

**PARTICIPATING INTO THE DEMOCRATIC “MIDDLE GROUND”:
YOUNG CIVILIANS MOVEMENT AS A NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT
IN TURKEY**

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PARTICIPATING INTO THE DEMOCRATIC “MIDDLE GROUND”: YOUNG
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TURKEY

DEMOKRATİK “ORTA ALAN”A KATILIM: TÜRKİYE’DE BİR YENİ SOSYAL
HAREKET OLARAK GENÇ SİVİLLER HAREKETİ

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY	1
CHAPTER I: NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS	
I.1 CONTEXT AND THE POSTMODERN CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY	5
I.2 TWO THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND NANCY FRASER’S RECOGNITION AND REDISTRIBUTION DISTINCTION	10
CHAPTER II: YOUNG CIVILIANS AS A NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT IN TURKEY	
II.1. CONTEXT, POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE AND MAIN ISSUES OF DEBATE IN 1990s & 2000s	15
II.2 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF YOUNG CIVILIANS MOVEMENT	24
II.3 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF OTHER NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS WITH SIMILAR CONCERNS	31
II.4 EVALUATION OF YOUNG CIVILIANS MOVEMENT	37
CHAPTER III: CONCLUSION	44
BIBLIOGRAPHY	48
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWS WITH SOME MEMBERS OF YOUNG CIVILIANS (GENÇ SİVİLLER)	

INTERVIEW I 52

INTERVIEW II 73

INTERVIEW III 90

**APPENDIX B: AN INTERVIEW WITH A MEMBER OF INTERROGATING THE
DARKNESS MOVEMENT (*KARANLIĞI SORGULUYORUZ*)** 102

ABSTRACT

New social movements put freedom, justice, peace, democratization of civil society at the center of their agenda. Young Civilians Movement in Turkey can be seen as a new social movement with their action of conscience, conversation language (*muhabbet*) and values as peace, anti- racism, anti-nationalism. There are also other new social movements in Turkey that are addressing the similar concerns with Young Civilians Movement. These can be named as “Say Stop to Racism and Nationalism” (*Irkıçılığa ve milliyetçiliğe Dur de*), “We Are Not Free Yet” (*Henüz Özgür Olmadık*), “Interrogating the Darkness” (*Karanlığı Sorguluyoruz*), Global Peace and Justice Coalition (*Küresel Bak*), Face Up And Research to Social Events Association (*Yüzleşme Derneği*). These new social movements direct attention to looking after each other’s rights and living with differences as well as being against nationalism, racism, military coup d’etats. This thesis aims to understand Young civilians movement as a new social movement as parallel to the change in the political culture in Turkey after the 1980s as well as evaluating it with these other new social movements. Also, it suggests that their way of doing politics as deconstructon of mainstream discourses, action of conscience, humorous forms of protest can be considered in a transcultural concern. By following Gurevitch, it can be said that they participate into a democratic “middle ground” as well as creating it by their conversation language. Lastly, Young Civilians movements’ politics can be considered in terms of James Tully’s “agonic dimension of citizenship”.

ÖZET

Yeni Sosyal Hareketler gündemlerinin merkezine özgürlük, adalet, barış, sivil toplumun demokratikleştirilmesini koyarlar. Türkiye’deki Genç Siviller Hareketi, vicdan politikaları, muhabbet dili ve barış, ırkçılık karşıtlığıyla yeni bir sosyal hareket olarak görülebilir. Türkiye’de ayrıca Genç Sivillerle benzer konulara işaret eden başka yeni sosyal hareketler de vardır. Bunlar Irkçılığa ve Milliyetçiliğe Dur de, Henüz Özgür Olmadık, Karanlığı Sorguluyoruz, Küresel Bak, Yüzleşme Derneği olarak adlandırılabilir. Bu yeni sosyal hareketler ırkçılığa, milliyetçiliğe, askeri darbelere karşı oldukları kadar birbirimizin haklarına sahip çıkmak ve farklılıklarla bir arada yaşamaya dikkat çekerler. Bu tez, Genç Siviller hareketini bu yeni sosyal hareketlerle birlikte değerlendirmek kadar Türkiye’de 1980 sonrasında politik kültürdeki değişime paralel olarak anlamayı amaçlar. Ayrıca, Genç Sivillerin başlıca söylemlerin yapı sökümü olarak siyaset yapma yollarını, vicdan politikalarını, sivil toplumun demokratikleştirilmesini, mizahi protesto biçimlerini kültürlerarası bir ilgiyle göz önüne almayı önerir. Gurevitch’i takip ederek şu söylenebilir ki onlar demokratik bir “orta alan” yaratmak kadar buna katılırlar da. Son olarak, Genç Siviller’in politikaları James Tully’nin “agonik boyutlu vatandaşlık”ı bakımından değerlendirilebilir.

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY:

“Men make their own history: Social life is produced by cultural achievements and social conflicts, and at the heart of society burns the fire of social movements.(Touraine, 1981)”

“A landscape without flowers or magnificent woods may be depressing for the passer-by but flowers and trees should not make us forget the earth beneath, which has a secret life and a richness of its own.(Henri Le Febvre)”¹

With the emergence of new social movements throughout the world, it has been encountered that new forms of politics have emerged. Rather than past’s class politics, they have been addressing to the ‘struggles of recognition’ and cultural identity based politics and transcultural politics. These are all emphasizing the democratization of civil society and intersubjective aspect of it which is largely shaped by tactics, conversation(*muhabbet*) and deconstruction of mainstream discourses. In this respect, the new social movements are all contributing to the construction of democratic “middle ground” as defined by Gurevitch and also participating diverse ways of citizenship which is defined by James Tully.

In the first part of this chapter a brief survey of new social movements will be made by explaining the context in which they emerged, how the claims for recognition of difference or ‘identity politics’ have emerged in relation to the critique of modernity and two theoretical paradigms for understanding ‘new’ social movements. In the second part of this chapter, Nancy Fraser’s redistribution and recognition distinction to distinguish between “old” and “new” social movements as the first focusing on class politics and the latter focusing on identity politics and civil society based new forms of politics lying behind peace movements, ecology movements, gay rights etc. as attempts to recognition of difference and transcultural or conscientious (*vicdan*) politics will be used. So that, as briefly speaking, if I make an ideal

¹ Gardiner, Michael E. “Introduction”, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, Routledge, 2000, pp. 1-23.

typical distinction between old and new social movements from the new social movements theory², New social movements' characteristics are as follows:

“1. Non –instrumental, expressive of universalist concerns and often protesting in the name of morality rather than direct interests of particular social groups.

2. Oriented more towards civil society than the state:

(a). Suspicious of centralized bureaucratic structures and oriented toward changing public views rather than elite institutions;

(b). More concerned with aspects of culture, lifestyle, and participation in the symbolic politics of protest than in claiming socio-economic rights.

3. Organized in informal ,“loose”, and flexible ways, at least in some aspects avoiding hierarchy and bureaucracy”³

In this thesis, it will be followed the New Social Movements Theory (NSMT) to understand the Young Civilians Movement and their way of doing conscientious(*vicdan*) politics as a new social movement. For that reason, this movement can be understood as a new social movement with respect to distinctive characteristics stated above. Because, looking at their discourses, it is clear that they reject authoritarianism, express universalist concerns such as freedom and justice. They use creative kinds of protests in the name of their conscience, defend pluralistic civil society, they are concerned with cultural citizenship as well as having a non-hierarchical organization.

Furthermore, in this thesis, beside analysing Young Civilians Movement as a new social movement, the aim is to extend the analysis to new social movements consisting Zali Gurevitch's 'dialectical dialogue' and James Tully's 'agonic freedom of citizens' by also considering other similar movements in Turkey such as “Say stop to racism and militarism

² “New social movements theory proposed by sociologists like Alain Touraine, Alberto Mellucci and Louis Maheu, on the other hand appeared as a European version of, or rather rival to, the resource mobilization paradigm.”(Şimşek, Sefa (2004). “New Social Movements in Turkey”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Summer, p.111)

³ Nash, Kate(2000). “The Politicization Of the Social: Social Movements and Cultural Politics”, *Contemporary Political Sociology, Globalization, Politics and Power*, Oxford, Blackwell, p. 102.

(*İrkçılığa ve Milliyetçiliğe Dur de*), “We have not been free yet” (*Henüz Özgür Olamadık*) and “Interrogating the Darkness” (*Karanlığı Sorguluyoruz*) movement, “Global Coalition of Peace and Justice” (*Küresel Bak*) movement, “Coalition of 70 million Steps against Coup d’etat” (*Darbeye Karşı 70 milyon adım Koalisyonu*) , “Face Up and Research to Social Events Association” (*Toplumsal Olayları Araştırma ve Yüzleşme Derneği*). These movements are all together adressing to the issues that are “suppressed” by modernity. They also call attention to ethical dialogue which is defined by Gurevitch as against repressive silence a call of the other into an equal dialogue.⁴ They seek conversation with the elements of the “Other” like “by giving a thing, one gives the giving not the thing.”⁵ Additionally, they address to the new forms of politics which may be seen as a new solution to inequalities of our time.

Additionally, there exists “ a middle term as fulcrum in a seesaw between struggle and ethics which grants freedom of movement-bouncing back and forth from one speaker to another, each of them considered equally a seperate world with its own value, voice, expression”⁶ between them. These points will be illustrated in detail in the second chapter. Besides by following Scott Lash, it is possible to assert that with such movements we are entering the place of “ non-institutionalized sub-politics of risk culture.”⁷

All these movements are civil-society based and they are using new forms of mobilizations that new social movements apply in their protests. As James Jasper analyzes the three category of identity in the analyses of social movements⁸, they are creating biography and culture by depending on movement identity which rises around the interaction

⁴ Gurevitch, Zali, Dialectical Dialogue: the struggle for speech, repressive silence, and the shift to multiplicity” *British Journal of Sociology* Vol.No.52,Issue No.1 (March 2001)

⁵ Ibid, p.96.

⁶ Ibid, p.97.

⁷ Lash, Scott (2000). “Risk Culture” in Barbara Adam...[et al.](eds),*The Risk Society and Beyond: Critical issues for Social Theory*. London Sage Publications, p.59.

⁸ There are three categories of culture. One as being constituting one’s own self-identity, second as group identity and last as identity of movement. Jasper, James(1997) . “Kültürel Yaklaşımlar”, in *Ahlaki Protesto Sanatı*, İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları. P.142-143.

between general knowledge and culture which is in the movement.⁹ In other words, as different from identity movements, in new social movements as transcultural politics enabled, when one joins to a movement with his/her own identity, it is also possible that this process is open to change and cooperate with other new social movements, if we consider movement as a biography. More importantly, these movements are calling attention to what Bakhtin argues : “We must always put our personal signature or emotional –volitional tone, upon the act in question, and any expressions or objectivations that emanate from such a deed must bear the mark of this signature... It is a world that is heard, seen, touched and thought, a world permeated in its entirety with the emotional, volitional tones of the affirmed validity of values.”¹⁰

Lastly, the question will be whether such new social movements, specifically the Young Civilians movement and their transcultural politics may be a transformative remedy for injustices or not.

As for the method, in this study, the focus is on the way the members of the Young Civilians movement define themselves and it is also relied on some announcements, and actions as well as the discourses they use in all these. Besides, interviews with some representatives of the movement is used. Also, in order to understand this movement as a new social movement as it is claimed, a comparison with some new social movements which have similar concerns and values was made. By doing this another example interview was used as an example of one of the movements of other similar concerns.

CHAPTER I: NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

In the first part of this chapter, the context in which ‘new’ social movements emerged will be analysed. In this respect, the critique of modernity in the relevant aspects such as how politics should be done will be clarified. Here, especially the postmodern critique of

⁹ Jasper, James(1997) . “Kültürel Yaklaşımlar”, *Ahlaki Protesto Sanatı*, İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları. (ibid)

¹⁰ Gardiner, Michael E. , (2000). “Bakhtin’s Prosaic Imagination”, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, Routledge. p.52.

modernity will be taken into consideration. Because, postmodern critique which was well established after 1990s has criticised modernity for neglecting identity claims of individuals and groups, which were encouraged economic and cultural developments that have been moving the world into a global system. Furthermore, this critiques have also given rise to the questioning of how politics should be done. So, with this concern, what the relationship between “identity politics”, “cultural turn” and “new social movements” will be questioned.

In the second part of this chapter, the two theoretical paradigms- “Resource Mobilization Paradigm” and “New Social Movements Paradigm”- which are emerged to understand ‘new’ social movements will be taken into consideration in the discussion of Young Civilians Movement as a new social movement. And, Nancy Fraser’s recognition and redistribution distinction will be used in order to understand the injustices which are addressed by new social movements.

I.1: CONTEXT AND POSTMODERN CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY

At first, politics in the post-industrial period, in the period of “reflexive modernization”¹¹ or in the globalization era, does not only refer to the politics only at the level of the nation-states. With the globalization and individualization processes, we- as “individualized individuals”- are no longer solely relying on modern institutions, “big” ideologies and institutionalized politics. While modernity offered an improvement by the light of cognitive or determinate judgements which presumes a sort of subject-object dualism and creates public-private distinction, it also began inappropriate to solve its inadequacies. “The private sphere’s creation of risks means that it can no longer be considered apolitical.”¹² As Beck stated that “radical socialism has become conservative and conservatism has

¹¹“the possibility of a creative (self-)destruction for an entire epoch: that of industrial society” Ulrich Beck, *The Reinvention of Politics: Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization*, in *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, Cambridge Polit Press, 1995. p:2.

¹² Beck, Ulrich, “The Reinvention of Politics: Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization”, *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, Cambridge Polity Press, 1995.p.10.

become radical”. By following Scott Lash’s notion of ‘risk culture’, it would be possible to claim that the idea of institutionally ordered, normative, rule bound and hierarchical sociations are not relevant today. Rather today’s “risk cultures lie in non-institutional and anti-institutional sociations and depend on aesthetic judgements”¹³ That is to say, “if determinate judgements follow a logic of the ‘I’, then the judgements of beauty operating through the imaginary (or imagination) follow the logic of the ‘eye’. Judgements of the sublime in contrast follow not a visual logic but a logic of much more tactile, sensuous, materialist and immediate; they follow what might be called a ‘logic of sensation’.”¹⁴ So, the new social movements emerged in such a society can be seen as coming of the immediate and the logic of sensation into the scene rather than the ‘I’ of the modern society and its judgements. So that, in such new sociations it is possible to see that the civil society based politics or transcultural politics -as we later point out detaily- is seen as a prerequisite for or *sine qua non* of being good and living a good life. What’s more, such politics can be interchangeable when it is used with Lash’s sub-politics. So that, sub-politics for Lash is “the displacement of institutional sociation from the public sphere into non-institutional practices more closely resembling the private sphere.”¹⁵ The view of politics of Young Civilians Movement -which is an example of a new social movement and main issue of this study- as one member of the movement said, which can be shown as an example of this : “...The politics is at the same time a reflection of our behaviors in our lives into public arena in some way. If we are against unjust behaviours and if we stand with all this, we should also stand the same when we are on the public arena and this is the politics actually.”¹⁶

In postmodern or reflexive modern society, differently from belongingness to big institutions such as Vatican or a unifying church, we are as sect members grouping

¹³ Lash, Scott (2000), in Barbara Adam...[et al.](eds), *The Risk Society and Beyond: Critical issues for Social Theory*. London Sage Publications, p.47.

¹⁴ Ibid. P. 57.

¹⁵ Ibid, p.59.

¹⁶ Appendix A-Interview I, p. 57.

communities depending upon self-difference. Besides, the life practiced in sects is non-institutional, private and public is not separated and community is non-hierarchical.¹⁷ Also, rather than relying on norms as in modernity, in postmodern or reflexive modern society, we are relying on values which are cultural and related to private morality, located in symbols.¹⁸ We are forming “new reflexive sociations which are neither *Gemeinschaft* nor *Gesellschaft*, based not in a normatively structured and utilitarian politics of interests, but in a politics of value and good life.”¹⁹

Secondly, at the second half of the twentieth century, “new” social movements which are involved in the struggles of the “marginalized”, uncovered issues of the traditional labor movements -such as women rights, gay and lesbian rights, ecology and environmental movements, ethnic and linguistic demands - have emerged and developed. These new movements or areas of struggles, addressing also to the insufficiencies of mainstream politics, delegitimization of political parties²⁰, have also motivated the rise in demands to participate and control the mechanisms of economical and political decision making by the citizens. In addition to that, there has been a need to identify or understand such kind of new sociations or new forms of collective action.

While these demands have developed firstly in the West Europe and the North America, in terms of the issues against the war and racism, environmental and gender politics, they have also united with the social dissidence of the “Third World” against the authoritarian and repressive regimes, calling for the anti-imperialism and the end of invasion of human rights. With all these societal changes, the means of democracy in mainstream

¹⁷ Lash, Scott (2000), in Barbara Adam...[et al.](eds),*The Risk Society and Beyond: Critical issues for Social Theory*. London Sage Publications. p.59.

¹⁸ Ibid. P.60.

¹⁹ Ibid, p.60.

²⁰ Larana, E. , Johnston, H. , Gusfield J.R. (1994), “Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements”, E.Larana, H.Johnson, J.R. Gusfield (eds), *New Social Movements from Ideology to Identity*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press. P.3.

politics have also started to be discussed.²¹ In other words, as Nancy Fraser stated, it is encounter with new claims for ‘recognition of difference’ and there has been a relative decline in the movements claiming equal share of wealth and resources.²² Additionally, it should be considered that:

“social movements have a central place in the understanding of new forms of politics... In the 1970s, it was those who identified with social movements who worked to make dimensions of inequality and exclusion other than class significant... Debates in the 1980s over whether identity is best seen as fixed “essential” property of the person or a social construction were closely related to “identity politics” of social movements.”²³

So, the experience is the redefinition and restructuring of nation state, change of meaning of justice and democracy and rise of the recognition of difference as identity claims as well as pluralistic civil society and stress upon the cultural citizenship²⁴ which are also highlighted by new social movements. Thus, these new movements have been important in the realization of “cultural politics”. This paradigm shift from old movements to new social movements can be called as “postmodern” or “cultural turn”.

Crucially, this can be said that in the post-industrial societies what is encountered with is a societal change: the emergence of new forms of collective action which cannot be understood by common terms as conservative or liberal, left or right etc.²⁵ It was not enough to analyse these movements from class origins, the ideology programs or interests as Marxist

²¹ These interpretations are done by the light of Leyla Sanlı’s interpretations in “Türkiye’de Toplumsal Hareketler” ,*Toplumsal Hareketler Konuşuyor*, pp: 9-10.

²² Fraser, Nancy , “Rethinking Recognition”, *New Left Review* 3, May-June 2000.<http://newleftreview.org/?view=2248>,p.1.[25.06.2008]

²³ Nash, Kate, (2000), “The Politicization of the Social: Social Movements and Cultural Politics”,*Contemporary Political Sociology. Globalization, Politics and Power*. pp.100-101.

²⁴ “To talk of a cultural citizenship means that we take questions of rights and responsibilities far beyond the technocratic agendas of mainstream politics. That is, we should seek to form an appreciation of the ways in which ‘ordinary’ understanding become constructed, of issues of interpretative conflict and semiotic plurality more general.” Stevenson, Nick (2001) “Culture and Citizenship: an introduction”, in Nick Stevenson (ed),*Culture and Citizenship*, Sage Publications, p.1.

²⁵ Larana, E. , Johnston, H. , Gusfield J.R. (1994), “Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements”, E.Larana, H.Johnson, J.R. Gusfield (eds), *New Social Movements from Ideology to Identity*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press. p.4.

oriented scholars do or with Weberian scholars' analysis of internal changes existing in the movement. What's more, others looked at the 'how' of the collective action, especially the way they mobilize resources and conduct rational action. Here, Resource Mobilization Theory came into the scene. And, main thinkers of this theory are Charles Tilly, John MacCarthy, Mayer Zald. According to them, "[actors and protest action should be understood in terms of logic of costs and benefits as well as opportunities for action."²⁶ But they were not enough for the understanding of the 'why' of the action. More importantly, what was different in these new forms of actions from the other ideological movements of the past or class based movements lie both in their structure and action. That is to say, new social movements' :

“social base transcends class structure, social base of participants have their roots in gender, youth, sexual organization.

Ideological characteristics differ from working class movement. They exhibit pluralism of ideas and values and they tend to have pragmatic orientations and search for institutional reforms that enlarge the systems of members' participation in decision making... The grievances and mobilizing factors tend to focus on cultural and symbolic issues of identity rather than on economic grievances that characterized the working class movement.”²⁷

Other than labor movements, these new social movements, which are calling attention to the multiplicity of authors within the cultural, emphasize pluralistic civil society, oppose technocratic state. Additionally, for these movements key issues are the “ethical questions of personal autonomy, libertarianism, protection of nature, and the maintenance of peace.”²⁸ They also struggle for the recognition of difference or identities which are silenced within the modern or industrial society. Whereas labor movements were aiming to control the state and organized in unions or centralized parties beside addressing the socio-economic injustices,

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid. P. 6-7.

²⁸ Faulks, Keith (1999). “New Social Movements”, *Political Sociology*, New York University Press. P.96.

new social movements are calling attention to non-recognition and cultural or symbolic injustices by coming together as networks. They are aware of the fact that local and global are inextricably linked.²⁹ However, this does not mean that claims for economic exploitation are disappeared and there is a complete distinction between the old and new social movements.

