and Prime Minister Erdoğan himself declared the democratization package, which are attempts of the Turkish decision-makers to improve the relations with the EU.

As well as the demonstrators, European decision makers have remarkably been displeased from manners and statements of Turkish political decision makers and Turkish Government's reactions to the protests when their statements are also critically analyzed. Especially Germany is an EU country whose decision makers have most harshly criticized Turkey. German Chancellor Angela Merkel clearly stated her frustration to Turkish decision makers in her statements which gave clues about Germany's attempt to block the opening of new chapter in Turkey's accession. While this attempt of Germany was criticized by the EU Minister of Turkey Bağış as Merkel's strategy for her electoral campaign in fall 2013, other EU countries supporting Germany's blockage showed increasing disapproval to Turkish authorities' handling style and manner. These can be counted as a negative side of the protests for Turkey's accession process because of the Turkish decision makers' reactions. When these are evaluated as a whole for any effect on Turkey's accession process in terms of the research question of this thesis, any direct and negative effect has not been observed in the short term expect a-few-month-delay of the opening of new chapter for accession negotiations, yet. Besides, any other direct negative effect on the process is not also expected in the short term as long as any other incidents which are impossible to be justified by the Turkish decision-makers are not seen in near future. However, the progress in civil society during the Gezi Park events is a direct positive effect of the demonstration to Turkey's accession in the short, which was also appreciated in 2013 Progress Report of Turkey. In the long term, many indirect negative effects on Turkey's accession process can happen while discussing the open chapters of the EU *acquis communautaire* as well as evaluating new reforms and laws adopted in line with the EU norms in Turkey. Nevertheless, the positive effect of the progress

in civil society can be spread to the long term if Turkish decision makers attempt to improve it for pluralist and inclusive democracy in Turkey.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1- Gezi Park and Taksim Square in İstanbul (BBC, 16/06/2013).



Annex 2- The Photo of a Woman in a Red Dress which Turned to a Symbol of the Protests (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013).



**Annex 3- The Debuted Intervention of police to the Taksim Square on June 11.
(Huffington Post, 11/06/2013)**



Annex 4- The standing man who started as a new type of protest in the Taksim Square on June 17. (Hürriyet Daily News, 06/06/2013)



Annex 5- Free library which was composed by the protestors in Gezi Park (Hürriyet Daily News, 04/06/2013b).



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I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and have been generated by me as the result of my original research.


None of the part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree of any other qualification at this University or any other institution.

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