Here again by calling attention to the idea of sect, it would be possible to say that the ways in which we perceive the risks are changed and as members living in risk cultures, the organizations around class belongings are losing value rather being closely connected to the cultural and trying to solve the present problems in more hybrid ways in relation to the individualized hybrid belongings of today.

I-2: TWO THEORIES AND FRASER'S RECOGNITION VS. REDISTRIBUTION DISTINCTION

In order to give meaning to these new social movements, there are two main approaches to the understanding of the contemporary forms of collective actions that are emerged in post-industrial society as Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) and New Social Movements (NSMT) theory. Basically, it is possible to claim that whereas the first one which is the dominant view in United States, looks at the 'how' of the action, the second one which is the dominant approach in Europe, looks at the 'why' of the action.³⁰

While Resource Mobilization Theory stresses that the struggles of the actors in these movements are based on their economic and political interest and this theoretical approach is based on the following assumptions:

- "Social movements should be understood through the conflict perspective,
- There is basically no difference between insitutional and non-institutional collective action,

²⁹ These interpretations are done by the light of 'Ideal types of Old and New Social Movements' table. Ibid.

³⁰ Şimşek, Sefa. "New Social Movements in Turkey", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.5, No.2, Summer 2004, p.111.

- Collective action enables groups to defend their interests in a rational way,
- The formation of social movements depend on the availability of resources and opportunities,
- The success of a group is measured by whether or not it is recognized as a political actor, and whether or not any increase is observed in material benefits.”³¹

On the other hand, New Social Movements paradigm as it is stated earlier directs attention to the cultural aspect-“questioning of the existing cultural codes, symbols and forms of authority”- of new social movements.³² In addition to that, as Claus Offe, one of theorists of NSMT, stated that there is a distinction between old and new social movements in terms of their actor, themes, values and forms of mobilization.³³ So, in the second chapter it will be referred to Offe’s distinction in the analysis of Young Civilians Movement.

According to Nancy Fraser, in the era we live in, the conflicts are not solely depending on class conflicts and economic inequality and cannot be reduced to class inequality, rather, we experience with the identity and status conflicts and the inequalities depending upon these conflicts are considered as dominant. For that reason, it can be claimed that symbolic and cultural elements of social divisions are more visible than before. In other words, at first, “although there has been an increase in the pace of economic globalization, we are experiencing with movements making emphasize on recognition of difference. They are displacing and marginalizing movements struggling around the issue of recognition.”³⁴ At second, as it has been experiencing with increase in the pace of global media and migration,

³¹ Ibid, p.117 (quoted from Jean Cohen, (1999) “Strateji ya da Kimlik: Yeni Teorik Paradigmalar ve Yeni Sosyal Hareketler” in Sabri Özburun(ed.), *Yeni Toplumsal Hareketler*)

³² Ibid.

³³ Offe, Claus (2002). “ Yeni Sosyal Hareketler: Kurumsal Politikanın Sınırlarının Zorlanması”, *Yeni Sosyal Hareketler*, Kenan Çayır(ed.), İstanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları. p.58.

³⁴ Fraser, Nancy, “Rethinking Recognition”, *New Left Review* 3, May-June 2000. full text available at <http://newleftreview.org/?view=2248>. (15.November.2009)

this means it has been also experiencing with more hybrid and plural cultural forms. So, there has been a need to rethink the problem of redistribution and to consider politics of recognition as displacing it. Again, following Fraser, in her words, it is appropriate to call the ‘politics of recognition’ as ‘identity model’. In this model, what is substantial is that it directs attention to the process of mutual recognition in the identity construction. According to this process, misrecognition by the other or denial of recognition in the construction of self is crucial problem. Because, in such a position, “members internalizes negative self images and prevented from developing a healthy cultural identity of their own.”³⁵ At that point, politics of recognition plays an important role but cannot be restricted to identity politics. “Due to the fact that it can give rise to the reification of the group and the displacement of the redistribution.” So that, by just concentrating on identity politics intragroup divisions such as gender, sexuality and class can be ignored. Also, thinking just identity politics may give rise to the ignorance of economic inequalities or politics of redistribution as well as reification of identity. Besides, Fraser’s distinction of politics of recognition as identity model and the status model of recognition, status model may cause institutionalization of social subordination and cultural value. So, in order to bypass these and for justice, what is needed is transcultural dimension; in her words, transformative remedy.

What will also be questioned in this thesis is whether new social movements that has been analysed can be seen from that perspective; maybe as a transformative remedy by directing the attention to the cultural and symbolic values of identities and injustices caused by redistribution. They also emphasizes modernity’s identity model injustice and gave importance to material and symbolic dimensions in the social divisions. One of the sayings of a member of Young Civilians Movement is important in understanding of today’s divisions. So that,

³⁵ Ibid.

“There are a lot of poor people in this country but they cast their votes for AKP. It means there are cultural motives, that are not purely explained in Marx theory, and it was better expressed by Weber. There are matters of their identity... There are some more existential tensions. He is hungry but if his headscarved wife is being cursed, even though he is hungry, he is casting his vote to a liberal party. There he is seeing a prime minister and his wife is also head scarved. The cultural sentimental relations, identity politics, and things like this, it is escaping such kinds of social politics things. People may be more powerful to his being Kurdish rather than to his being laborer. They practice politics through their Kurdishness eventhough they are also labour. Such things may happen. They may be in politics on their being women.”

Thirdly, looking at three waves of feminism as an example of a new social movement, it can be said that three level of analysis as a transition from class-based politics to cultural politics and lastly the action of conscience. So that, first wave feminism was struggling to get egalitarian political and economic rights such as freedom in the workplace while the second wave was focusing on the motherhood and claiming the personal is political. Lastly, the third wave shed a light on neither economic reductionalism nor the “women” as different than man but rather the plurality.³⁶ In this respect, if we think it with Fraser’s terms, while the class politics of old social movements corresponds to redistribution, identity politics of new social movements corresponds to redistribution. However, there is also another way as seen in third wave feminism: representation of the self in a cultural way. So, Young Civilians’ transcultural politics, in other words, feeling pain of the other or empathy may be seen in that way. As it is said by one member of Young Civilians, Şehadet Çitil, their understanding of the citizenship relies on non-privileged but equal citizenship with differences.³⁷ It can also be considered as

³⁶ This interpretation is done by the light of Çayır, Kenan (2002). “Toplumsal Sahnenin Yeni Aktörleri: Yeni Sosyal Hareketler”, *Yeni Sosyal Hareketler*, Kenan Çayır (ed.), İstanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları. P.30-31-32. Also, this analysis done by Asst.Prof.Dr. Yıldız Silier while we are talking on this study.

³⁷ Appendix A-Interview III, P. 94.

a game like activity, if we adopt Arendtian look that one characteristic of political game is the “interaction among equal citizens with different viewpoints”.³⁸

CHAPTER II: YOUNG CIVILIANS AS A NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT IN TURKEY

After evaluating the new social movements in the context of the changing world and their addressing on how politics should be done, in the first part of second chapter, it will be concentrated on the context, the political atmosphere and main issues of debate in 1990s and 2000s in Turkey’s political culture to understand the Young Civilians movement. Such a movement’s emergence also gives knowledge about mutual transformation and interrelation between movements and political structure. Here, it will be relied on Touraine’s view that “Emergence of new social movements symbolizes the transformation of the relationship between social movements and political structure.”³⁹ In this respect, it will be looked at the relevant aspects of changing political culture in Turkey such as the historical context as coming to the spreading of non-governmental organizations and identity politics and emphasis on civil society in 1990s and emergence of new social movements in Turkey in the last twenty years. And also, it will be concentrated on other new social movements with similar concerns, values and organization. This will allow to evaluate Young Civilians as a part of broader “structure”. Because, these diverse movements have something different than identity movements emerged after the 1980s: the plurality both in politics they do, defend and structure. What’s more, they put a flashlight on living together with “differences”.

What’s more, in the second part of the second chapter, it will be looked at Young Civilians movement, considering it as a new social movement, what their activities are and how they define themselves. How they define themselves will also show what kind of

³⁸ Tully, James, “The Agonic Freedom of Citizens”, *Economy and Society*, Volume 28 Number 2, May 1999, p.162.

³⁹ Ibid. As quoted from Touraine, Alain (1992) , “Beyond Social Movements” ,*Theory, Culture and Society*, vol.52, p.142–143.

politics they defend and their view about political activity. After that, new social movements with similar concerns will be briefly described. That is to say, these new social movements are new in some contexts, but what is also crucial as this is that they all as a new social movements directs attention to plurality. And lastly, Young Civilians movement will be evaluated by referring to their action of conscience, feeling pain of the other , “empathy” politics as a way of political activity including agonic dimension as referred by James Tully. What’s more, this analysis will lead to a similarity between ethical dialogue of Gurevitch and Young Civilians’ conversation (*muhabbet*) dialogue.

II-1: CONTEXT, POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE AND MAIN ISSUES OF DEBATE IN 1990s AND 2000s

In recent years in Turkey, what’s witnessed is the increase in civil society organizations and civil society based politics. As a part of being such politics, new social movements such as the ecological, feminist movements, peace movements and movements addressing to headscarf issue in universities, minority rights movements and Face up and Research to Social Events Association (*Toplumsal Olayları Araştırma ve Yüzleşme Derneği*) has also emerged. These movements have gained importance in the public arena.

Also, these movements are different than the movements of the past. That is to say, these new movements are differing both from the labour movements of the past and the 1980s’ ‘identity’ movements such as Islamist movement and Kurdish movement. Although Sefa Şimşek in his article *New Social Movements In Turkey since the 1980s* defines them as identity movements, they may be considered as new social movements, or struggles for recognition as Fraser named. However, Young Civilians Movement and the new social movements that are addressed in this study have a difference from these movements. This difference is that identity movements maybe evolve to cultural domination of a group and

may ignore intradivisions within the group itself and issues of redistribution⁴⁰ Furthermore, “the new reflexive sociations” as it will be discussed later differ from them in terms of organization, values, way of doing politics. So that, their social base includes more diverse groups coming together in one topic rather than being a full member of the group. Their organization is non hierarchical and way of doing politics is civil society based rather than identity oriented.

However, the analysis of new social movements that are considered in this study, cannot be seperated from the state-society relationship and citizenship debates that are existed in these years in Turkey. Because, these are also calling attention to a shift in strong state tradition and a change in the meaning of modernity.⁴¹ Additionally, they address to the diversity of cultural citizenship. That means, it becomes possible to question the ordinary understanding of citizenship or problematization of citizenship as just having a say in the elections via movements calling for diversity that are existing in the cultural.⁴² In addition to that, I have to look at in what context these movements have emerged. Because, social change and the movements are inextricably linked. In that respect, globalization and change in the meaning of civil society takes a crucial part for us.

By following Nilüfer Göle, it can be stated that after the 1980s, with the impact of social actors and movements, there has been a change in the ‘political culture’⁴³ of Turkey. “This change can be seen in three levels: change of political discourse, change in the relationship between state and social actors, and to what degree this change in the relationship between state and social actors is shaped and expressed by the side of political

⁴⁰ Fraser, Nancy, “Rethinking Recognition”, *New Left Review* 3, May-June 2000.full text available at <http://newleftreview.org/?view=2248>. (15.November.2009)

⁴¹ These two interpretations are done by the light of Keyman, F., İçduygu A. Globalization, “Civil Society and Citizenship:Actors,Boundaries And Discourses”, *Citizenship Studies*, Vol.7,No.2, 2003. P.219.

⁴² This interpretation is done by the light of Keyman, F., İçduygu A. Globalization, “Civil Society and Citizenship:Actors,Boundaries And Discourses”, *Citizenship Studies*, Vol.7,No.2, 2003. P.231.

⁴³ In this dissertation, I will follow Göle’s definition of political culture as referring to the interaction between social movements and political parties. Göle, Nilüfer (2000), “80 Sonrası Politik Kültür: Yükselen Değerler”, *Melez Desenler*, Metis Yayınları, p.37.

parties.”⁴⁴ Considering the first level, i.e change in the political discourse, it can be encountered with changes both in the style and the content of it. Within the 1980s, the manner of the style of the political discourse has become more tolerable in respect to those who are not sharing the same political attitude. Also, a transition from the questioning of the system and the oppositions to the regime to the discussions of the performances about whether diverse political views and even diverse life styles can live together or not can be seen. What’s more, violence against women, individual freedom of gay and lesbians and headscarf issue of university students that derived from polarizing discourses that label the “other” as “irrational”, “backward” have started to be criticized in the public sphere. Coming to the second level change in the political culture, it would be possible to point out that a search for pluralist understanding of civil society as compared to before can be seen. Before the 1980s, dominant culture was shaped by polarization of right and left ideologies. Besides, again before the 1980s, main method for social and political transformation was claimed to be both by leftists and nationalists. However, after the 1980s, the axis of political transformation has shifted from the state to society. At that point, it should be reminded that, the relationship between state and civil society in Turkey had followed state’s dominance until the post 1980s.

In this respect, if we look at the 1980 -2000s’ Turkey’s political history, there has been lots of important turning points.

Firstly, at the year 1980, there was a military coup d’etat which was justified to end at anarchy and polarizations of the 1970s. Also, new government was established and new constitution had been announced. With this constitution, press and union freedom as well as individual rights and freedoms were restricted.⁴⁵ Leaders of some parties were arrested. That means, military has gained power on politics. National Security Council had been organized

⁴⁴ Ibid, p.37.

⁴⁵ Zürcher, Eric J., (2007), “Modernleşen Türkiye’nin Tarihi”, İstanbul:İletişim Yayınları , p. 409.

and started to work on a new constitution. With this constitution, the freedom of the press and freedom of union, individual rights and freedom had been restricted. After a referendum, this new constitution was accepted. Also, acceptance of new law for political parties came after that period. At this period, politicians, who are active after the September 1980, have been forbidden. In order to construction of new parties, approval of National Security Council was needed. At the end of the 1980, only four political parties were permitted to be on the political arena. These were Social Democracy Party (SODEP), Big Turkey Party (BTP), Motherland Party(ANAP) and Nationalist Democracy Party (MDP). At the end, ANAP won the elections. Later, the leader of ANAP, Turgut Özal became the president of Turkey. At the following years, while the Turkey's main problem was the economical, the society and economy underwent a transformation.⁴⁶

Secondly, at the 1997, February 28, National Security Council had announced a memorandum. The subject of the memorandum was the threat of political Islam. At this period's government was coming from right wing party. The reason of the memorandum was that that periods' prime minister Erbakan had made trips to Islamic countries. Also, he organized a dinner to sheikh of cults.⁴⁷

In addition to that:

“Turkey tried to maintain its strict control over all kinds of social movements and organizations until the end of the decade. It was only by the late 1980s that Turkey began to tolerate the existance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with different cultural and ideological orientations and their activities... Since the mid 1980s, the most widespread movements have been Kurdish ethnic nationalism, Islamism, feminism, the Alevi cultural movement, environmentalism and human right activism.”⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 405-412.

⁴⁷ “28 Şubat Süreci Nedir?”, URL: <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2006/02/12/gnd108.html> (12 February 2006)

⁴⁸ Şimşek, Sefa. “New Social Movements in Turkey”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.5, No.2, Summer 2004, p.112.

In this respect the globalization's impact on Turkey should also be questioned. Because, there has been a global, national, local level change in Turkey in the 1990s as well as change in the civil society can be seen⁴⁹. While the center left and right parties losing their importance both in support and in the meaning of gaining importance, an increasing importance in civil society organizations to cope with problems created in the process of globalization can be seen. The process of economic and cultural globalization can be shown as a reason for that. Because, with such an impact, what is encountered is the extension of the boundaries of politics and change in the state-society and individual relations.⁵⁰ Looking at the changing meaning of politics, it is possible to point out that at the global and historical level an increase in support of civil society organizations for the democratization of society can be seen. In Turkey, after the 1980s, a shift from the state centred politics is perceived in which state acted as independent from society to civil society based new politics in which culture became an important factor.⁵¹ In this shift, impact of globalization process is important. Because, it is encountered with the new actors, new identity claims and alternative modernities challenging the meaning of modernity and strong state tradition in Turkey. Furthermore, Turkey's entrance to membership process of European Union was also crucial in such a questioning of both Turkish secular modernization and strong state tradition as well as questioning of citizenship. Here, it should be reminded that state-society relationship and citizenship are inextricably linked. This means there has been a need for the democratization of state-society relations and for Turkish politics civil society has an important place.

Last but not least, with the 1999 earthquake which happened in the Marmara region of Turkey in which thousands of people died changed people's attitude around state and it can be

⁴⁹ Keyman, F., İçduygu A. Globalization, "Civil Society and Citizenship:Actors,Boundaries And Discourses", *Citizenship Studies*, Vol.7,No.2, 2003. p.219.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.220.

⁵¹Ibid, p.223.

stated that people lost their trust on hierarchical organizations. The help was coming from civil organizations before the hierarchical organizations. In such an environment, civil society organizations has gained importance.

In addition to that, in Turkish political history another important turning point was 2002 general elections. Because, we encounter with the leadership of a right wing party which may be defined to include the global, individual and Muslim elements. This may also show us that people become to express themselves through identities. Also, after Abdullah Gül, whose wife is headscarved and who comes from a right wing party, became president of Turkey in 2007, there has been a rise in militarism and secularism. 2007 e- memorandum of the Turkish General Staff comes after that.

Last but not least, in the emergence of new social movements besides the dates addressed above, there is an another important date. This was the January 19, 2007 in which Hrant Dink was murdered by radical nationalists. So, these dates are crucial in the emergence of the new social movements that are addressed in this study.

Returning back to the change of political culture after the 1980s, it can be summarized that there has been both a change in the strong state tradition and a declining support in political parties to solve the problems caused by globalization, modernity and alternative claims to modernity in Turkey has been becoming more visible.⁵² Also, rather than ideological polarizations existed in the 1970s, in the 1980s we see plurality of claims coming from the societal sphere such as Islamicist movement, liberal movement, leftist movements are becoming visible. However, as compared before, they were open to new groups to participate.

“ If the liberal movement represented the economic dimension of the autonomization of civil society, the Islamicist movement represented the cultural dimension... The leftist movements of the post-1980s period

⁵² Ibid.

constituted yet another dimension of autonomization of social groups. The leftist approach during the decade was less utopian and more ideological; protest was pragmatic and not visionary.”⁵³

As a result, what is experienced is cultural, economic autonomization of civil society from state after the 1980s. Also, what is encountered with is the existence of movements calling attention to the women issue, ecology, gender differences which contributed to the emergence of diverse identities in civil society. But, it should also be reminded that this does not mean that the distinction and discussion between left and right has lost its meaning and disappeared. Rather, now it can be mentioned about the complexity of the meanings of left and right. Because, as Melucci stated, in post-industrial societies inequalities are not only depending upon economic ones, rather these societies have witnessing the increasing “unification” of cultural, political and economic structures. So, the movements of this era are not only struggling in order to gain an advantage. Cultural and symbolic aspects of struggles are more dominant.⁵⁴

So, the new social movements came into scene in such a context. What makes these movements “different” or “new” is their emphasis on participatory democracy, their call for diverse groups into action for democratization of society by civil society based politics. What’s more, other than just focusing on labor issues, they address to the identities and diverse lifestyles. By doing that they also deconstruct or problematize the way identities are constructed. In that respect, it can be claimed that they differ from identity movements.

Briefly looking at the student movements in Turkey between the years 1960-1970 without concentrating on the student clubs or organizations and the actions of that period, it would be possible to claim that youth’s “real duty” was to bring consciousness to the working class. Or in other words, the aim was to provide the working class to be a class for itself

⁵³ Göle, Nilüfer (2000), “80 Sonrası Politik Kültür: Yükselen Değerler”, *Melez Desenler*, Metis Yayınları, p.37.

⁵⁴ Melucci, A. (2002), “Çağdaş Hareketlerin Sembolik Meydan Okuması”, *Yeni Sosyal Hareketler*, Kenan Çayır. (ed.), İstanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları. P.188.

which is a class in itself. This years' main debates were shaped by the assumption that improvement is economic so the economic problems should be solved. Also the main issues were the critique of capitalism, debate of social democracy and socialism. So, between the 1965 and the 1967 economic problems were viewed from economic perspective.⁵⁵ In 1968 and 1969, after the learning of revolutionary world view, the struggle for power was the aim. The youth called to share power for junta to get the power. However, after a while, when this had not happened, youth prepared to talk on behalf of the working class.⁵⁶ What is crucial here is the power oriented and ideological movements.

Additionally, by following Sefa Şimşek, briefly looking at the 1980s' identity movements or recognition of struggles, there exists Islamist movement, Alevi movement, Kurdish movement and feminism. Considering two of them as an example, firstly, Kurdish movement as emerged in 1960s in association with Marxist groups and questioning the unitary structure of Turkish nation state, "after the 1980s, it began to stress Kurdish traditional, cultural aspects turning them into politically recharged symbols."⁵⁷ Similarly, Islamist movement "raises symbolic issues such as veiling. It also demanded religious and cultural recognition in the public sphere and tried to create an Islamic identity and way of life."⁵⁸

As an example of critique of strong-state tradition and problematization of such a modernization that considers citizenship as just having a saying in the elections and excluding some groups like minorities by discrimination from political dialogues or dominant practices of governance can also be seen in the discourses of Young Civilians Movement. In their book, with a sense of humour and irony, they had prepared a university entrance exam questions

⁵⁵ These interpretations are done by the light of Karadeniz, Harun (1975), *Olaylı Yıllar ve Gençlik*, İstanbul: May Yayınları. p. 240.

⁵⁶ Ibid. P:241.

⁵⁷ Şimşek, Sefa , "New Social Movements in Turkey Since 1980", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.5. No.2, Summer 2004.p.134.

⁵⁸ Ibid.123.

which involves a critique of the distinction between the people and citizens. To illustrate, one of these questions is like that:

“ Which of these below can fill the blank of the sentence?

I vote in elections and a shepherd too,....., is so valuable that it can not be ceased to ignorant people.

- a) the sheep
- b) the stick
- c) the chair
- d) the royalty
- e) the democracy”⁵⁹

Another example may be given from one of the activities of Young Civilians. The Republican meeting which is organized by some associations such as “Kemalist Thinking Association” (*Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği*) in Turkey on April 2007 took place in Ankara at Anıtkabir with a critique about presidency elections. Their opposition was about the candidate, Abdullah Gül, who was coming from a right wing party and whose wife is headscarved. Young Civilians read an announcement in Istanbul in front of the model of Anıtkabir (Ataturk’s mausoleum) in a park called Miniaturk where there are miniature models of several monuments in Turkey. In this announcement, they were saying that:

“We are badly uncomfortable about being seen as a potential threat for the regime because of our thoughts, look, race, sect, faith, lifestyle or even our mother's or siblings' lifestyles; troubled about not be able to become eligible citizen in no way; about the fear that if let be, we would run away to a drummer or zurna player; troubled about being depicted, even in the coup plans, simply by a nickname "chorus", passive mass of people who can just pour into streets with a simple note”

Also, their use of popular songs’ lyrics and combining them with social issues, such as “If Kurds and Turks cannot live together in this world, then, go down with the world” can be seen as a symbolic challenge to the language of the mainstream ideology.

⁵⁹ Genç Siviller, (2007). *İçeride Eylem Var!* , İstanbul: Hayy Kitap, p:44.

II-2: BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUNG CIVILIANS MOVEMENT

To begin with, Young Civilians movement is a new social movement which evolved in 2000's Turkey. Their main values are defending democracy, peace, justice and transculturality. In other words, as one member of it Hayri İnce said during our interview, democracy, conscience(*vicdan*), freedom, rights are the values that are holding them together. Also, they do politics to transform the society, affect politics, create empathy and as a therapy. In this respect, they are against military coup d'états as well as guardianship of anybody. As Şehadet Çitil said:

“They [Young Civilians] do not accept guardianship of anybody, they refuse to accept the guardianship in case it may be causing the unfair, torture, unrest, or it may break the balance of the nation, or it may give negative effects to democracy, but we do not mean ethical side, they do not accept the guardianship of any institution or bodies.”⁶⁰

Young Civilians have a website called as www.gencsiviller.net, where it is possible to find the activities and actions they made, the announcements and some columns written by some members. They have two publications, named as “Young Civilians are Unhappy (*Genç Siviller Rahatsız!*)”, “How to Devastate Ergenekon (*Ergenekon Nasıl Çökertilir?*)”. As for their financial resources, they arrange Money among each other and accept donations from academicians, businessman, friends.

Looking at what “Young Civilian” refers to, how this name emerged, it is visible to see that it has emerged with a declaration about the Kurdish issue in May 19, 2006. However, the seeds of this group can be traced back to the organization of an alternative May 19 (the national youth festival day) youth festival in Van in 2000. This alternative celebration was pioneered by METU (Middle East Technical University) Communication Society and included the participation of young people from different universities. It should be remarked that 1999 earthquake in Turkey contributed to important changes about the public's

⁶⁰ Appendix A- Interview II, p.88.

perception of the state and state's inability to cope with the aftermath of the earthquake. After 2000, in each May 19, these celebrations continued to exist in different cities such as Istanbul, Rize, Konya and Ankara. These gatherings which brought young people from various social groups and intellectuals together aimed to search for the possibilities of constructing a new, creative, opposing discourse and a local, honest, democratic position.⁶¹ Young Civilians name was firstly expressed in a manifesto called "Let's Save the '19th May's from Stadiums", in which it is stated that " these stadium ceremonies existed only in totalitarian countries and they are old-fashioned ceremonies."⁶² After the declaration of this manifesto there were several criticisms of it in many newspapers. However, "Young Civilians are Uncomfortable" has emerged as a reference to the headline of the Kemalist newspaper Cumhuriyet as "Young Army Officers are Uncomfortable". This headline was referring to the unease of the Turkish army with the ruling religious party AKP, having an implicit reference to the need for a military coup d'etat.

Here, by looking at when and why the name of the movement emerged can also give us information about what their civil society based and action of conscience mean. Because, remarking that Young Civilians movement is evolved around the Turkey's political and social problems after the 1990s and 2000s, their activities can be interpreted as a referance to the state's inability to cope with societal crises after the 1999 Earthquake, Hrant Dink's assasination in 2007 and the debates around the 2007 president elections in Turkey. These dates will be referred in relation to activities of Young Civilians movement to understand it. . Also, it is crucial to note that, "Since the 1980s, but especially in the 1990s and today, hegemony of the secular and state centric nature of Turkish modernity has been challenged by

⁶¹ "Who are Young Civilians?" , www.gencsiviller.net, April 6, 2008.
http://www.gencsiviller.net/haber.php?haber_id=40 [May 13, 2008]

⁶² Ibid.

alternative claims to identity, politics and society and increasing presence of new actors with different societal visions and political discourses in Turkish politics.”⁶³

One example of critique of Turkish modernization can be seen in Young Civilians movement’s discourses. For example, they ask:

“ Which of these below makes us to reach contemporary civilization level?

- a) listening to classical music
- b) waiving flag in Republican meetings
- c) exercising balet
- d) being against coup d’etat and memorandum note
- e) Slogan of ‘Turkey is secular and it will remain secular’”⁶⁴

Besides, looking at how Young Civilians defines themselves as stated below:

“We are democrats. This is a big assertion... we, all come together around a common discourse by following our consciences in the end. We are collectivized around this discourse by the situation of not feeling at home anywhere, of rootlessness and of discomfort. We claim that we put our consciences into play of politics. We are dissidents but our dissidency knows calling to account with the morality of insurrection and giving account with the morality and responsibility. There is an established system in Turkey surviving by pitting blacks against one another. We can destroy the balanced mechanism this power block grounded on by attending to each others’ rights diagonally, and by disconcerting memorizations. A muslim should say “in 1915 action of Bogazlıyan’s governor does not represent me, but Bogazlıyan’s muftu who was declared fetva against massacre could represent me. It is needed Sunnies to see the Alevi’s problems first of any others and attend to them. It is also needed Alevis not to construct Sunnies as “the other” by relying on the protection of secular sensitivities and power. It is necessary for a socialist to recognize the discrimination against headscarf turning into a kind of racism, and to speak in a strong and deep voice. Otherwise, by the effect of

⁶³ Keyman, F, İç Duygu, A, “Globalization, Civil Society and Citizenship in Turkey: Actors, Boundaries and Discourses”, *Citizenship Studies*, vol.7,No.2, 2003.p. 223.

⁶⁴ Young Civilians (2007), “İçeride Eylem Var!”, İstanbul: Hayy Kitap, p:45.

this deep distrust among social sections we can not manage both living together and democracy .”⁶⁵

What they say about “What Kind of Turkey they want” as stated earlier, directs attention to that today’s civil society based politics is much more important than the capturing of state and to be in a continuing dialogue and recognition of differences via such ethical dialogue which will be explained later.

Besides, when what kind of politics they defend is looked at, it is possible to claim that they are doing politics as a part of everyday life, for the good life and even they find a connection between the good life and good politics as they said. That is to say, it is an existential thing for them. Their aim is not just restricted to good law system or good state but also for good society. ⁶⁶ With this concern, they are doing politics just for its own sake or just because it is a valuable thing. In this respect, they are against the struggle to get authority and they consider politics as something open ending and struggle is continuous. ⁶⁷

This movement can be evaluated in terms of new social movements which are concerned with the issues of democratization and human rights. Because, in Turkey new social movements are shaped both by new political consciousness, new economic ideology, international impact on the changing economic and political organization and circumstances that are caused by societal crises and cannot be solved only by state.⁶⁸ Therefore, in this part political atmosphere and main issues of debate in political agenda of Turkey will be questioned from different aspects. In this respect, without entering into the discussions about civil society and non-governmental organizations in Turkey and the discussion of their attitude towards democratization, the processes which paved way to emergence of new social

⁶⁵ “Who are Young Civilians?” , www.gencsiviller.net, April 6, 2008.
http://www.gencsiviller.net/haber.php?haber_id=40 [May 13, 2008]

⁶⁶ Appendix A. p. 59.

⁶⁷ Appendix A.p.61-62.

⁶⁸ Sanlı, Leyla (2003), “Türkiye’deToplumsal Hareketler”, *Toplumsal Hareketler Konuşuyor*, İstanbul, Alan Yayınları. p.16.

movements that are doing civil- society based politics will be analyzed and why of it will be questioned.

Young Civilians made a lot of activities and actions since they came into the public arena in that name. This movement which has began as a social responsibility project after the 1999 earthquake and as a group discussing about the May 19 celebrations, which they see that it includes ‘fetishism among the bodies of youngsters’ evolved into an anti-militarist movement⁶⁹, in their activities, they addressed peace, democracy and criticised nationalistic ideology about Kurdish question. In all of their actions, what they were directed and directing attention to was and is the meaning of being civilian and democrat, the critique of the coup d’etat in the past of Turkey as well as the “deep state” and “gangs” in it. They also by their action of conscience emphasized minority rights, discriminations concerning ethnic minorities and gender differences, importance of ecology. Besides, as the political and everyday agenda of Turkey changed, as parallel to that, they have made some actions and activities which have been directing attention to peace, anti-militarism. In other words, what they are against is war, militarism, authoritarianism, racism and nationalist ideology. Their activity called, “ Neither coup d’etat, nor coup d’etat” referring critically to some groups which were judging the danger of a military coup d’etat and the danger of sharia on the same level. Genç Siviller were referring to the past of Turkey and criticised April 27 memorandum as being barrier against democracy. For them there was only one danger for democracy: the military coup d’etat.

Their activities were about “the deep state” debate, construction of civil constitution and change of 1982 constitution. They also discussed how to stop the military coup d’etats by following an example from the world (Italy) as well as they made activities concerning Kurdish cultural rights. Ironically, they made activities such as “Good Children of the Republic (*Cumhuriyet’in İyi Çocukları*)”⁷⁰ and “ These are the tearful children of the

⁶⁹ Appendix A: p.53.

⁷⁰ http://www.gencsiviller.net/haber.php?haber_id=100 (27 October 2008)

Republic (*Cumhuriyet'in gözü yaşlı çocuklarıydı onlar*)”⁷¹ in the anniversary of the establishment of Turkish Republic they made activities concerning people “ignored” and “loved” by the Republic. Whereas with the good citizens people who are taking national identity and public good before their individual identity is referred, by the “ignored” citizens or civils who are murdered- such as Hrant Dink, Uğur Mumcu, Deniz Gezmiş- because of their thoughts or their “difference” is referred. In these activities, this people are represented and their life story is told. These activities can be interpreted as deconstruction the mainstream understanding of civic republican citizenship and being “eligible” (*makbul*) citizen.

Maybe one of their most visible activities is the organization of an activity called as “Democracy Class”⁷² in which democracy and barriers against democracy were discussed. In some of their organizations, the places of activities have choosen symbolically referring to the past. For instance, they made an activity at Yassıada, being a place government of 1960 had been in trial and prime minister and some ministers of that period had been executed and others put in prison, in 50th anniversary of May 27 in Yassıada. In there, what they suggested was that the “Make Yassıada a democracy museum.”⁷³

When Young Civilians’ main values considered, it can be possible to say that they are struggling for the democratization of civil society and defending for plurality by also putting cultural diversity into the centre of their debate. Also, democracy defined for them as being able to struggle for the “other”. In this respect, attending each other’s rights and “differences” crosssectionally is crucial value for them. What’s more, by their action of conscience or feeling pain of the other they are addressing to injustices and discriminations. For them, you are democrat and making action of conscience if you are able to defend the rights of the

⁷¹ http://www.gencsiviller.net/haber.php?haber_id=17 (29 October 2008)

⁷² http://www.gencsiviller.net/haber.php?haber_id=36 (5 April 2008)

⁷³ http://www.gencsiviller.net/haber.php?haber_id=167(20 May 2009)

one's who are seen as "the strange". In this respect, their cultural belongingness and politics transcend identities as being Kurd, Armenian, Muslim. The activities that are addressed in this chapter can be an example of it. Also, their way of doing politics differs from identity politics so that as one member from Young Civilians said : "...[The identity politics is a disaster. The largest enemy of the politics is identity politics. There is a side making yourself sensitive for your own matter and you are likely to forget about larger troubles." Instead, as the actions of them shows their politics addressing to the intersubjectivity. Additionally, "being an opponent requires questioning the injustices with the morality of revolt and give an account for what you have done with the morality of responsibility." ⁷⁴

It should also be reminded that as a new social movement they use a new form of protest: sense of humour. In this sense they directly address people's feelings. As told by one member of the movement:

"...the humour is also reaching those who hate you most. Humour is a very global language. It is creating a physical effect. An expression is creating an effect and causing others to laugh. It is very excellent of course, it also means that it is understood. It is being told from one to another (from ear to ear). A simple humour is told it is reaching to every farrest place with almost speed of light. You are talking to the society, you also have to try to tell your intention in a good way."

By such a creative form of protest, they call people into dialogue and create a public awareness. In this sense, they can also be considered different from the movements of the past. They use popular song lyrics or sayings in their critiques in order to subvert the mainstream discourses. Also, the questions concerning the critique of Turkish modernization as stated in the second section of chapter two can be an exemplary of it.

What's more, if from whom they separate themselves is looked at, it is clear to see that they are separating themselves from those who consider themselves as leftist by defending

⁷⁴ Genç Siviller (2007). *İçeride Eylem Var!* , İstanbul: Hayy Kitap. P. 10-11.

statism and Kemalism. Last but not least, as one member from Young Civilians Movement stated, they also follow the actions of two civil society based new social movements from the world. One of them is “Moveon” which is a family of organizations in the United States and which has made activities against the war on Iraq, against the privatization of social security at the national level and organized campaigns around the healthcare and energy, environment issues. Also, they are against the control on the internet by big companies. They also organized the Black community under “the color of change”⁷⁵. In this respect, this movement looks like the Young Civilians movement. The second one is the Attac which is an international anti- globalization movement which stands “for the regulation of financial markets, closure of tax havens, introduction of global taxes to finance global public goods, cancellation of developing countries’ debt, fair trade rules and limits to free trade and unregulated capital flows”.⁷⁶ As for what they want is that, “Attac believes that the list of primary political and economic goals should include improvement of living conditions, development of democracy and self-determination, effective protection of nature. Attac stands for an ecological, solidary and peaceful economic world order. The enormous wealth generated by the planet must be fairly distributed between its entire people!”⁷⁷ This movement seems as struggling for the redistribution in a new way, directing attention to the financial aspect of globalization. What is crucial is that they put people at the center of their struggle. They are a global social movement.

II-3: BRIEF OVERVIEW OF OTHER NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS WITH SIMILAR CONCERNS

In this section, Young Civilians Movement will be briefly compared to with the movements such as Say Stop to Racism and Militarism(*Irkcılığa ve Milliyetçiliğe Dur de*), We are not free yet (*Henüz Özgür Olamadık*) and Interrogating the Darkness (*Karanlığı*

⁷⁵ “Celebrating ten years of People Power”, <http://pol.moveon.org/10years/>

⁷⁶ “What is Attac?”, <http://www.attac.org/en/what-attac>

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Sorguluyoruz) Movement, Global Peace And Justice Coalition (*Küresel Bak*), Coalition of 70 million Steps Against Takeover (*Darbeye Karşı 70 milyon adım Koalisyonu*) , Face Up and Research to Social Events Association (*Yüzleşme Derneği*). What is aimed in that is to look at the action of conscience closer and new way of doing politics and protests in the era that we live in.

The reason why these movements are chosen is that they are addressing to the new forms of politics and recognition of difference. They give importance to defend universal and libertarian values such as democracy, justice, peace. Not only they have similar concerns as such, but also what they oppose to or challenge and their forms of protest intersects. Also by following Offe, looking at values, themes, forms of movement and actors, it can be stated all these movements can be characterized as being against racist, militarist and discriminatory politics and war as well as racist, discriminatory language existing in some practices of everyday agenda. For instance, Young Civilians movement made actions against censorships on the Internet such as the ban on the *you tube* because of the existence of the videos against Ataturk and ‘Love or Leave it’⁷⁸, slogans existed on the mosques in the liberation day of Istanbul by governance of Istanbul.⁷⁹

What’s more, they all are doing civil-society based politics and transcultural politics without concentrating on one identity as a homogeneous group or ignoring the differences in the identity movements itself. Besides, their activities and emergences have importance in the debates and political atmosphere of Turkey in 1990s and 2000s. The brief overview of these new social movements with similar concerns has a substantial role in understanding in which atmosphere Young Civilians Movement have emerged, what they opposed and trying to challenge, when, why and how their way of doing ‘conscientious’ politics have developed in Turkish political culture. Furthermore, these movements are new social movements that are

⁷⁸ It is a nationalist discourse that operates through otherizing one group as “stranger” and suspend it from the country.

⁷⁹ http://www.gencsiviller.net/haber.php?haber_id=193 (21 Kasım 2009)

calling attention to doing politics with empathy, conscience and conversation. In this sense, their form of mobilization differs from “old” social movements. While they are questioning discrimination, racism, militarism, nationalism they also call attention and question the meanings attributed to nationalism, racism, race and nation.

Not only they question these but also they put a flashlight on Turkey’s past in terms of military interventions, 1982 constitution and practices including racism (not only racism relying on race but also cultural racism⁸⁰), nationalism, headscarf issue, discriminations based on gender which goes in Turkey’s agenda.

Say stop to Racism and Nationalism is a civil society based movement and as it can be understood from the name it criticizes the racism and nationalism which evolved in Turkey in the recent years. They are against the racism’s and nationalism’s becoming something ordinary and justified in institutional discourses. It also directs attention to Hrant Dink’s assassination and underlying gangs behind it as well as the racist and nationalist logic lying behind the ‘race’, ‘nation’, ‘fatherland’ and ‘ethnic discrimination’.⁸¹ It defends living with our differences together. The members also cooperate with other movements with similar concerns.

‘We have not been free yet’ movement can be considered as civil society based, consisting of headscarved women, which defends freedom by holding each other’s rights by cross sectionally. That is to say, as they claimed their main problem is censorship on people’s lives, appearances, sayings and thoughts. They are not only concentrating around the headscarf issue in Turkey but rather they also direct attention to the definition of “real citizens”. In addition to that, by putting freedom at the center of debate, they address to the

⁸⁰ Briefly speaking, by cultural racism we mean here that ‘race’ is socially constructed and complex phenomenon. And, race is not just something about the categorization of brain skull or related to color of the people, but also racism is something existing in subtle forms such as fascination, exoticisation and categorisation of “the people” via cultural and national identity.

⁸¹ <http://www.khaos.info/serbest-kursu/9915-irkciliga-ve-milliyetcilige-dur-de/> [21 April 2009]

ethnic discrimination, gender discrimination, minority rights.⁸² In this respect they say that they will not be free even the headscarf issue has been solved until the censorship on Kurds', Alevi's, minorities are solved.⁸³ What is crucial in this movement is that, they do not only question the "entrance" of headscarves to universities, rather they problematize the questioning of freedom itself through a way of dressing.⁸⁴ They also look at the starting point of this forbidden process as a class issues. So they address to the modernization process and as their social base shows us they direct attention to multiple modernities by problematizing what the boundaries of political are. Through the issue of citizenship they see a parallel with Kurds, Alevis and Armenians which are not considered as "eligible". Lastly, it can be said that they put a flash light on the discussion of the university by such a politics that says 'we have not been free yet'.

'Interrogating The Darkness' is a civil society based movement in which Bosphorus University Students come together and by also cooperating with some unions and leftist political parties such as Emep, Disk, Genç Sen and other new social movements such as 'Young Civilians' and 'Say Stop to Racism and Nationalism', standing against nationalism, ethnic discriminations and making a voice to "the unseen", "repressed". As similar to Young Civilians movement, they made activities in this respect as parallel to the changes in the political agenda of Turkey. For instance, as they said, after the Hrant Dink's murder in Turkey they came together, questioned nationalism and make arguments about them as well as they made some activities such as organization of some panels referring to militarism and discriminations. Crucially, it can be said that the name of Interrogating the Darkness emerged with reference to Rakel Dink's, who is the wife of Hrant Dink, saying in the funeral that : "Brothers, there is nothing to do without questioning the darkness which created a murderer

⁸² Akbulut, N. , Yılmaz H. , Kaplan H. (2008) "Söz Konusu Özgürlükse Hiçbir şey Teferruat Değildir.", *Henüz Özgür Olmadık*. İstanbul: Hayy Kitap. p.13-14.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid. p.82.

out of a baby.” After that, this movement stressed the calling of the forgotten to the present. They also made an announcement in which they stressed that they did not forget the September 6-7 issues, and some discriminatory applications done among minorities in the past which can be interpreted as a calling of social or collective memory. Additionally, they criticized racism, militarism, nationalism.⁸⁵ It should also be pointed out that this movement’s beginning dates back to “Bosphorus to Diyarbakır” in 2007. They aim to create public opinion in Bosphorus and as one of the people from them said, “To get social opposition and academy together” and not “represent” the people in Diyarbakır but to carry their views to Bosphorus⁸⁶. Like other social movements pointed out in this study, with similar concerns and values, later they organized a march against deaths in Tuzla under the name of ‘We Demand Brotherhood (*Kardeşlik İstiyoruz*)’, made actions against discrimination concerning minorities which is also told in Appendix B and supported the headscarved women in their actions. Looking at their social base, it is possible to say that in an humanitarian sense “... the people of very different, completely different minded people all around, those who are from different ideas and thoughts came together, different identities and different memberships of bodies came all together.” Also, people from different clubs, such as Fine Arts, people from different traditions, different cultural backgrounds and traditions come together.⁸⁷ In this sense, they seem similar to Young Civilians movement especially through their action of conscience. Also, it can be claimed that in the practise of a political action, everybody is attending with their own individual identity –as they stated in Appendix B- or difference as well as it is horizontally organized. With this respect, thinking it with the fact that this movement evolves around a different name, different form as the agenda of Turkey changed and their social base,

⁸⁵ Çobanlı, Kudret, “Bogaziçili Öğrenciler Karanlığı Sorguluyor”, URL: <http://bianet.org/bianet/insan-haklari/93386-bogazicili-ogrenciler-karanligi-sorguluyor>, 15 March 2007.

⁸⁶ Kara, Senem, Korkmaz, Özge, “Militarizm, Milliyetçilik, Toplumsal Cinsiyet (Devam)”, URL: <http://www.savaskarsitlari.org/arsiv.asp?ArsivTipID=1&ArsivAnaID=40077>, 16 July 2007. (16 July 2007)

⁸⁷ Appendix B-p.107.

their way of doing politics maybe seen as a radical democracy. So that, in radical democracy different identity situations may come together in one topic to struggle. Also, radical democracy addresses multiplicity of subordination situation.⁸⁸

Global Peace And Justice Coalition (*Küresel Bak*) is a social movement addressing to anti-capitalist struggle and aims to “organize the unorganized”⁸⁹ against war. By putting being against war into the center of their struggle, they address to the occupation of Afghanistan and the aggression on Iraq by criticisizing the policies of George W. Bush. Additionally, this coalition as being against capitalism and against war and other injustices in the world, organized a music festival called as “Rock for Peace (*Barişa Rock*)” in the year 2000s.⁹⁰

The Coalition of 70 million Steps Against Coup d’etat (*Darbeye Karşı 70 milyon adım Koalisyonu*) a new form of establishment, doing civil society based actions. It composes of various people and various civil society organizations and political parties. All comes together in the common purpose: against the coup d’etats. In this respect, they make demonstrations in which they make conscience (*vicdan*) courts by addressing to past coup d’etats of the past such as September 12, February 28, March 12.⁹¹

Lastly, Face Up and Research to Social Events Association (*Toplumsal Olayları Araştırma ve Yüzleşme Derneği*) is a civil society based organization which puts the concepts of peace and brotherhood to the center of their actions, events and defends democracy. They call for confronting the past of Turkish society. By confrontation or facing up, they mean coming up with the errors of the past and heal it.⁹² Also, against official view of history, they compose a new history group and they made activities against any application including

⁸⁸ Mouffe, Chantal (1993), “Democratic Citizenship and the Political Community”, *The Return Of The Political*, London; New York: Verso. p.70-71.

⁸⁹ “Küresel Bak Nedir?” URL:

http://www.kureselbarisveadalet.org//index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=33&Itemid=55

⁹⁰ “Barişa Rock 2003” URL:

http://www.kureselbarisveadalet.org//index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=54&Itemid=126

⁹¹ “Darbeye Karşı 70 Milyon adım Koalisyonu Kimdir?” URL:<http://70milyonadim.wordpress.com/about/>

⁹²“Kuruluş Bildirgesi”, <http://www.yuzlesmedernegi.org/bildirge.asp>

racism and applications concerning minority rights. In this respect, what they aim is to create a consciousness in the society about such issues. Culture and art takes a crucial part in creating such a consciousness. Here, again, a similarity between other movements that are pointed out above and Young Civilians Movement can be found. All these movements put a flashlight on the creation of public consciousness, like Young Civilians to be the conscience of society and doing politics as a way of living by taking democracy as a primary concern.

Taking all these into account, to illustrate from the Kurdish issue, such a similarity with Young Civilians movements and others stated, may be shown with an example quote from Young Civilians can be adequate:

“All the words about Kurdish matter are very obsolete. Even the such words as peace, brotherhood are cliché. However, this matter is concerning millions of people’s life. But, this is a matter which is arrested into a very narrow, very barren left and civil society language. The language of the discussion is like that. We prepared a project text from here ‘ how we can create a social, popular language of peace.”

These movements, that are said up to now in this section, may be interpreted as together directing attention to the creation of a democratic “middle ground “and new ways of doing protest and intersubjectivity. So that, although they address different issues in different tones, ways, they are pointing to the transcultural politics. Also, like different cultures in politics they address to intersubjectivity by cooperating each other in some contexts. In this respect, they are emphasizing the existence of plurality rather than essentialism and just expressing cultural difference.

II-4: EVALUATION OF YOUNG CIVILIANS MOVEMENT

In this section, Young Civilians movement will be tried to be evaluated as a new social movement with a consideration of fundamental characteristics of new social movements as defined by Larana, Johnson and Gusfield. And, the findings will be pointed out as parallel to the comparison of it with other new social movements which are discussed

in the previous chapter. Besides, in order to understand their conscientious (*vicdan*) politics both the Welsh's transculturality and Tully's "agonic freedom of citizens" will be considered. As for their new forms of protest which is conversation (*muhabbet*) language, what will be referred will be Gurevitch's "ethical dialogue." This will also be an important "tool" in understanding of new social movements', that are said in this study, and their creation of a democratic "middle ground".

In the first place, it would be beneficial to remember some fundamental characteristics of Young Civilians movement that are pointed out in the second part of the second chapter. As compared to the class politics of the movements of the past, Young Civilians movement refers to the action of conscience. Rather than aiming to capture the state's power, they are concerned with democratization of civil society. Their key issues and values are peace, justice, cultural citizenship and democracy. What they distinguish from themselves is racists and nationalists. They organize in loose networks and their form of organization is civil society based. As for their social background it is not restricted to a given identity or a group of people. Rather, people from various ethnic or socio-cultural backgrounds come together in order to defend democratization, anti-militarism, anti-racism and anti-nationalism, justice and maybe more crucially, these people unite around their consciences.

In the second place, as different from the recognition struggles or identity politics, what they stress is the feeling pain of the "other" or empathy. As it is seen in "what kind of Turkey they want" in the second part of the second chapter, what they address is to looking after each other's rights cross-sectionally". And as they stressed one does not need to be at the same cultural identity in order to understand Alevi's problems or headscarved women's problems. Rather problems should be owned by civil society. In this respect, for them, your socialist, Armenian, Muslim identity is not important etc. So, with this concern, if Young Civilians Movement's emphasis on the action of conscience, and their virtual 11th president

candidate who is “both Turk and Kurd, a little bit Armenian, Alevi and headscarved women” is taken into account, it is possible to see a transcultural concern. While identity based new social movements direct attention to group specificity and includes members from the same background, Young Civilians movement includes people from diverse ethnic, religious, political backgrounds. So, here it can be stated that struggles of new social movements which are addressing to ‘the politics of recognition’ can be analysed in two aspects: One as being focused on the difference of a specific identity or group and call for recognition of this difference and the second as being focused on feeling the pain of the “other” or empathy ”in a transcultural concern. After that, action of conscience or as it is called transcultural politics is used and will be used as interchangeably. What is meant by “transcultural concern”⁹³, throughout the thesis, refers what is meant by Wolfgang Welsch, 1999. That is to say,

“...the advantage of the transculturality concept over the competing concepts of globalization and particularization... It is able to cover both global and local, universalistic and particularistic aspects, and it does so quite naturally, from the logic of transcultural processes themselves. The globalization tendencies as well as the desire for specificity and particularity can be fulfilled within transculturality... The concept of transculturality sketches a different picture of the relation between cultures. Not one of isolation and of conflict, but one of entanglement, intermixing and commonness. It promotes not separation, but exchange and isolation.”⁹⁴

What’s more, in this respect, what they call or remark is the “ethical dialogue”. So that, Zali Gurevitch in his article about “ethical dialogue” directs attention to the poetic aspect of

⁹³ “Transculturality: the concept of transculturality aims for a multi meshed and inclusive, not separatist and exclusive understanding of culture... Transculturality also contains the potential to transcend our received and supposedly determining monocultural standpoints, and we should make increasing use of these potentials.” Welsch, Wolfgang, “Transculturality: the puzzling form of cultures today”, Featherstone, M. Lash S. (Eds), *Spaces of Culture. City-Nation-World*, Sage Publications, 1999. pp.200-201.

⁹⁴ Welsch, Wolfgang (1999). “Transculturality: the puzzling form of cultures today”, Featherstone, M. Lash S. (Eds), *Spaces of Culture. City-Nation-World*, Sage Publications. p. 205.

dialogue, in which both listening to the “other” and talking take place. Dialogue other than monologue opens up a path to the “other” that is silenced or repressed. It is also a necessary step for the conversation to happen. “A genuine dialogue requires that there be two separate presences, each coming from its own standpoint, expressing and enacting its own particular specificity. To speak of celebrating to the other, therefore, is to call for just such a dialogue, not the self-celebratory monologues that have thus far dominated our understanding and our practices.”⁹⁵ Also, in turn ethics of dialogue includes a practice like turning to a mirror to the repressive side to ‘celebrate the other’ and ‘common purpose’. However, in the ‘poetics of dialogue’ as defined by Gurevitch, with the “utterances that produce meaning and understanding and as creating or giving space” a path to conversation is opened.⁹⁶ It includes talking with the other and “belongs neither to one nor to the other but it is dialogically owned, and exists in passage.”⁹⁷ That is to say, conversation is a channel that goes beyond the dialogue, directs to sociability of the topic. So that, if in dialogue two sides both the I and Other recognizes each other by speaking with their individualities, in conversation the role of the speaker and listener are not separated rather the “multiple interpersonal play” is crucial.⁹⁸ “Conversation is neither an account of individuals, nor a sociality that dissolves individuality, but very state of betweenness, between individuals and sociability, a middle term between a fight over who will become the centre, offering the middle to the other, and putting conversation itself in the middle.”⁹⁹ In this respect, Young Civilians’ conversation (*muhabbet*) language can be seen as similar to that. To see this, it is substantial to look at what they said about it:

“ ...Conversation is very interesting word. As far as it means love of the peoples each other and it also means talking. i.e. Dialogue is something like

⁹⁵ Gurevitch, Zali, “Dialectical Dialogue: The Struggle for speech, repressive silences, and the shift to multiplicity”, *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol.52, Issue 1, March 2001, p.97.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 99.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p.100.

this. The dialogue is not a case that the two persons are putting their mutual positions. It is the event that the two are getting into each other like ying yang. We are opening ourselves actually when we talk, and we change, this is a very good thing.”

What’s more, as they have stated, they are talking about “a dialogue that can be exchanged and transformed.” That means a dialogue, not just explaining and defending yourself, but opening yourself to change with respect and confidence. This is also democracy for them. Also, ethics and politics relationship is not restricted to finding a victory at the end or trying to gain authority. Instead, politics and the conversation is itself valuable for them for the democratization of society.

After considering conversation from such a point of view, it may also be possible to claim that, through aiming democratization of civil society and addressing the issues such as justice, peace and anti-racism, anti-militarism from different angles and with different actions, there also exists such a multiple interpersonal play between new social movements that are considered in this study. Because, as conversation includes looking to the middle term from its sociality, past and present edges, they directs attention to that issues in their sociality and recall past and problematize the way the present is constructed.

In the third place, I will also refer what James Tully adopted from Hannah Arendt in his analysis of diverse ways of citizen participation and diverse practices of governance. So that, Arendt considers activity of politics, which is also the freedom, itself as having an agonistic dimension. In such intersubjective activity, people as a being equal in interaction, takes their identities as citizens.¹⁰⁰ What is more crucial is that,

“...This unique form of speaking and acting together is free because it embodies two aspects of ‘action’: ‘agere’, to begin, lead and rule and ‘gerere’, to carry something through together, a task. It is a beginning because the participants always bring something ‘miraculous’ – new,

¹⁰⁰ Tully, James, “The Agonic Freedom of citizens”, *Economy and Society*, Volume 28, Number 2, May 1999. P.162.

contingent, singular and unpredictable- into the world, breaking with routine and changing the game to some extent, and they seek to carry it through, to sustain the practice over time. In virtue of the miraculous appearance of practices of freedom the time of humans is not completely in the realm of necessity or universality but partakes of the unpredictable 'deeds and events we call historical.'"¹⁰¹

So, in civil society based politics of new social movements that have been addressed and in Young Civilians' politics, it is possible to see such kind of characteristic. Or in other words, they can be viewed from that perspective. It includes such an intersubjective manner in which listening and talking to "the other" occurs. Also, it reminds me that "In *la perruque* a practice is not reducible to the given economy; it is logic is heterological only in its placelessness or lack of profit. As in metaphor, there is a movement from the proper, but, unlike metaphor, it is not determinant as to where this movement go."¹⁰²

New social movements and specifically the Young Civilians movement, struggle is for the cultural and social diversity rather than trying to capturing the state. Their aim is to broaden the societal consciousness and try to be the conscience of society against state centred politics. In this context, it may be possible to point out what they do is a kind of democratic citizenship as defined by Tully. So that, according to James Tully, there is a link between games of freedom and 'democratic citizenship'. By following both Foucault and Arendt, he sees political activity as a game-like activity, and instead of looking at the rules of the game and develop ideal set of rules, he adopts the view that 'the game is not closed by a frontier'. Instead, there exists citizen participation as the practice of freedom and there are three diverse types of citizen participation in constitutional democracies which are cultural diversity, participatory diversity and federational diversity.¹⁰³ Young Civilians' and others'

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Colebrook, Claire, "Certeau and Foucault; Tactics and strategic Essentialism", *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 100;2, Spring 2001, p.557.

¹⁰³ Tully, James, "The Agonic Freedom of citizens", *Economy and Society*, Volume 28, Number 2, May 1999. P.173.

struggle to overcome racism, cultural stereotypes, ethnocentrism can be example of struggles of citizens for cultural diversity. Also their attempts for the rights of religious and cultural minorities to participate the dominant practices of governance can be seen as the practice of freedom for participatory diversity. What's more as Tully tells as features of this three types of struggle for diverse forms of citizen participation, "they are the democratic struggles to negotiate the biased ethos of citizen participation. They involve agonistic dialogues and negotiations in which always listen to the other side is the immanent rule of reciprocity. It is a game of politics that aims not to an end-state or final goal but free activity of citizen dialogues." ¹⁰⁴

By adopting such a point of view, we may also think "new" politics of new social movements as tactical. So that, if the rule of the political activity is to participate politics with modern concept of citizenship or formal democratic citizenship, in the Turkish case as Kemalist republican ideology defined, directing attention to the notion of cultural citizenship may be seen as tactical move. So that,

"...A "strategy" the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an "environment". A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as proper and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, "clienteles", "targets", or "objects" of research). Political, economic, and scientific rationality has been constructed on this strategic model. ... A tactic, on the other hand, a calculus which can not count on a "proper"(a spatial or institutional localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance. ...The "proper" is a

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. P. 174-175.

victory over space over time. On the contrary, because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on a time...”¹⁰⁵

With the concept of cultural citizenship, with emphasizing the centrality of culture, what is done may be interpreted as an example of diverse practices of governance which is not restricted to the formal institutions of constitutional democracy as defined by Tully.¹⁰⁶ In this sense they can be seen as “non-democratic” or tactic. To illustrate, Young Civilians’ “Today is the April 24; we are not full of happiness” activity, in which in the National sovereignty and Children Day is celebrated, they address to the 24 April 1915 in which some Armenian intellectuals had been arrested and Armenian Children’s pain in that day.

III- CONCLUSION:

Consequently, every epoch includes its own social conflicts, not necessarily completely isolated from the conflicts of previous epoch. Social movements have a vital role in understanding of these conflicts and societal changes both shapes and shaped by them. In today’s ‘post-industrial’ society, conflicts are not solely depending upon class conflict addressed by labour movements. In today’s post-industrial society which can be characterized by rapid technological advances, flow of people, goods, capital and information which opens up cultural diversity and multiplication of social world, conflicts are not based on only class inequalities. Rather in this era, social conflicts are driven by the questioning of identity and the ‘claims for the recognition of difference’¹⁰⁷. Manifestation of these can be seen in environmental movements, feminist movements, ethnic movements, anti-racist and civil rights movements after the 1960s and in the 1970s. These movements were calling attention to the recognition of different identities, individual rights by shedding light on the cultural

¹⁰⁵ Certeau, Michel D. (1984). “General Introduction”, *The Practice Of Everyday Life*, University of California Press. p.19.

¹⁰⁶ Tully, James, “The Agonic Freedom of citizens”, *Economy and Society*, Volume 28, Number 2, May 1999.p. 178.

¹⁰⁷ This conceptualisation is used by Nancy Fraser as one of the two models understanding of the motor of today’s change. Fraser, Nancy, “Rethinking Recognition”, *New-Left Review* 3, May-June 2000, <http://newleftview.org/?view=2248> , p.1. [25.06.2008]

dimensions of inequality and exclusion –in this respect emphasizing the construction of social identities- other than focusing only on economic inequalities drawn by traditional labour movements. With parallel to the changes in social movements we also encounter with the new politics such as ‘identity politics’, directing attention to the construction of identities and struggles over the definition of meanings. In other words, “Today’s recognition struggles are occurring at a moment of hugely increasing transcultural interaction and communication, when accelerated migration and global media flows are hybridizing and pluralizing cultural forms.”¹⁰⁸

In order to understand these new movements, scholars looked at some characteristics of it. However, while the American scholars looked at ‘how’ of the action, Europeans looked at the ‘why’ of the action. As for European approach, which is used throughout in this thesis to understand how Young Civilians movement defines themselves, what kind of Turkey they want, their way of doing politics, there are some fundamental characteristics that distincts them from the movements of the past. If we combine Claus Offe and Larana, Johnson and Gusfield’s definition of characteristics of new social movements, it is possible to point out that they differ mainly in terms of values, key issues or themes, organization, actor and form of mobilization and social base. In our case Young Civilians movement and other new social movements that are addressed throughout this thesis direct attention to plurality, democratization of society, rather than aiming to gain state power, focus on horizontal organizations in civil society. They also differs from identity politics as well as class based politics. What makes them different from identity movements maybe considered in their address on feeling pain of the “other” or empathy, stres on action of conscience and deconstruction of mainstream discourses. They also stress freedom via looking after “other”’s right crossectionally. They struggle against authoritarianism, militarism, racism,

¹⁰⁸ Fraser, Nancy, “Rethinking Recognition”, *New-Left Review* 3, May-June 2000, <http://newleftreview.org/?view=2248> , p.1.[25.06.2008]

nationalism and discriminatory logic through civil society based politics. Their social base includes Kurds, Alevis, Muslims, headscarved women, women and man. They emphasize the plurality of cultural identities. Also, it is similar to Say Stop to Racism and Militarism(*Irkçılığa ve milliyetçiliğe dur de*), Interrogating the Darkness(*Karanlığı Sorguluyoruz*), We Are not Free Yet (*Henüz Özgür Olmadık*) in terms of values, organization, themes and social base as well as the forms of politics and way of protest.

As it has been stated in the first section of the chapter two, the emergence of these movements are also related to the change in the political culture. They can not be reduced to such concepts as left and right or liberal or socialist etc. As it is possible to see in our case- Young Civilians movement- the participants of the movement have political ideology, but when it comes to the movement itself the actions or activities done under a consensus, conscience based democracy. In Turkey, the emergence of movements that are concerning gender differences, ecology and women issues came into the scene only after the 1980s. This is also related to political parties and state centred politics inability to solve the problems caused by globalization. And, only in this period, multiplicity of identities are addressed in the public arena.

As for Young Civilians Movement, ‘what kind of Turkey they want’ and ‘what kind of politics they do’, what is came across is the emphasis on the intersubjectivity of the identities through transcultural politics or conscientious (*vicdan*) politics. So that, this politics directs attention to minority rights, discriminations concerning ethnic minorities, importance of ecology and gender differences. In this respect, they are similar to the other new social movements that are stressed in the third part of the second chapter.

It can also be possible to say that Young Civilians movements is a part of big “structure” in which the intersubjectivity of the political activity is emphasized. That is to say, as new social movements throughout the world directed attention to the intersubjectivity

of cultural identity based politics so the Young Civilians movement also does. They as against the technocratic state, address the plurality of civil society. In this respect, deconstruction of mainstream discourses have a vital importance. Furthermore, other than “restricted” with the mainstream political discourses going on belongingness to one group as left or right, Islamist or liberal etc. what is stressed is the ‘looking after each other’s rights cross-sectionally’ through a continuing conversation. Besides, by recalling the past and subverting mainstream discourses in the present as well as struggling for the cultural diversity and participatory diversity, these new social movements told throughout the thesis contributes to the creation of a democratic “middle ground”. Lastly, differing from multiculturalist logic or identity politics, if we say it in Nancy Fraser’s terms, they “deinstitutionalize hierarchical cultural value rather than group specific identity.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Fraser, Nancy, Alfredo-Gomez Muller, Gabriel Rockhill, “Global Justice and Renewal of Critical Theory: A Dialogue With Nancy Fraser”, URL: <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2009-04-21-fraser-en.html> [12 February 2010]

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-A: INTERVIEWS WITH SOME MEMBERS OF YOUNG CIVILIANS

INTERVIEW I

Burçak: Actually, in the book of the Young Civilians There is Action Inside (İçeride Eylem Var) has already explained a lot of things, what is the civilians and what are their plans etc...

For example, was the name of the Civilians declared after the “Let’s free May 19’s from the Stadiums” or on the event that mentions the unrest of the young officers on the matter of the Kurds in the year 2006? Is there description of the youth for the Young Civilians? i.e. Does the young civilians have youth organization?

Yıldırım Oğur: Let me tell you a little story. Actually, first beginning could be considered as the earthquake of 1999. There was a student club at the METU (ODTU) in which I was also a member, after the earthquake of 1999. This youth club began the aid action in the Adapazarı, Sakarya region. It was that kind of society and social responsibility issue, the effect of the the earthquake of 1999 was like this. In the imagination of many people and our society and among our civil society organizations as a whole the earthquake was very important. The state structure was damaged... The state left the people alone and that was unbelievable and the came to the end of the path... For example, the soldiers came to the earthquake of region 5 hours later than we reached there, we went as a group from the METU and made some coordination and later the soldiers arrived there from Bolu Brigade Commandment after 5 hours, later on, they pushed us beyond their placement. They gave a press release. The scene that we see in the earthquake was crucial in the destruction of strong state perception. After the sensibility of the society that began in the population, we invited Ömer Laçiner for example, and he came... We had talks with him for 5- 6 hours or so... This

political opposition line had brought us increase in our breath. We decided to meet in the year 2000 later on, for the first time in Turkey in a topic saying “the future of Turkey, the Turkey of the future” in the governorate of Van... We got in touch with the students of Yüzüncü Yıl. Professor Yücel Aşkın supported us. We found a sponsor for that project. They gave us money. There were Arçelik, Turkish Democracy Association, Konrad Adenaur Association, we as a group of 100 students went there altogether, Ahmet İnel, Ertuğrul Günay, Recep Yazıcıoğlu, Atilla Yayla a great team was in there, we organized meetings, and prepared a civil constitution prestudy over there. We discussed the problems of Kurds on the edge of the Van Lake. There was Soli Ozel in there and some others. The following year we did some more activities with the people remaining with us regarding the May 19. We tried to find something alternative to that day. In the day of youth the youngsters are being used as something. Actually, for the first time, we used the May 19 expression. Messages are being given to world through the bodies of the youngsters. It is used in totalitarian regimes as mass gymnasium. Later on every year repeatedly, we organized activities, and meetings, we discussed the matter of youth. We did this in many other places as well. We did it in the Sabancı University, there were each of Şerif Mardin, Halil Berktaş, İlber Ortaylı. It was a meeting that they participated. There was also a live tv program called “Siyaset Meydanı (*Arena of Politics*)”. Later on we did the same in the Assembly in the year 2003. We demanded a saloon from the Assembly, Sabancı University and two student club came together. The youngsters came after saloon was arranged. Our topic actually, was “Status Quo at Home and Empire in the World” we changed it to be “Globalization and Turkey” We organized the meeeting and many students from several universities participated. It was the saloon of the CHP (Republican People’s Party) A letter about freeing the youth from the May 19. In the year 2000 when we made the first activity Hüseyin Çelik was member of parliament from the DYP (True Path Party). We visited all the members of parliament from Van

including Hüseyin Çelik and they helped us in that action and Hüseyin Çelik helped us a lot. He became the Minister of National Education in the year 2003 when he met us. On May 19, he came to the saloon in the assembly, and he listened to the letter about the May 19 , “ I agree with fellows” he said. The following day, this subject was discussed a lot, it lasted 2 weeks long. There was some criticisms about that beginning from Cüneyt Arcayürek to Emin Çölaşan from Bekir Coşkun to Ruhat Mengi, Güngör Mengi and Oktay Ekşi. They all wrote tough criticism saying that “they belaboured Atatürk’s festival”. They said “who are they? Who is supporting them”. We also gave an interview to the nation wide newspaper *Hurriyet*. At the beginning it was a group in the opposition but it was not so well organized and the student did not calculate everything. It was merely opposition. It was an ideological opposition but they felt unrest from the authority. The children of colonels, generals, elitist, the children of rich families. At the beginning it was merely “White Turks” But there were some people coming from Sivas for the meeting. We organized a meeting in Rize, the people had to change three buses to reach there. There were people from various sections of the population. Later on Mustafa Balbay, the famous journalist, said in his topic “The Young Officers Are Unhappy” or they felt unrest from the situation. Very tough articles were written they gave also some names. It was not merely a political from the point of view, but it was an opposition group, it was a group that felt unrest because of authority and we did not use that. The arguments on Cyprus, there were 5 articles, the fifth was about may 19 arguments. It began from there actually there was something in our minds to use the “ The Young Officers Are Unhappy” the “Young Civils are Unhappy” but we did not use that. From time to time we had cooperation and support with the Sabancı University for example, to make a campaign for postcards on European Union. *Hurriyet* distributed 1 million postcards. Hrant Dink came and many other people came. The mayor of Diyarbakır, Güler Sabancı, Mustafa Koç also came. We made something like a carnival at the University. CNN Turk had a live program.

November 17 was the date for European Union Summit. People made Turkish postcards. Every body sent messages to European countries about Turkey through the postcards. Behind it there was a “Coming Together Forum” (*Buluşma Forumu*). That group was the one continuing the Young Civilians. The meeting went on later. We organized in Konya in 2006 as the last one. At the meeting there was the popular language, a serious nationalist language about the Kurdish matter. There were some e-mails calling the people not to make trade or not to buy goods from the Kurds. Also there must be some answers for that kind of action. The things that are subtle until now is becoming apparently told. The society is living together but at the end ‘Kurds are migrant, poor people, there are also ones who are purse snatchers’ this can be used and society can be agitated here and this may become a popular thing. With such a fear, we questioned how we can construct a language of peace. All the words about Kurdish matter are very obsolete. Even the such words as peace, brotherhood are cliché. However, the matter that matters us is a matter that matters millions of people’s life. But, this is a matter which is arrested into a very narrow, very barren left and civil society language. The language of the discussion is like that. We prepared a project text from here ‘ how we can create a social, popular language of peace. There must be messages given to Kurds that somebody is interested in their matter and the terror and fight can bring nothing to anybody. At the same time the Turkish ordinary people must also be acknowledged that there were population and some of them can be bad some others can be good. At the same time among the Turkish nation there must be some good and some bad so we must put the case to solve the problem in the best way. This is a topic related with life of millions of people. We do not accept neither the tough actions of the soldiers nor the other PKK side. Terror can not be acceptable at all.

B: Does the meaning of being civil come out of that?

Yıldırım Oğur: Actually, the civil is anti militarist principally, but at the same time, because the letter was about the Kurdish matter, when we say “The young Civilians are Unhappy” in

all the subjects in the both sides there were some who never got weapons in their hands and never supported the weapons. In the both sides.(neither soldiers nor the PKK) We tried to do things for the both. The things we made against the military coup d'etat was given as example in many talks at the "Young civils are Unhappy" came out like this. That meaning in the letter was much heavier about the Kurdish matter. The letter was focused on that topic. What we are expressing over there is that the people crying for the film "Babam ve Oğlum" and laughing for the films of Cem Yılmaz. The people must feel that they belong to something. We must do on behalf of them and we must talk on behalf of the society...

In Turkey understanding of civil society is like that: "let us remain clear, let us remain very good people but the society is whatever happens, they are fascists, they are regressives, and they are Kemalists" With this generalization, "everybody is very bad, we are good like this being the group of social idealist young civils. We remained clean in this dirty world." This thought is widely found in the population. As the political side of the society does not care about the persuasion, they say "let us place our position and let us tell our problems, even if the world does not understand us, we shall clean in front of the history" On the contrary, our target is really to do something pedagogic. To be the conscience of the society. The civil society in our country is like that, so is the politics. When the people read this, they share the same feeling and the say this knocked me somewhere" so become their translator. The reader must say "this exactly the same came to my mind" there are realities like this, while you read the article in the news paper, you say the same "these are the words I would like to say. Somebody expressed my thoughts." Therefore the conscience of the society is very important. Without abstaining Orhan Gencebay and Sezen Aksu and popular culture... Without getting into deep political language, the reason of the humour is that... Because the humour is also reaching those who hate you most. Humour is very global language. It is creating a physical effect. An expression is creating an effect and causing the others to laugh. It is very excellent

of course, it also means that it is understood. It is being told from one to another (from ear to ear) . A simple humour is told it is reaching to the every farest place with almost speed of light. You are talking to the society, you also have to try to tell your intention in a good way. Our basic problem becomes this in a sense.

B: Do you mean that is the civil like society organizations, that is the young civilians are separating themselves from the other civil society organizations, and also it is indicated in the book, is not it?

Yıldray Oğur: There, the civil society organizations in the book TOBB (Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry), chambers, trade unions, they are not civil society organizations, they are organizations established according to the law, they are obligatory. The people are being their members. If you are a big tradesman you are being member in the TUSIAD. However TUSIAD is not a civil society organization, it is in many relations with the authority. Also TOBB semi official and not civil society structure. We mean this over there. But, there are criticisms in the book about the civil society structures. It is very important, Turkey has not yet come to that stage. There is an argument about the civil society matter, they are deep matters... At the last period there was the illness of the civil society supporter about the Ergenekon. There is an illness called political rightness, or correctness. We try not to make the same mistake. This is the “political correctness” of the liberal left in the USA. This exactly, let us stay clean and let us have the joy of being clean in the milk bath. It is like practising farm works without touching the soil. This is impossible. In case you are doing something from time to time, when you do it, you must say something hurting, and you must take correct position and you hands may be dirty. When you oppose the military coup d’etat, you may find yourself at the same side with AKP, this is something not bad. You are fighting against the military coup d’etat and this is very good and very basic matter. When we say civil society, there such a perspective, there are insufficiencies in political perpectives, and the

primary needs of Turkey are not yet very clear. There is nothing clear about why they practise politics. We have a lot of reasons to be in politics, but we are not very great desire for that, but when we are doing something we are sacrificing, every body has some works to do actually. Here, the unhappy in the “The Young Civils Are Unhappy” is telling all about us. We feel unhappy when we watch all these things on the TV. We do this to comfort ourselves actually, There is a correspondance of ontology of our politics. The meaning in ourselves. If we do not do it we shall not get relaxed.

B: Whose consciousness would young civilians consider? There something belonging to every body such as “some things bothering me may not bother the others”. This could be in your matters that you are defending. What kind of distinction you have in here?

Yıldırım Oğur: Our starting point is that we consider that every body is good principally, and we accept that every body has conscience. “some things bothering me may not bother the others”. This only can be covering on the or so... You possibly found a thing to cover for you to relax your conscience. You relax through it and you say “but”. This “but” would make you feel happy. It prevents to tingle and deterioration of your conscience. In case there is bothering in the “but”s according to us every body feels unhappy. Of course conscience is not a thing presented to human being from birth but the feeling of justice it is. There is something belonging to Derridarian saying that that only thing we can not devastate is the feeling of justice of the people. People demand justice, people demand the most basic need freedom. When you put a bird in the cage it demands freedom it is a cause of being, it is learned later. Rousseau is being read and later learned. We all want to be free. The demand of justice is something like this. Unjustice or being unjust is something like this. Any ordinary person who does not hide himself/herself behind the ideology, morality, explanations, or similars may see the unjust behaviours. The classical liberal thought thinks and consider everybody bad, but on the contrary we consider every body good. As Rakel Dink said, “the

darkness that created a murderer out of a baby” Veli Küçük once was a baby, he was very good baby, innocent small baby, there is more romantic expression in our imagination. Not the sinful person in the Christianity, but in our traditions and the way we were brought up in the society, in the tradition of the Islamic thought, “every human being is good”. Maybe there is coming from there. The people are born innocent and there are reasons, cases directing them into bad, in an ordinary democratic system the person is considered as good. But people like the good. For example, Etyen Mahçupyan mentions about a test he did in his seminar. In a company there were managers and administrators, they want to give them marks to evaluate them. Most of the marks go the managers that listen to the others and gets their idea. Actually they are democrats. This kind of behaviour is liked mostly. There is a relation between good person and good politics. The two are not separated from each other. Our main target is to get all the positive specifications together, not only good law system and good state but at the same time there should be good society and good person, the quest is on all. It is like this in the ancient Greece, they search for good person at the same time. For example Aristo says: the politics is a quest for good people and good person. It is a politics on existentialism. The politics is at the same time is reflection of our behaviours in our everyday lives into public arena in some way. If we are just, democrat, if we are against unjust behaviours and if we stand with all this, we should also stand the same when we are on the public arena and this is the politics actually. I can say this about conscience for example. “Would there be a common conscience, can we catch it?” Also there is the conscience of the societies as a whole, this is very important. Not only the persons, but also the societies have common sense. Not all the societies walk to the hell all together. There is Hitler example of course, he is a very bad example. He is doing this with a very serious power. He has got 30 % when he came to power, he did not get very enormous votes. He has invaded the assembly with his paramilitary powers or so... They are killing all the opposition members. As a result, Hitler is not coming

to power with democracy. There fore when the societies come together a good result come over the Common sense. It became as follower of Habermas' idea. Rationality comes out of dialogic relations. The more people come together and talk, a pure rationality comes out. This is the thesis of Habermas. When societies come together there is more common points that brings common solutions. The rationality is not a merely found out by a men on the street and we see it and we say, it is great let us follow it, it is not like this.

B: Is there something you call as conversation(*muhabbet*) language among the young civilians?

Yıldırım Oğur: Yes, when we say conversation there is something like this. Conversation is very interesting word. As far as it means love of the peoples eachother and it also means talking. i.e. Dialogue is something like this. The dialogue is not a case that the two persons are putting their mutual positions. It is the event that the two are getting into each other like ying yang. We are opening ourselves actually when we talk, and we change, this is a very good thing. When the people begin to talk a third person comes out as a result of the dialogue. It is very important.

B: Is that what you mean by the conversation language?

Yıldırım Oğur: Yes yes. For example when we collect the ideas about certain subject we do not ask the classical question like what do you think about the idea, actually we do not agree with that, what would you like to say, this is not our way, we have more friendly atmosphere, the people like to express their thought with their own will. They are talking about affection. The person has respect and love to his environment so he explains what he thinks delibaretely. We are talking about the dialogue that might be exchanged and might be transformed. It is not defending himself, but the person would open himself, and he would do that with the full respect and confidence. Actually, the democracy that we are talking about is that. Moving while thinking... When there is military coup d'etat threat you can not talk so freely, and

there must not be the idea of being punished. Because those who do not agree with idea came to power. There is his gun on the table, so you can not talk over there. There is gun on the table. When the gun is used the talk will come to an end. It indicates the subject agenda and the contents of the talks. Even if the weapon was with no bullet inside, it has the same effect. The civilizing will have an effect on the talks with the counterparts. It is not that “the soldiers will go and the people’s power will come’.

B: All right I am taking the young civilians movement as a social movement actually. The sensitivity is also very important in the social movements. Is there any civil society organization that might be hand in hand with you?

Yıldırım Oğur: There is no similarity 100% with many of them. For example, we are criticized a lot. We are listening to our common conscience. We are practising the politics by listening the conscience about the things we are interested. The people are asking from time to time about some subject why did not you do anything for this subject or for that subject and they are right. We are doing things in the subjects. In the civil society, there is something in Turkey, there is banner and there is party, or the banners of organizations to show they did something. There you need to put a line to point out that the job had been done. There was reaction about the the topic of Tuzla, so we put a point over there by our group of people for example. One of our members was the person who organized the Tuzla action. He was a member of young civilians and member of the board at the same time by then. We gave him support for example. They used our means of communication. They sent faxes. Many people participated into the action from us. We never demanded that our name as the young civilians were over there at the activity, we did not care about who did it. The signature of the young civilians was not so important. We are not trying to market the brand name of young civilians. We are doing that for ourselves at the same time. There is no need to have our flag in there and...

B: Yes, for example, i myself wondered about the existence of the young civilians in July 2, and May 1, we could not see your signs.

Yıldırım Oğur: Our people participated in May 1.

B: I think there was individual participation, is it so. ?

Yıldırım Oğur: No, it was not individual participation, it was institutional participation. The relations are kept on base of non confidentiality. There is a case here, people are asking about whether we were in July 2 or not. We actually do not like that kind of question. The organizations are racing with each other to make shows. We will not be in that kind of race. They are asking for example about our participation in the event happened 15 years ago, but we were established only three years ago. We actually made a lot about the action. Sent mails and faxes, we were also in Sivas for converting Madimak Hotel into a museum. It is an important concrete action. Whenever we feel that there is a need we go wherever necessary and we are ready to stay there. We do not want to hear something like that 'look they are also sensitive about Alevi matter'. This is not what we wonder about. There is anniversary of a topic which is not in the agenda of today for the society. We are not in race. If the same thing happens today, the July 2 issue, we would go Sivas. We go forefront of Madimak and make activities for days. Here there is a distrust among people in such organisations. Everybody is trying to test everybody in every issue. This is creating awful distrust climate. And in such doubts it is not possible to do politics. Why we be in an effort to prove ourselves. We are not a conservative group we're describing ourselves as democrat. We are neither an Islamic group. No body informed us to join them, the July 2 organizations. We would join if they informed us. They did not informed us because they do not trust us probably. What must we do, then?

B: Is there any section of it which is not confident?

Yıldırım Oğur: No, When I checked the the list of those who joined the action on July 2 they signed . There was nothing sent to us like this. They did not call us asking whether we join or not in the meeting and organization.

B: Does it usually come.?

Yıldırım Oğur: Of course, always the invitation comes. When they plan any activity and they want their joining, they call the People Houses, Labor Party, and so on they organize with them, They choose their participants to cooperate with them from the beginning, it is not correct that we are not joining any activities There was a discussion about AKP - military coup d'etat there were some who placed in somewhere, some activists joined that from our group. In our grup, Young Civilians, there are a lot of Alevi people, from Tunceli, Kurdish, Alevi, many people from them, many from the Sunni sect, from the headscarved people, they joined the meeting in July 2, in Kadıköy. There is an Alevi group close to the Young Civilians. We are in dialogue with them. There is an association called "Face Up and Research to Social Events Association (*Yüzleşme Derneği*)". This one was established in our headquarter Office. For example, while the Alevis were not doing anything the Alevis were doing for activities done against murder of Dersim the reason of the Alevis was that they do not want Atatürk and Republic to be criticized. The Alevis are always saying "lets take care no criticism should come to Atatürk. We did activity about Dersim and they did not join us. They are not sensitive because of the Republic and Atatürk. Those who are not from Tunceli do not mention that events. The events that is the topic for the July 2, the creator of the July 2 were the Kemalist Groups, and they are using those events just to blame the others, to persuade the others. There is no pedagogic wonder about it. There is something like "those did this, or they had done before." Thing like that. There is no use of it for Turkey. Of course every body must get shy about what he did wrong and bad. There were millions of people

who were not in Sivas in that date. It is not healthy at all to keep those millions under the pressure, under psychological suppression by using these events. It is a very tough political behaviour. Therefore we did not go to Sivas in July 2. If they invited us, of course we would go and we would mention on some other topics such as “you did this, you are murderers, you would do this again, actually AKP has the same potential, there is the same potential in all the moslems” we also would say that this kind of behaviour is not good and healthy one. Therefore we are in all the actions for the anti war actions since 2003 we take place since March,1. We went for the protest of Incirlik bases. They say Converse ¹¹⁰is American. How many people could go for the protest of Incirlik? We went to Damascus, Syria to give support for Syria against the threats from America. We are so comfortable in that sense. Our group is giving importance to the ecological problems from the beginning, we are sensitive for that. We were in global actions, nuclear actions, we are also inside a coalition about global warming. We were in the actions of Peace Attempt, we also were in the action of Uğur Kaymaz¹¹¹, we were in the committee about Kurds. In case we are called and if they want is to join in any action, we shall do. But in the conclusion we have priorities. We give support to everybody that make those things as ideals.

Many thing are happening in Iraq, many people are dying over there, we are doing actions under the roof of the Global Peace and Justice Coalition (*Küresel Bak*). There is also egoism saying that I might do every thing. We are ready to work under the name and part of the body that is doing the action in the best way, we consider that as more merit to do that. To give them support. Global Action Group is very good, they are very sensitive for environment. The

¹¹⁰ Converse as a shoe model is the symbol of Young Civilians. It represents their definition of being civilian as not weaving any one’s uniform, and not connected to any ideology and identity with strong ties. (Genç Siviller (2007). İçeride Eylem Var!, İstanbul:Hayy Kitap.p. 7)

¹¹¹ Ugur Kaymaz is a twelve years of child who was murdered in the operation which is directed to ‘illegal organization members’ in May 21, in Mardin. (Çelikkın, Murat, “Uğur Kaymaz terörist mi?” Url: <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=144822>, 26 February 2005.)

people who were in the actions of the ‘Say Stop to the Nationalism and Racism’ (*İrkçılığa ve Milliyetçiliğe Dur de*) , and actions after Malatya murders were merely half of them Young Civilians. The others are also supporting us in many actions such as those who are in the Global Peace and Justice Coalition (*Küresel Bak*), supported us in actions of political crisis, military threats, problems of democracy, they supported and joined with us. They were not in search of being mentioned in the actions.

B: You have the democrat description actually, you know. “Having protecting the rights of each other in cross sections.” You are very logical in that sense. Because, civil society organizations might have support to each other in cross sections.

Yıldırım Oğur: Look at that for example, there are tiny explanations, of many chambers, associations, so simple, so minute, so unimportant, not useful in any where. We have something like this. For example after the case opened for closing DTP we all talked about what to do for all three weeks and later we were criticised about not reacting about the closing case of DTP. On the contrary, we have applied to the DTP assembly group to allow us to make explanation on the case of closing DTP. Directly after the case there were budget talks but the talks were not held. The time passed. Our main problem was this. We want that must be good and useful. We want it to be in the agenda. We must find very good idea, let us write article. Let us find the equal to this like in miniaturk.¹¹² Our aim is not make explanation for nothing and that is why we do not defend banning on DTP. We are actually in relation with the DTP. We have a fear that it should be useful, other wise we do not want just to be supporting on the screens on just for show. Instead of making some activities that might not be useful at all, we always prefer meaningful actions, and it should be wondered among the population. We are thinking on it. Humour is very difficult actually. They may be in very

¹¹² Young Civilians made an announcement, telling their discomfort about being seen as a potential threat from their thoughts, race, look and faith, in front of the miniature model of the Ataturk’s mausoleum when the Republican meetings, concerning grievances about government’s support of the 11th president candidate whose wife is headscarved and who is coming from the right wing, done in Ankara.

comic situation as well. It is very tiny line. We always argue about this. Everybody may think that they are the most comic, the most interesting, the most creating of all. It is not always like this of course. The common sense setting in between. Whenever you think that way, when the action are belonging trade union, these trade unions have the realist actions, when they do not allow us to talk, we close the mouth with band, and we carry the symbolic wooden grave and such ways, they are not the ways known before, the way is postmodern, the product of the third smartness, not all the things coming to the mind the rate 3th or 4th ones.

B: All right there are things I am wondering. There is Gramsci, Arendt, Foucault and Deniz Gezmiş among the inspiration resources. Which sides of them you are using? For example Deniz Gezmiş is anti imperialism but not anti capitalism.

Yıldırım Oğur: These are not inspiration resources, actually. You are talking about the dialogue at the behind pages of the book.

B: I think it was in “who were in your kitchen” ?

Yıldırım Oğur: We did not mention about Deniz Gezmiş. We can talk about Arendt, Gramsci and Foucault.

B: Are they the most basic ones?

Yıldırım Oğur: We can talk about Etyen Mahcupyan. We arranged H.Arendt symposium on the 100.bith day of Arendt. Arendt is placing the politics as the existentialist action in the arena. If I practise politics I exist, but if not I am absent and I am not free, he has some ontolojik political core. We feel her very close to us. The politics is not very valuable thing, the one in Turkey is the war for getting authority. Every body is trying to defeat the others. On the contrary, the politics itself is very valuable thing. We are struggling with each other with out defeating each other it is for authority. There is some thing like this, we are going to gain one day., we are going to defeat them, there some groups like this, and this is seen in many groups. The victory is waiting for you at the end of the road. No body thinks that that

the struggle itself is the aim. It is itself a good thing. It is enough to make it in a good and ethical. Every body might respect the bargain ethics. Democracy is like this. It is hurting you, because there is not always the beautiful things around. The struggle continues al the times it never ends and goes on. When the struggle finishes, the new struggle for others begin. Who knows what kind of authority will be established. There is the same in Marx and the left wing. When the struggle ends, everybody reads books. The fisherman continues fishing. The politics can't be closed. It is totalitarianism. You are closing the interrogation of something, there is no paradise like this. We think that debate is good itself. And it is good if it trains us it is good. In case we respect the ethics of the debate.

B: Is the separation of the left and right wing still going on until now? Why?

Yıldırım Oğur: No. We are telling and declaring that we are in the left wing. It is not possible to bring the things we say and the right wing together. The right wing does not have such kind of things. We claim that we are leftist. But we evaluate the left as the opposition culture, the relation kept with the authority in the country, the relation done with the left, the matter of public benefit. The public benefit is not always statism(state socialism) . The public benefit is identified with the statism in Turkey. Privatization is a bad thing because public benefit is big sales of the state. There is nothing like this in classical left. If the benefit of the companies are brought in the front plan and if the less work for the doctor is in front plan, in the new reform in the social security system, there we are with public benefit. We participated in the meeting against the social security system, for example, in this law there were some article for benefit of medical companies. We are trying to be selective. There is no say about all the thing done by the state is bad. We are trying to decide after a search. Where is the public benefit. What is good for the society? Sometimes, privatization could be good for the society. Retirement at the age of 60, it could be good to get retired at the age of 38 at the beginning, but we are carrying the burden later. It is not logical to get retired at the age of 38. We should not look at

the event from the memory but we have to study the case, because we are passing into the delicate situation, the minds are mixed, there different mechanism. According to me there are some people enforcing themselves as they are leftist they must think that way. There is no need for that kind of enforcement. We all have the sense of conscience, we check the case first then we ask ourselves whether it is just or not? Is it good or bad? Is it good for the majority of the society? Is there Public benefit over there, we decide after checking. Arendt has also that kind of view. When she criticize the totalitarianism, Nazizm, Stalinism and soon he complain about the people's thinking of very great theories. She says "they had transferred their minds to the great theories. Whatsoever they had their own minds. They would say whatever is coming from us, our people had said this measuring and calculating... Therefore, although Eichmann was a good father he destroyed the Jews. When he was on the trial afterwards, he said " I only did my obligation".The main thing is not having the obligation done but, one has to think every detail. The political principles of the neo-liberal democracy is very valuable. The left wing in Turkey considers neoliberals as fascists. However, The liberal values are very dear whan you look over the freedom and democracy... The left burned their flags in the 19. century. The bourgeoisie might create the leftist revolutionary movement but, the social rights afterwards were brouhgt up by the radicals, later on the French radicals completed them. Later on the subject came on "let us solve our problem of bread" when this came to frontier, democracy fell behind to be the third important matter. Whenever we evaluate ourselves in the history of the world we, of course, consider ourselves as leftists. But Turkish left might not accept this. Because the Turkish left wing is not left. We are mentioning about a group that do not respect the democracy, the assembly, totalitarian, that think Kemalism as leftism an they merely do not accept the left as left but they consider statism as left. We are separating ourselves from those others.

B: But we must feed our stomachs...

Yıldırım Oğur: First bread is a Mussolinian point of view. Jacoben idea is the same. “There are poor people let us feed them first.” It is well known how to do it. The economy has something closed for debates technically. Whe the ideology is in that situation in the agenda, it is very difficult to get relation with the democracy. Because there he has a solution in his mind. He intends to get his economis model into the power. He had already found his solution, why should he be in dialog with me? This left wing model is very primitive left. Neither in Europe nor in the world there is no more left wing system like this. Because participation in the process is the main way and important. You are defending the worker but the worker has no idea... For example in the Tuzla matter it is like this... Some leftist groups wanted the shipyards to be closed, but the laborer is not joining them. The laborer is demanding something different. Therefore the laborers are not joining them 20-30 laborers are supporting. In case you are defending someone’s right you have to talk with him.”I am the leader class, i am the leader party, these people are poor, and i am doing the best for them, I know the best and the worst for them. Right in there the readings of Hannah Arendt is coming into the circuit.

B: Which readings? As far as I did not read Arendt...

Yıldırım Oğur: For example, her explanation about social problem... the matter of there is need for bread... this is closing the politics, There is no need for public debate for those who make that matters as main topic of the agenda. The conclusion of this goes to the totalitarianism. This does not mean that the money affairs are never kept as out of public debates at all. But the subject is “ the first and primary important subject is not that. We can also add that the only problem they face is not only economic problems. If it was like this, ÖDP would come to the power. There are a lot of poor people in this country but they cast

their votes for AKP. It means there are cultural motives, that are not purely explained in Marx theory, and it was better expressed by Weber. There are matters of their identity. There is the say of Şerif Mardin mentioning the center-periphery theory. There are some more existential tensions. He is hungry but if his headscarved wife is being cursed, even though he is hungry, he is casting his vote to a liberal party. There he is seeing a prime minister and his wife is also head scarved like his wife. The cultural sentimental relations, identity politics, and things like this, it is escaping such kinds of social politics issue. People may be more powerful to his being Kurdish rather than to his being laborer. They practice politics through their Kurdishness eventhough they are also labour. Such things may happen. They may be in politics on their being women. New social movements are in that meaning. The identity is instead of being citizen, laborer, or bourgeoisie it mostly on homosexual laborer...

B: All the thing can be all together.

Yıldırım Oğur: Therefore we are getting involved with new social movements.

B: Of course you are getting. As far as i can see, there is nothing going on from one identity. That's why, it is different from identity politics, instead it is more inter identities.

Yıldırım Oğur: Yes, the identity politics is a disaster. The largest enemy of the politics is identity politics. There is a side making yourself sensitive for your own matter and you are likely to forget about the larger troubles. In the example of the feminist movement, it is clearly seen that you can read the world on the on the feminism problem, when you do that, when sometimes feminism come face to face with democracy, you can be side by side with Kemalizm while interacting with feminism. For example, as it was seen in the civil constitution arguments.¹¹³ There was an article about giving the women a positive

¹¹³ In the year 2007, when the 22th government of Turkey came into work, the change of the 1982 constitution has been discussed. In this debate, concerning construction of a civil constitution, the issues are 'the raising the fundemantal rights and freedoms to the universal standarts and the representation of the different parts of the Turkish society'.("Sivil Anayasa Tartışmaları Başladı", URL: <http://arsiv.ntvmsnbc.com/news/424890.asp>, (2

discrimination they classified the women among the poor, disabled, elderly, in the same category. The people opposed this naturally. Those who did that were not the AKP members, they were the liberal constitutioners. They said that they put it this to use that as reason and support for positive discrimination according to them. It came to a certain stage that they visited many Kemalist publication and press to get their support. And we would do things with them for the campaign of the constitution. We tried to establish a commission about civil constitution, we organized some meetings. The continuity was in there for example. They did never accept that at all. The change of the constitution of 12 September was itself a good thing. It is good to change it. The content could be bad but let us change it. Let us take a step forward. We might not so close to that point. In case the change is not taking care of their matter then the constitution is not mine. That way of behaviour does not care about conjuncture, and the whole society as a whole. They reflect their demands on the highest level but when the matter was to put the private rights on the constitution, but when you intend to put this in reality, the constitutional changes may be refused by the military curatorship (*vesayet*). It is very difficult to persuade people. This could be realized step by step, The politics is a pragmatic thing. You go step after step, you gain some positions, you persuade somebody, you get somebody behind yourself. You have fear in getting step by step, But if you say the reality is that, let us tell all the truths, you may say that the women rights are this or this, when you say that you can not have any step forward. You might lock yourself. You are locked in a circle. This is the main topic that is the problem for all the civil societies organization. Together with social pedagogy to practice politics, what is the authority relations, what is understood when I said what, and what shall I say and to whom would it be useful, they do not have such kind of fear. We are very good people, we must say the reality with whole nudity, every body might criticise, it is enough to say some words. It

November 2007)) In this respect, it also includes new adjudgements such as the ban in the headscarf in universities and rights of broadcasting in the native language.

is an idealism merely, there is no civil society organization getting something by doing that in the world. The most thing movement is the one that is basic right movement. It went there by very tiny steps.

... We are not talking about something we theorized after sitting and studying. Let us sit and talk about who are our leaders, we need to read, it is beautiful or something... Many of our people may not have any idea about much of the things we are talking about... In our group there some 20-30 people who are really aware about what we are talking, but those who are not from the social sciences education may not know any thing about it. We do not do these things because Arendt said this. It is somewhere in our mind, we are finding out about who had already theorized the thing we intend to do. Arendt is a thing that began with my own readings. I gave some courses about it and later the people liked it and we organized a symposium afterwards. This is merely a reflex given the matters of Turkey and to the matters of the world. Other wise there is not like that as we are against war and let us sit and read and memorize the literature about those things opposing the war, there is nothing like this. As a result, if you are against war in Turkey, there is enough subjects you might talk and write about. From that point on, one can use the the academic studies, but there is something unclear if this would help the sensitivity or would decrease and fade it away it is not clear. We have some basic troubles in general, we are leftists, democrats, as the others say we are acting according to our consciousness. Otherwise, who are we? What are we? Are we in the left or in the right? These questions are like a facit circle, instead of being in the circle we would rather prefer to go where the situation takes us. The caravan would take the way.

B: Are there movements around the world that you are supporting or feeling them close to you?

Yıldırım Oğur: For example there is a group called “move on”. It is a very large one and it is established on the internet. It is a group against war and activities against George Bush. They

have a website called moveon. org. They have around 2 million supporters. They telephone and they protest things. They are collecting money for example, there is a musical clip “Superball Tournament final match they had it announced and played it in the half time of the match. Their new language. What is more, they are against war and against globalization as well. Their language is a colorful one, their actions, the ways they are using in their actions, and the colors on their flags they are colorful and attractive. And there is a group in France called “Attac”. We follow them of course.

INTERVIEW II

Burçak: Can you explain the process of your participation to Young Civilians?

Hayri İnce: I did my university studies in Izmir. I was studying International Relations, the period when I was into politics. Though when I was in college, I have also interested in politics; but not as well as in my university period which corresponds to the period when I was mainly into politics. I was also reading Radikal 2 at that time. Apart from that, I am not really following all the resources, and not much reading political and cultural magazines... I started to be interested in politics in my first year at university; I was reading small books from around. After that, I went to Germany and came back. I can say that my political view about liberties become definite after my return from Germany. My relevance to Young Civilians has started in this way... There was a statement of politic scope movement. It was published in the page of Perihan Mağden. I did like that a lot. Hereby, I met Young Civilians on the internet. I have knowledge about the protestations that they did when the Nokta magazine has been closed. There is a critical point for me. I am born in family which is living with a secular wing around, with Alevite origins. On the other hand, I rub shoulders with people coming from different cultural origins, for instance people who are not drinking alcohol. By the way, the protests about scarves make me sick. (That prohibition etc...) Young Civilians is a group which is supporting them, and I am a real fan of that organization. They

are describing very well their ideas in their statements. They mention several discrimination areas which are openly turned into racism. There are two points which make me very angry. First, the occlusion of the Nokta magazine, it made its last publication one week after it has been closed by the military verdict and eventually the management has finished the publishing. It was not a direct closure method. It has been closed by the owner but the real reason of the closure was the military prosecutor verdict. That was a breaking point for me. Second was the warning letter in 27th of April. I was sitting at home and turned crazy when I heard that, and they provoked me to politics. I am following Young Civilians from Internet in Izmir. I haven't got a direct relation with them. Even if I try to communicate, they don't have any branch office in different cities.

B: Did Young Civilians exist at that time?

Hayri İnce: Yes in 2007. I can say that Young Civilians has been founded in 2006. They appeared with a statement about the Kurdish problem. I read and appreciate their wish of having a single political party. That's really perfect and it expresses me. That is the area that I can perfectly express myself. I can say that one of the reasons why I came to Istanbul is Young Civilians. I really want to work with these guys. It clears my conscience and it's something like therapy to me. It is good to see that we are not maniacs, to see people which have the same ideas with us, and which are not only fighting for their own rights and liberty but also for the rights and liberty of others. It is not only about conducting the society but it is also a self-therapy. Because in a situation where apartheid is a norm, you are seen as abnormal when you are situated against the apartheid. You feel yourself weird between those much pathologic events in this country. They make you feel insane when you talk about the liberty, since being fascist is counted as normal. Briefly, that was one of the reasons why I came to Istanbul. I met first Yıldırım, Turgay when I came. We assisted a conference about Marxism. Yıldırım was speaker. When I saw him, I recognized him and got close to him and

talked to him. He told me that they will take off a ship for 27 May. It will be a democracy landing to Yassı Ada. It was my first operation. We went together to Yassı Ada by ship in 27th of May 2008, after that traffic has appeared, office visits etc... There was nothing official. You don't fill a form or something. You just go, come, enter and exit. You start to get something and do something.

B: It is also like that I suppose; in my opinion at least you can agree or disagree in some points with Young Civilians.

Hayri İnce: Generally, there is no point that we don't agree but it's up to you the level of activity. You can get a job in a specific subject, you can try to do something, and you can take in charge, you don't have to join to other operations. There is nothing such as one movement. You can retrieve in one event and be very active in another. However, I can say that our opinion is the same in all subjects. When I say all subjects, I mention the subjects that we are against and organize events. Otherwise, we have different political point of views. For instance, I argue with my liberal friends. There are some liberal friends who are more conservative. (Religious cultured friends) We have also social democrats, socialists. There are friends who see themselves liberal or democrats. That shows the political differences between each of us, it definitely exists. The differences don't prevail our spoken activities. We mostly speak on subjects that we agree. For example, we don't go to the IMF protests. Because some of our friends don't think that it's useful to protest IMF, or it might be that some of our friends think that IMF is a useful organization.

B: Is that according to the majority?

Hayri İnce: We are moving with one consensus. We never take a vote, for example there is no presidency in our organization. However I can say that the most working and who burden the activities of the organization is Turgay. But Turgay was against our 1 st May act. The reason why he was against it is the possibility of having a problem such as custody, etc...

because in none of our acts, none of us has been damaged. We made it even if he didn't want to be. We were pretty persistent.

We have got a concept. For instance, someone is hurt if the democracy doesn't exist. It would be better that no one is hurt even if the democracy doesn't exist. We are sensitive to violence. We argue when it comes to the final analysis, and a mid point has occurred. For example, we say A if we think that it is a good idea. If we are uncertain about an idea we don't act, if we collect the subjects that we don't act, you can make a 12 volumed encyclopedia. Unmade acts chapter 8 volume 3. That is a subject of joke between us. I can say that it's much more than committed acts. Sometimes, we can not conclude in mid point. We don't act despite the interpretation of the opposition. However, if we have a common decision we act. That is what constitutes our color. For example, for me it is possible to act against the homophobia; but it can not be accepted by other members. As I mentioned before, there are some conservative friends among us. It might be possible that they don't feel comfortable about that subject, and not accept that. That is my political decision. I can go there again, but I don't make that act under the name of Young Civilians, I can be present by myself in that act. Or I can also be present in a protestation of IMF but we are not assisting against that as a group.

B: So we can not identify Young Civilians as an anti-capitalist, anti-globalization or any kind of group?

Hayri İnce: No we can not and they are not. That's why we cannot identify them under the name of a specific group. We can have a specific political ideology as an individual but not as a group. For instance, you can be an anti-capitalist by yourself; but Young Civilians can not be an anti-capitalist group. They don't take a stand against any kind of economic or politic point of view. The reason of that is that we are composed from different people who have different political ideas. We need to identify a common ground. We are trying to make noise against subjects which disturb our conscience and to be democrat. That is also a difficult

claim, to be a democrat. You are claiming minimum democracy and liberties. You don't need lots of things to be democrat in this country. For instance, it's enough to be against the military coup to have a political opinion; because we are living in a country in which people believe that it is necessary. If the country will be ruled by the Shari'a we will be receded to 100 years back, if it will be such a military coup we will receded to 10 years back. Even so there are people who support military coup. There are some people from central media who support this kind of radical politic opinions. There are at least 6 million people who will collaborate with devil to remove AKP from the ruling power. I say it because I know people in my family who think like that. Even a small point can mean a political idea against military coup. Even if it is against democracy, it put you in a political position. In a situation that it exist that kind of absurdism and differences, our common opinions become first instead of our differences. For instance, I can even think IMF protests in that point. Our common opinions such as Kurdish problem, problem of head scarves or Alevite concerns can become first in that point. If we live in Sweden, we can possibly discuss these subjects without any problem, but in Turkey government makes secret regulations, they even prevent judges to reach necessary documents in certain rooms. In such a country, it would be more normal to have common opinions. Now, in general we are saying to people to remove the guns from the table. Sit at the table and argue as it should be. We need to remove guns. In my opinion, it shouldn't be Young Civilians ten years later. I can say that Young Civilians is a project that we collaborate until the gun has been removed. You can say military or bureaucratic custody. We collect our conscience in a common conscience environment. 10 years later, if Turkey becomes a member of European Union, if we solve the Kurdish problem at minimum levels as in the Spanish, English or French examples, if in the Alevite situation, all the citizens would have similar rights, if we solve the head scarves conflict, if we don't judge people from their hair, their look or their skin or their clothes, if the military stops making press

conferences informing the military coup and stops to intervene judges, opposition political parties jobs, we won't need to cooperate. We will reach the level that we can easily discuss our differences. You can consider Young Civilians as coalition.

B: How can we explain this action of conscience?

Hayri İnce: It is the reaction that we give against all things bothering our common conscience from heart in a collective sense.

B: Is there any inspiration source for you in here?

Hayri İnce: No, actually I do not have any inspiration source. I see here a photograph of something. The getting rid of the ban of the head scarves. Freeing of the ban for head scarves was made by the law before the Constitutional Court abolished the law. There was head lines saying that your ban of the head scarves freed with the 411 votes to the chaos and anarchy, one day later I remember a girl was trying to enter into the university, but there were a lot of people around here in the Aydın University, people were shouting, having hand moves protests against her. Those people were possibly considering themselves as contemporary people, they were considering themselves as they are enlightened people, I suppose....

Now I do not remember whether it was 1960s or 1950's a black lady in the USA, Texas I do not recall her name right now, was sitting in the front row of the public bus instead of the back rows. They were asking her to go and sit in the back rows but she refused. So she began a movement at that time in the following period. And later on the schools were made mixed boys and girls, the citizen rights were accepted and put into the realization, there were some marshes right in that I remember a black lady wearing black eye glasses was trying to enter into the university, there were a lot of white students protesting her, insulting her, this picture was unbelievably the same picture of the picture repeated nowadays. The same separatism in both cases is the same. There was one of the black ladies saying after 50 or 60 years later that picture of the scene was her most ashaming picture in her life. We have adopted apartheid so

much that this case is bothering me; there is no need to have any members of my family to use the head scarf. I have witnessed some people were insulting someone on the street just because of speaking Kurdish language, these is bothering my conscience, there is no need to be Kurdish at all. On the other hand, the matter the praying and holy places belonging to Alevites is not being accepted as holy but the mosques are holy religious places, and considering one of the sects of the Islam as the sunnite sect and to teach its theology to the Alevite students, you do not need to be Alevite to get bothered, there is separatism, apartheid in this country. There are the superior ones in this country, there are the good ones, there are those who have all the rights and there are those do not have any rights and there is a great power of rule as owner of state and the use of those powerful using that power against those who do not have any rights, they tell the poor saying that you can not have existence in this type of ruling, it says, take the head scarves off and then you can enter in, otherwise no entrance to the university. He says "I am Turkish, therefore you have to speak Turkish and later you can do whatever you like later. You can remain Kurdish but you have to say that you are Turkish; the ruling state is imposing this on you. All this is being despotic rule, it makes the state leviathan, this bothers me a lot, and my conscience is being bothered after seeing all these. I do not know how I should describe myself after seeing these, entire leftist, rightist. I am defining myself as leftist, but you do not need to be leftist to get bothered out of this behaviour.

B: Is there any separation between the left and right wing nowadays?

Hayri İnce: I think there is separation between the left and right wing nowadays. It is of course different from the classical separation between the left and right wing nowadays, because there was a movement of the labor class and the leftist movement was merely that, on the other hand there was other collection group of the system defender "tyring to protect, liberal, conservative, and central right wing groups. Now the only labor struggling

movement in the political arena is not the labor movement. The first one is the economical part of the paradigms. There is the problem of the identity, in a factory when 20 black laborers died out of an accident, they say that 20 black laborers died and not laborers died. However when the hazelnut cultivation laborers die, this event goes beyond the struggle of the class. Their villages are burnt, their animals were killed, and they remained in poverty. They work with a daily wage of twenty million. They are they are the Kurdish workers, seasonal workers, we entering from a different field. We are going into village evacuation.

B: Maybe before it gets disappeared.

Hayri İnce: There we can not say that there is not at all. But when we consider as percentage we can say that there is lessening in the number of the industrial sector laborers. There is no decreasing in the population of them but there is continuous decrease in the percentage. There is production in mechanization, with no more need for the laborers themselves, there is production concentrated on machine and automatic production sites, rather than production with population centered production, there is trend on technological production. There was no identification problem until 1990's, it was jailed in the economical arena only, the identification problem came out, it was exploded after the collapse of the Soviet union, inequality, the return of the religion, we saw that the suppresses religious believes and similars came back, it disappeared just in shape and appaerance but we found out that it was there in reality. There was a kind of explosion; we must not think that as it is negative and bad thing, it was the reality, in other words. If the man lived a travma because of his being homosexual and if his being that made him feel agony and if his woung was there he is producing his policy from over there, we must see the economic axis as the main indicator not leftist or rightist axis. We must see that like this. The previous left and right axis in a way. It is not the axis that is defining his trouble, if you ask me about it, the man can be in the left wing but there are liberals and socialist feminists as well nowadays, but there are also some

separations over there, this can be considered for the conservatives too, in other words, the man may have conservative cultural effects, take Cemil İpekçi for example, I can really say that he is average conservative man. The style of life of this man is not drinking alcohol, and this paved the way for marginal behaviour and ideas. However, how rational is that, we all have conservative values, in other words the cultural dimension began to be avoided, and kept aside, I think that there will be return of this in future. We are in a period of the demands out of the leftist cultural line and classical right wing, those demands; the both are able to represent themselves in many arenas. If a person is suppressed, he would try to get rid of that suppression, so he will be close to those who will help him doing that and he will vote for those helping him, whatever the political party could be if the leftist party is supporting him he would direct him towards that party or else he would do accordingly. If you do not help him he would come closer to the party helping, in case if my problem is the head scarves, I would come closer to whom help me in solving the problem whoever the party it is, if I am homosexual and something is hurting me I would search for those who would help me solve that problem. If I am unhappy because I am a Kurdish, I would search for whom trying to relax me and helping me solve that trouble, but if you are Kurdish and you are a worker, then you have different roles, you are a Kurdish, but you are also a laborer, and you are more than individual according to the role. From which part you feel bothered you will want that side to be corrected, so your prime problem will be the most important to be solved, so you have different dimensions to be checked out. But the man is still a laborer. Or he could be an employer, so the economic side is getting importance in that sense. The man may have 50 different identity, different factors. Being a Kurdish, a man, a homosexual, etc...a lot of identity....

B: All right is the Young civilians are cultural movement activity?

Hayri İnce: In general we can say that the political identity is coming in front in general, yes; the economical side is staying out usually. I am talking on behalf of the Young Civilians; we are bothered from several things. 7 textile workers were drowned in a car bothers us a lot. They died because the car was without windows, glasses, it was out of the standards, it was a car for carrying goods and not people. This bothers us a lot, and there is the bloody first of May of 1977, there was gun fire on the laborers, this bothers us a lot, they were innocent workers, it is unacceptable event. Later on we went to Tuzla, we participated in the protest marshes for deaths of the laborers in the shipbulding area, (Tuzla Shipyard) there were many people participated in this protest, X was with us, X could be a leftist but this is not a reason to call us leftists, the event itself could be considered as a laeftist protest but this would not be a left wing protest. This was part of the action of conscience any thing causing agony to our conscience we feel necessity to participate. However we must to the things different. We must not repeat us. The reaction and the protest must not be repeating itself. Therefore you may not see our activities in some events we are related and we are against. But if we can not find something original, we do not go and we do not give support. For example the protest against Istanbul Bar Association for lawyers, it was a repetition, we made it first in the May, but we did it this was belonging to the Young Civilians. When we discuss I am usually on the side that demand participation in each of the protests. But we have a good fame regarding reactions, the ideas must be original, must be ironical, must be surprise, and must be new and not heard before, it must be special and the specialization must belong to our movement. We must not loose those specifications.

B: There are some semi civil society organizations. The Young Civilians differs from others and they were mentioned in the book, can you give me example for them, which ones could be mentioned?

Hayri İnce: This could be TOBB (Union of Chamber of Commerce and Industry) Turkey's Bar Association; they were established by the enforcement of the laws. This can not be that way, the civil society can not be that way, if someone is telling you that you have to be our member, so this can not be civil society, this is a legal obligation, so you have to be a member, so you can not practise your profession if you do not register at their membership. The same is relevant for bar association. You can not be a lawyer if you do not register at the bar. So how come the bar is being a civil society organization. The whole is going away because of those organizations. TOBB (Union of Chamber of Commerce and Industry) is considered and accepted as the largest civil society organization. So it is a place to climb on being a member of the national assembly, you are using a great deal of economical power. You have a political position. It is strange. I consider that naming it as a civil society organization is completely wrong and void.

B: We know that the Young Civilians are using the civil society organizations to make politics; does this have any direct relation with the addressing to the conscience of the exploited people and public opinion?

Hayri İnce: Now, there is something like this, we are not against producing policies in the assembly and in the parties. As I told you there are a lot of people from different ideas and political movements. I am myself inside a political movement; it is Yeni Sol parti (New Left Party) establishment activities. I feel close to non- Ergenekon, non- nationalist, democrat, freedom supporters, so we aim at that kind of a party, and I am inside that kind of team. On the other hand, there are friends from the AKP as well, so they feel their conscience is comfortable, so that is the young civilians, so he wants to react his oppositions in the civil

politics, he wants to transform according to himself. There will be the things bothering the society, and they will continue bothering the people, just in case those troubles are solved and the bothering items do not exist any more may be after ten years or so, we can be in real political movement very freely. That is why I want this party to be established, we want to make society based politics. I am considering my self as leftist but I do not find any party that will deserve my vote. They do not represent my ideals. If you mention AKP , there are many friends of ours in the party but there are a lot of events and topics they are critising, but they feel necessity to practise politics, as a result, there is politics in our aim finally, but the politics is not only made in the assembly. And it can not be only practised in the street, so there should be mixture of the both.

B: I see the style of the civil society based political practise as the new style of the political practise, I see the young civilians as the group practising politics between the identities, I see people together from every different political trend and therefore I asked the question.

Hayri İnce: There are three dimensions of the event. We are saying words in order to relax our conscience completely in therapy sense, we aim at transforming the society, and therefore, we are searching about how we can understand each other. When we are talking about transforming the society we do not mean the society engineering at all, but we aim at developing the empathy capability, we try to find political ideas in order to create alternative policies. For example when I attended The Alevite Workshop, I delivered a speech over there, there were many Sunnite social organizations they were still thinking the same way they did before considering Sunnite and Alevite sects are completely different in their minds, they have that way of thinking... On the contrary you must look at the case in the way the law and rights of the opposite site. For example when you look over the head scarves event I said that the ban on the head scarves must be abolished and the scarves must be freed; I also said in

speech that the ban on educating the children less than the age of fifteen must also be free as well. .Who is you to ban them from religious education? The family may educate their children as they like and the way they like, how can you interfere? They can send the children to the religious schools at the age of 12 if they like. How can you determine their sending the children to the schools, I said that the ban must be abolished. On the other hand for Alevite problem, I listed the demands and I said that the practise on obliging the Alevite children to get Sunnite religious classes is a torture. This was astonishing for them. If you are defending the rights of the Alevites, you are also supposed the rights of the others as well, the way it was until now, was the policy of myself and the other side. If you are defending the rights of Alevites whether you are Alevites or this does not change the topic, you are already reflecting on the level of background, and you mention those messages, but there the man wants to establish the case or empathy, he is becoming aware of that he might be defending all the rights and freedoms. Many of the leftists are no more against the head scarves and its freedom, and defending the ban is becoming marginal, it might be our role to do that. The classical nationalists and those who are culturally conservative are following the actions of the young civilians very well. That is because we acted against the military coup d'etats. We paved the way in front of Abdullah Gül to be the president of Turkey, this was being banned because his wife is wearing head scarf. We compared all the military takeovers with the one in 1960. There was a belief saying the order come to Turkey after the military takeover that took place in 1980. We played a role to transform to ideas like this ones. We think that we played role in transformation of our society. We are practising politics in order to affect the tree political parties. In other words, we try to direct the politics; we intend to direct the solution towards the solution towards Kurdish problem. For example the Chorous of the Kurdish voices, we are saying that we consider ourselves as side party in the matter of the Alevites, we say that this is an equal citizen right...we as young civilians are creating an

observed effect on the political authority and on the related bodies and political parties as well. September, 12, 1980 military coup d'état take over conscience court, we are carrying the subjects that are causing us unrest to the public in order to find a way for solution.

We are talking with the members of parliament just to do something, we are trying to make Yassıada the Island of Democracy, and we are talking with the members of parliament. There are some people think of us as we are close to AKP, their main characteristics is that are so far away to the subject, they think that really Uskudar and Kadikoy are really side by side, however in reality there is a distance and you must drive in order to reach there. It will take that long and that time to walk there, it is not that close. So we are also not close to AKP at all. It depends on the angle you are looking at. When you look at the world from the Mars you might see Madrid and Istanbul close to each other. It is the looking angle, as far as you consider the other part far away, you can not think that you may act together in some topics. When you look at us for example from the angle of CHP, it is very normal to consider us like that.

B: Can you explain the topic that I took it from the book? It is like this: “All those words and terms used in the political arguments were conquered and polluted, whatever you say you pay attention not to tuckle to one of the passwords, and to the words in one of the drawers. Therefore you have to say a new word”.

Hayri İnce: I told you when we practise an action we pay attention to make it a little ironic, clever, it must be new idea, we are always stressing on this. If you wonder about it must say that we ourselves are being tucked in to what did. We say that we are again followers of Soros, Feytullah Gülen, we are AKP followers, we are liberals, etc.... Etc.... It is impossible not to get through the drawers. There must be system just to get rid of these walls in the heads of the people around, it is impossible to recover some people. How can I get rid of the walls in the head of Doğu Perinçek? I do not feel I am supposed to do that. But mostly we can affect

some of the nationalists, conservatives, as we name them, the Turks, religious nationalists, we can convince them to react on the death of the deer so we can direct them. We direct them to question the mistakes and the misdeeds done before. How can we make them do this, on which effect? There are some alternatives: for example, you may shout that; “get out of the Kurdistan region” or you can say something else, you can say the “the children of the Kurdistan are not alone”. Those things are the ones that reside in the mind of the person. This will cause him not to look into the subject into more conscience side and more positive codes. In that stage he would think that because the Kurdish himself they did say those words and that is why they are supporting them. All the perspective would continue to be negative. If the aim is that the politics would be the same as the result the leftists would vote for you or the rightists would vote for you the percentage would be either 40 % rightist, 60 % leftists or just the opposite. So, as far as the percentage and figures are like this why should we practise politics? It is not like this. The people vote for you because they like what you promise and they like what you did, because they think they are right. Nobody is born as leftist or rightist, things are not happening like this. If they take your words serious, he is beginning to react about what you demand. He is beginning to ask why that girl was killed. I am mentioning a man who nationalist and Turkish in origin. If we are talking about average citizen we tell them that killing a girl of 14 years of age is not acceptable. We are trying to explain it with a conscience language. We are trying to use that language instead of the any ordinary language. So we are trying to use new words and new things. We are aware that you never be able to completely get rid of the words in the drawer but as soon as we can we are trying to reach the human being without being stucked into the memorized cliché words.

B: Is there any group you say that they neither can nor be among young civilians?

Hayri İnce: The nationalists can not be among us. MHP or CHP can not take place in our movement, they can not, and it is against our meaning of our world. Emine Ayna can not be among us, but Ahmet Türk may be.

B: All right, do not you have any ideology? Is that possible?

Hayri İnce: I said that we have a lot of ideology actually, we all have different perspectives, many points of being common and also many points we are not in common ideas. The points we are in common is the democratic structure, conscience, rights, freedom, mainly four words would be the magic ones. As a group we have different view of politics. According to me, the freedom of the person that is working 12 hours, all his democratic rights, freedom of speech, education in the mother tongue, freedom of belief etc... even if everything are provided I do not think that he would be free . The freedom is the right of selection, when you work for twelve hours a day, you do not have the chance of choosing of preferring: You sleep, eat and drink and later you go back to your machine life. However Bill gates is free, you are free, we have the right and freedom to choose, we have thr right of education and all the other basic rights. Bill Gates may have a trip to Mars, he may go there and spend a holiday over there and he comes back. That is his preference. He has the right to sleep or or not to or to work or to eat this or that, he can do whatever he likes, i.e as a result is freedom is the right of choosing among choices. To what extent a man have choice, he is that much free? At the end, I am talking about basic rights and freedoms and liberal democracy, when all these are provided I believe that things would be better. According to me we shall not be free enough. I might give my right hand for the liberal democracy now. It is a distance for me, in future, a point in future; I would struggle to provide it. If we are saying that we have a common ideology, this means something; we can not say something else. The policy of conscience, and being

democrat. It is something that we might not evaluate ourselves, somebody else from outside must evaluate it.

B: The organizational scheme does not seem to be hierarchic, then how do you solve your financial problems? As far as I see you are sending mails inviting people to make donations for your activities, in other words to your “source for the mills”, Money source.

Hayri İnce: We have two different sources. The first one is ourselves, nor is every body student. There is a common friend he is supporting us 200 – 300 million Turkish liras per month. The friend that opened the leaflet in the first of May for example.

B: You are arranging among each other, in other words?

Hayri İnce: We are not dying out of hunger as a group. There are several friends working in several jobs. Project managers, medical doctors, teachers, this or that architects and similar friends are extending their support, we are trying to be self sufficient, but from to time that money might not cover our expenses so we accept donations as well. There is a list of those donors, we have their names listed. Mostly our friends. We can demand help from them. We are not accepting institutional donations at all. We also do not accept any money on their behalf. We also do not accept any donations from the embassies of diplomatic missions. We also do not accept donations from the open societies for example in case we accept money as donation from the American Embassy, how can we convince people that we are acting on our behalf on the Kurdish topic? Your being donated from the American sources directly changes and gets rid of you reliability automatically. There are academicians who are donating money to us for example; it could be a businessman that we know through our personal relations. There are around 3000 members in our e-mail group.

INTERVIEW III

B: How was your first relations and acquaintance with the Young Civilians?

Şehadet Çitil: The way I knew this Young Civilians is through the internet, I have been following them through internet since the beginning, I was not active at all until 29 of March, the elections day, an e-mail came to me, inviting us to follow the results of the elections in the office, as I said it was the movement I was following since the beginning, I was watching the movements from far behind through internet, but as far as I was working for the municipality I was not able to participate, however, I went there later , I was supposed to get rid of a taboo, I am working in the municipality but there is something I must do, and I went there that night with those thoughts. We watched elections, so my participation to those meeting, and my being with them had begun. The young civilians are the teasing young guys, i.e. the ones that are joking, playing around, kidding with many events such as the daily problems of the society, recent troubles, playing with those problems, every now and then saying that those things do not go correct for that reason of this reason, things can not be placed with cliché words or the words repeated and can not be a solution, things do not change that way, they criticise that way, they say no body is taking care, their way of interference and their interference point with their joking behaviour made me feel nice. I was affected by their joking behaviour; I can say that in this way.

B: How do you describe the civil side of the Young Civilians?

Şehadet Çitil: It is not a group that is never accepting the guardianship or control of any body, I am not talking about the guardianship of the army, it is surely never accepted, but none of them, guardianship of the religion is completely rejected, the guardianship of the traditions. They do not accept guardianship of any body, they refuse to accept the guardianship in case it may be causing the unfair, torture, unrest, or it may break the balance of the nation, or it may give negative effects to the democracy, but we do not mean ethical

side, they would not accept guardianship of any institution or bodies. They are a refusing group in that sense. Being civil is like that for them, and being civil is like that for me as well. They think that guardianship of the other bodies is caused by insufficiency of the civil actor bodies; the main reason is non-sufficient role of the civil actor in their roles that is why this group intends to fill the gap caused by insufficient actor of the civil body. But this can not be done with former cliches and systems which are tried formerly and registered as unsuccessful cliché solutions, this is the worst case that is causing trouble and makes us defeated. The guardianship of the bodies is rejected. The people want radical solution and clear changes that will make their life more comfortable and without trouble, like getting rid of the heating system if the parts of it ruined, you can change the parts while all the system is ruined. People expect you to get rid of all the heating system and close the shop, they are so clear. I describe being civil that way.

B: All right, what does the action of conscience recall for you? As far as I am concerned this is the most important problem of them.

Şehadet Çitil: Yes we want conscience and we want basic democracy. We can not talk about a democracy without conscience. It is the conscience that is holding us all together. Or else, the democracy description and translation is different in the mind of each of us... My democratic thoughts were the ones that were thought to me in my religion, since my childhood, also the things I have learned from my family, the things my society has injected into my mind, and in to the others minds, but all these democracy definition may conflict with the knowledge and with definitions of the others, for example it may conflict with the definitions of the X, the things I say may not attract the attention of X and may not be useful for X at all, so I am leaving aside the ones that were thought to me in my religion, since my childhood, also the things I have learned from my family, the things my society has injected into my mind, because those may cause troubles, X is taking my religious believes as criteria,

that's why we need a common criteria, so I am acting according to conscience, because conscience is common, this is getting involved as common sense. If something goes wrong with your conscience you are not likely to accept it. Even if you may think that something is correct according to what you have learned until now, your conscience may not accept it as correct. So you may refuse it. If the things that were thought to you in the religion in childhood, the things I have learned from the family, may damage the society, may give damage to me and to X, we can accept things going wrong with the conscience. That is our demand of conscience based democracy. This is the common idea bringing many of the people together and helping the production of common ideas.

B: Do we mean something ethical (ahlaki) when we mention conscience?

Şehadet Çitil: Both ethical and also...Yes we talk about ethical values and criterias but those ethical criterias do not mean a lot, it has elastic structure, it is not individual. If the behaviour is ethical for me it might not be ethical for others. At this point I am coming to the point of harming the others. If the behaviour or the action is bothering the others and harming them, my conscience is having its role and interfering into the topic. Because the movement arena of the individual must not be limited.

B: So is the the criteria here related to the human rights and freedoms?

Şehadet Çitil: Exactly, we aim at non limiting movement arena of the individual; my conscience is getting into the interference. If a person wants his movement arena to be wider, he has to struggle for it, if a group or a society wants it to be wider arena they have to fight for it. If the usage of the right is damaging the complete procedure it bothers me and my conscience gets involved into the circuit.

B: How do you describe the Young Civilians' pressure on citizenship? Citizens are not able to swim, but there is headline saying that the people has filled in to the beaches, how do you comment on this? How do the Young Civilians describe people as definition?

Şehadet Çitil: I think I remember the words you said I suppose. There is a word differentiating the people from the citizen over there. The citizen is not person who has privileges. There is kind of sense. There is a belief saying that the citizen has the right to govern the others, telling not to do this, not to share that or similar things, they feel that they have those privileges. They say as far as I am a Turkish citizen, there is a main element for this, and this is to be Turkish in origin, if you are not Turkish in origin you can not have the main element needed to be equal. As far as you are not Turkish in origin I have the right to be privileged. The description of the citizen is causing a trouble.

B: i.e. is this the understanding of citizen description you are against?

Şehadet Çitil: Yes, we are not talking about the citizenship that is grabbing the privileges.

B: They used to say that the citizen was the ones laughing at the jokes of Cem Yılmaz and crying for the drama film known as “babam ve oğlum” etc...

Şehadet Çitil: We are people like this; we are not holders of priveleges. We do not have a trouble such as changing the world. We are not kind of citizen getting the change of the world as their duty and not establishing a control center for this. We laugh at the jokes of Cem Yılmaz, there are some of my friends listening to the singer “Müslüm Baba”, and I do not want to mention the word people's citizen and the citizen's people because it recalls “CHP”. Could I tell you the thin line? I do not know the line is really minute and tiny. The definition people and citizen has elasticity and can be tightened and the opposite.

B: i.e. do you struggle for the cultural citizenship in reality?

Şehadet Çitil: Every body has the right to be citizen with his or her own cultural identity, there is a prerequisite to be a citizen and that is doing the necessary action to be Turkish, this has to be done...

B: Any thing beyond this?

Şehadet Çitil: Beyond this you must be able to be citizen as Kurdish as well, you must be able to be citizen with your Armenian culture, and the common values are the cultures. Being the citizen must not bring us together, the culture must bring everybody together, do you understand what I mean. If the main topic bringing us together is citizenship, the main privileged is the Turkish origin, but I am not the main element of the society Turkish citizen. We are different in this topic.

B: Is there someone not accepting this reality?

Şehadet Çitil: No not, we are against of their being the holders' privileges. We are against claims of main privileged citizens to say that they are privileged and they are the real citizens. There is nothing such as main citizens; they are not the main element citizens. Turkey is so cosmic, there were many struggles and wars for this, all want to be the main citizen but it is not so easy, nobody could be the main one, this is a complex subject...

B: I think we have to protect each others rights in cross sides, this is the reality.

Şehadet Çitil: My struggle for my own rights means a lot for me, this is because my movement area is limited I struggle to make it larger, my democratic right were grabbed by the others so I fight for my rights, and I do this for myself, my participation of Alevite marsh rights intervenes into the subject now, the conscience interferes is not the circuit, in addition to the conscience there is the cultural right getting into the circuit, those people are not using their cultural rights, because they are not the main citizens, they were not taken up to the same level of the main citizens. I want them to be the main citizens of that country. This is now the

main point to be mentioned, The Alevite is coming and supporting me in the marshing against the ban of the head scarves, and i go and support them in getting their struggle for the cultural rights and for their getting main citizen rights. We are not sitting together and talking about what we shall do, what is the ideology of the other fellows, we do not ask X about his/her beliefs, or Y about his/her ideas, what the religious beliefs, of the the way they look towards solving the problems, i.e. our common points are not the ideologies of the people around us, there is not a common policy on a certain subject. They may be opposite in political sense but our common sense is the conscience and cultural values. It is the limitation of the movement arena of our demands and rights and freedoms. This is the topic.

B: Do you mean that there is no any problem with the large ideologies?

Şehadet Çitil: No we do not have any problem with the large ideologies at all.

B: Do the young civilians have any ideology?

Şehadet Çitil: No, not at all, it is only democracy based on conscience, there is nothing else bringing all of us together.

B: Is there any separation between the left and right nowadays, according to you, or is not there any? Why?

Şehadet Çitil: There is great difference between the left and right in Turkey itself and the classical world literature, when you take the leftist movement in Turkey it is very different from the leftisit movement in the world in general, and when you look over the rightist movement in Turkey, and the rightist movement in the world you find great differences. The left and right are the words that were not filled in because of the teenage psychology, and teenager shouts. This must be studied a lot.

B: How?

Şehadet Çitil: I will only give you example to try to explain the case to you. Normally the leftist wing in the world refuse the last control of the cases in the ruling site, the left wing

would be praying for the interference of the army in the affairs to have the control on the ruling power, this is the case that comes to the mind at the beginning. I can not say every body is the same but this is the case. Is there any conflict between the left wing and the right wing? Yes, of course there is, certainly there is a conflict...But it is the opposite with the world in general. The party that is demanding democracy is nearly on the right wing, not center right , on the other hand those who are side by side with the army is the leftist party, but it is just the opposite in the world. The owner of the privileges was the left but nowadays it is the right wing. There is right saying that I am getting to the majority of power and collecting the larger share of the cake and distributing to the higher number of the people (to what extend they distribute is to be discussed) and it is trying to establish a law and jurisdiction, so it naturally causes conflict.

B: Is there any “brother” civil society associations with the young civilians

Şehadet Çitil: This is very large concept, which kind of brotherhood?

B: The ones you acted together.

Şehadet Çitil: We are supporting the civil society associations in the marshes “say stop” 70 million people were against military take over, we were inside the coalition, but we are not some where else. As far as we are working different from the labor unions, we are not arranging labor organizations and activities, we are avoiding this. We are not that kind of activists that are distributing leaflets and going home in the evening... We are enjoying our activities at the same time, we are considering the day of activity as the day of joy, which is how we consider it. Whoever is the main topic of our actions we are joking with his position until the end of the action...so we go back home in the evening, this case is the way of getting discharge as well, so we are also doing the function opposite the civil society associations doing so we say that the action is needed so we had to do more effective job, we are criticizing the labor union as they do not do whatever demanded from them. They are warning

and castigating the actions. That is why we are sitters with their movement...but we are supporting...

B: All right, which groups we can say there are inside the Young Civilians?

Şehadet Çitil: There are guests but there are not any different groups. Once an activist comes he has to leave his group outside. There is nobody saying that he or she came on behalf or the certain group or movement. There are some friends joined us from “say stop” movement but on the other hand there are a lot of people coming from the conservative religionist side, there are people from the Alevite society, they all leaving their societies and groups outside when they join us, because our aim is not to pave the way for different groups to introduce their policy, but to let the groups to know each other and to know their thoughts, we are all leaving our group identity outside, we are not talking about the cultural identity as well. There are a lot of different fellows among us, there are agnostic ones, but i am just the opposite, there are some fellows defining themselves as they are leftists, there are some liberals among us, and on the contrary there are a lot of people conservative, religious, people we all set around and talked about to whom we casted our votes, one of our friends said that he casted his vote for Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, one of our friend voted for Saadet Party on the contrary of his family voting for CHP, some voted for Saadet Party, some Kurdish originated fellows voted for AKP and some for DTP, so they divided their votes that way, we found out that there was no vote for CHP. Excluding CHP-MHP side we were a complex group.

B: I would ask you a just related question with that subject; do you have any tendency movement that you declared that they can not be with you?

Şehadet Çitil: No not at all. There is no group we certainly exclude away, just in condition of not being a fascist we accept all the ideas, but we are against accepting the sacrifice of the souls for the flags, for the land or for the holy things, we may not accept this. Those who support and cast vote for CHP and those who are liberal or leftists can come among us.

B: Can you explain the topic that I took it from the book? It is like this: “All those words and terms used in the political arguments were conquered and polluted, whatever you say you pay attention not to tuckle to one of the passwords, and to the words in one of the drawers. Therefore you have to say a new word”.

Şehadet Çitil: New word, our joking language, we talked with a friend of ours he used all the words, all the cliches hidden in the drawers he said that we must nor be alienated to each other, we have to accept the differences among each others, the language that is used in the arguments is the language of the aristocrats and not the public language, the language of the street, so when the political argument is done by that language, the people do not like or understand, on the other hand the language that is used by the Young Civilians is the public one that is why we have the sympathy, so the people understood all what we said just the opposite the political argument, people do not understand what they say, now we say the Turks and the Kurds were living together for a long time, instead of saying this we said that if the Turks and Kurds would not be able to live together let that world be demolished, we say that in public way, that is why we are good with the people we talk their language.

B: The sensations are getting involved into the language.

Şehadet Çitil: It is all senses. We do not talk things that are not coming from the deep heart. We are also like this when participate into actions; we are not voting the actions before doing it. We are looking into the eyes of each other, there are even some friends leaved our activities because we did not vote the activities whether to or not to do. We are taking the decision at that time and transferring into actions. Some friends are opposing that way, so they close thier eyes until the decision is taken (laughing).

We do not think that the politics must not be done in the garden of the assembly. We are also practising politics, we are every day giving press release we are making actions, believe that politics of Turkey must be taken out of the assembly garden and the garden of the army, it is

tucked in those garden. I myself were brought out in the city of Diyarbakır, the decisions that were taken in Ankara was not interested for me at all. Those decisions that were made out of my participation is not of my interest. I did not care about the effects of them because they were not applied over there, they never asked our ideas, we were never thought as we are part of the problem, they were decisions by centers we were not included. For long years, the same system had been applied. The politics had been done without people-centered decisions, we added a new language and a new breath to the politics, some parties are inviting us to their headquarters to ask how we could attract the attention of the society. The way we act was the equal to the politics, we were talking on the level of the people but the members of the parliaments were talking on the higher curtain, we are sitting in tea and coffee houses and producing actions, the people think that we talk their language and they feel that we are close to them. We are like this, we must not force another language. The language of politics must not be deaf, the language must change, the language that begins with Mister President, mister vice president, these words are the language of the cliché, it must change, we think like that. Now the main aim of the Young Civilians is the problems of the ethnical origins....The Turks are the ones who are the main citizen, their movement arena is wide enough, they already freed their limits, but there are the ones who are second class citizens, so the Young Civilians are acting towards arranging the normal citizenship to everybody, the Kurds, Romans, Armenians, etc...

B: It seems that there are many people in the mail group, are those people coming to the meetings?

Şehadet Çitil: In average, we are 72 people who give money, are registered in mail group, write and distribute announcement, commit act, visit office but I don't know how many people we are. There are some people who are registered only to be informed.

B: What is the relation between Young Civilians and Water Movement (*Su Hareketi*)?

Şehadet Çitil: I don't know the history of Water Movement but it is an e-mail group which is established in the past and its name is not changed. When young civilian is established even they were not in existence. Some people came together and planned a movement.

B: Isn't it also a group who makes policy?

Şehadet Çitil: No it is not. Our group's name. In the past before young civilian isn't established. A group in which people came together and made something in the young children's format and in that naunces. So we didn't change that.

B: There is also a group that left you, why did they leave?

Şehadet Çitil: I don't know why they left. They did before me. I started to visit young civilians in March last year. We don't know it at all. But because of people's differences there are some different points among people. I also have differences. Everybody has special life we just come together and enjoy making something there. Why the others left, we need to ask those previous members.

B: Young civilians say that they use speaking conversation (*muhabbet*) language, can you tell about us?

Şehadet Çitil: It comes from here (she shows his heart). We use the language which is comes from the heart. We are improving a new language in that means community is in a struggle with every part especially for 26 years. I am talking about a republic which is 86 years old. Everyone is copy of another. So the war language of ours occurs. And that is a war language that we have, we couldn't develop peace language. How is the peace language developed? With speaking language. It develops with something that comes from your heart and that is connected with each other in conscience. While you don't want democracy with conscience, you can't use speaking language. While you don't use speaking language, you can't use peace language. While you don't use peace language, war language doesn't disappear. Something is

connected with each other like this. That means for example, we say 'I love you' to each other that is easy like this. If X one is injured basicly, I cry here. If someone is hurt because of its sect, it affects me. Even I am for because no one should be insulted or restricted because of their selections. Actually, human right exists when I defend other people, not myself. That means, I can join some actions for headgear but if I don't go for someone else. There is a deficiency and I can't improve the speaking language there. Speaking language is necessary for someone else, not for themselves. The person mostly loves itself in the world.

B: To create empathy

Şehadet Çitil: Yes, that is necessary for someone else. I've already loved myself. People love themselves. When I love someone else, language already develops. It comes from empathy.

B: Lastly one more question. Is there any problem that is why you are here in young civilian movement now?

Şehadet Çitil: Yes, there is. I am there for democracy. Because when I want for myself or flame's right and demand or only Armenian's right demands. I just want for them. My action's area finishes for democracy.

B: So how do you determine actions that you will?

Şehadet Çitil: Completely from agenda. That is, we speak a subject which is agenda at that time. We don't make extra agenda. We already have enough. At that time what is problem for us for example; if DTP (national Kurdish party) was closed, we talk about that. Following week, we talk about problems like this; Roman citizens have matters which occurred in Selende. We don't have enough time to make extra agenda for us. Because agenda is already concentrated.

B: Is your meetings weekly?

Şehadet Çitil: Yes, we meet weekly but because of our weekly meetings are not instutional. We provide free attending. People who don't want to come so he or she doesn't come but

after meeting, decisions are sent all of them. Like; you make a decision I can help or can't in that decision.

APPENDIX-B: AN INTERVIEW WITH A MEMBER OF 'WE ARE INTERROGATING THE DARKNESS' MOVEMENT

Burçak: Why do 'we interrogate the darkness'? How did it appear?

Mehmet Kentel: The movement is not merely that we are wondering about and questioning the darkness, this is the case that brought this entire people around. Actually, it is not a merely questioning and interrogating the darkness. It is going on and under a different topic and under a different structure.

B: Is it like a student club or so?

Mehmet Kentel: It is not a club actually. It was just after the Semdinli – at that time I was a student and I was not in that movement- an organization made in here under the name of From Bosphorus to Diyarbakır. Along a whole week there was participation by the teachers and students at the campus of the university. If I remember correctly, some open class sessions were held a week long. A photograph exhibition was held if I am not mistaken. After this, directly, the organization of a bus trip to Diyarbakır was done and students and teachers participated and went to Diyarbakır, they made some contacts with some teachers and families in there. There was something beginning in there and it was a case of coming side by side. This case was beyond the clubs and beyond politics; it is not easy to name it. I am here to represent some ...like this.... 'I am representative of EMEP' ...there was nothing like this, every body in there was an individual, there is no other explanation. Practising a political action is created and formed that way.

B: Anti institutional

Mehmet Kentel: Yes or there was never an event being anti institutional and there was never sharp clubbing or there was not a case expressing that we were completely against

institutionalization, a written manifest from the beginning. There was a case remaining out of that in one form or another. There was no case having under those conditions .There was a standing outside of it. It was not at all under the umbrella of it. And later every year and every season it took a different identity and a different thing, it is a unique event named by the participants.

B: But there were only Bosphorus University students I suppose.

Mehmet Kentel: Some other people from the outside participated in all what we did. But, the original center of the idea has never changed the weight of the topic and main mission remained the same.

B: I see, they could not be included in all means...

Mehmet Kentel: The participation remained in the small scale. There could be my mistake in the chronological order but I must place it before or after the Diyarbakır trip, there was an organized reaction against the law called “Struggling against Terror” in the campus of the University. They were the same people who organized this protest. Later on ‘interrogation the darkness’ came together with the murder of Hrant Dink to our terminology. I was included in that later on. Hrant Dink was murdered, and when he was murdered it was the last day of the final exams in the school. Therefore a great number of the students were going for semester holiday. Later the school began again, directly after the semester. When I was walking down from the south uphill road there was an “open meeting: we are interrogating darkness that is creating a murderer out of a baby”. This sentence was used by Rakel Dink at the funeral. There is a study saloon, in Bosphorus campus, there was a big open meeting with wide range of participation, and there were almost 150 people in that meeting. There were some teachers the number was around 5 to 10 teachers, there were many students from very different establishments and organization and things...like me in that political movement, people who are political party members, such as TKP members or so....

It is a matter of humanity sense, the people of very different, completely different minded people all around, those who are from different ideas and thoughts came together, different identities and different memberships of bodies came all together. Actually, I am telling you that case, whatsoever, open meeting political arena and etc.....There, the people made the argument about the murder of Hrant Dink, why did they kill him?...what is behind that action? What is creating a murderer out of a baby? There were many people felt great sorrow out of that murder and they felt that this nationalism was a bad one and we must like our land like this and good nationalism does not kill Hrant Dink or that kind of things. There were people thinking that way. They were eliminated later and then, the community that made their sound heard, saying that nationalism is a bad thing and nationalists actually do that kind of things.

B: That's merely against nationalism, is it like this?

Mehmet Kentel: Yes, the story began from a place like this. And now we are interrogating the darkness such as organizing classes, panels, we made the campus very busy for very long time like two months or so...Here we organized a photograph exhibition in the middle of the field, the field over there, we opened table and we sold *Agos* newspaper and we organized a photograph exhibition. We sold books about minorities like the *Metis'* or so...

B: Actually, There is something to give consciousness to the people against misdeeds and misconsciousness, is that correct?

Mehmet Kentel: Yes, we actually never took a teaching mission to ourselves like this. But look at those things that we could not see. One thing was that while we went to Diyarbakır we got introduced one a name of one of them. What was it? It was about non-seeing...There is something we do not see, it was like this, I do not remember but there was something unseen or so...There are some people we do not see and we do not touch, they are feeling agonies, we must touch them, and we must see them.

B: It is coming to me as the modernity is refusing to accept and such as covering it, suppressing it, it is something making those moves being seen or that kind of thing.

Mehmet Kentel: It is correct. Actually, when you take a look at the same people, and the environment you see that this environment, these people in the movement and their different protests have a close relationship with the movements being suppressed by modern nation-states or capitalism. However we did not sit around a table or discuss that those kinds of issues are happening and let us do something, this did not happen. We were not interested about these. As the main topic is that the subject that was attracting the agenda of the world and the agenda of our nation brought us here. Hrant was murdered and we must do something about minorities. There was an explosion in Semdinli and people went there. The laborers died in Tuzla and later we marched into Tuzla. Therefore, they were reflexive movements meaning wise. We are interrogating the darkness. Whenever we organized an event of interrogating the darkness in October of 2007, and there was a march from the North campus to the South there was symbolization of the action, they laid the body of Hrant to the ground...

B: Performance?

Mehmet Kentel: Yes, a performance has been done. Many television canals came, news papers came, because we announced that we were going to walk from the North campus to the South and we were doing while marching on the streets the policemen began to bother us, saying and telling us harshly not to walk on the street, walk away on the pavements, the bargaining with police. Having troubles of pushing each other or so... We came to the south gate and while there was a press release over there the police had attacked us, later on we watched on tv, when they attacked they, the policemen, shouted that "There is a gun" and thing like that to legalize, legitimate their attacks on us, as they knew they were going to be documented and shown on the tvs. They wanted a reason for doing that. As a result, whatsoever, we escaped inside. There was a bargain with the police. The policemen were

telling us to open the street and we were saying that we would not open. The teachers came, they made bargain with the police. They bothered our teachers. And they did some things like these... some similar things happened over there. As a result the police went away and we went down. We finished that period with concerts and brotherly songs. And later, another argument came around. Who were we? What were we? What is going to happen to us? What kind of thing we were representing? Were we a structure? What is bringing us together? Is there something bringing us together? Shall we be organized in a club or a party? All this things were discussed.

B: What happened at the end?

Mehmet Kentel: Nothing happened at the end. That is until now; the most concrete, touchable result is that Tea house (Çayhane) you see. But I am not inside that movement at the moment or I may say that I am around it, let me say that way. I have an intimacy and I have a feeling of sympathy but I do not feel the same as the last times of the Interrogating the Darkness. There is much of different reason for that.

After the Interrogating the Darkness, the summer , the vacation of summer came around and when the season was opened again in september of 2007 nobody came into the meeting site from October until November, later on the issue about sending soldiers to Iraq, we had a meeting once again, and the name of the Interrogating the Darkness changed to be “We Demand Brotherhood (*Kardeşlik İstiyoruz*)” Those who were not among us in the movement of the Interrogating the Darkness, came among us and those who were around before they went out, because it had a flexible structure. Many effective and influencing activities were done there. We covered this green area with the grave stones.

B: I had seen it but I did not know about the Interrogating the Darkness by then.

Mehmet Kentel: Had you seen it? I see, and on the grave Stones we wrote down all the names we know well such as Hrant Dink, Musa Anter, and similar names murdered formerly.

We also wrote names of the soldier most possibly could be 19 years old Mehmet and on the other hand 21 years old Civan of the guerillas as symbolic of their names we wrote on the strapor material and wrote their names. We also established two tents just to give an idea about the war and to tell the war, to tell about the headquarters, we used several symbols and similars, we tried our best to express the agony, to tell the feelings of the mother, there were a lot of poems, and symbolic things were exhibited inside the tents. You could hear the voices whenever you enter inside.

B: It seems you had fed yourselves with the art, actually.

Mehmet Kentel: Yes, really there were a lot of people among us from different clubs from the Fine Arts, they had many additional things to give and many people from different traditions they had thoughts on their own cultures and conciousness and therefore a lot of things came around.

The following “We Demand Brotherhood (*Kardeşlik İstiyoruz*)” took place in Tuzla later on again. We organized activities not to allow all Turkey to be like Tuzla. In the spring season of the year 2008, when the laborers died one after another, we questioned what we can do there. Again we organized an exhibition in here, if I do not remember wrong, we organized a photograph exhibition. We organized a labor week. For along week, many laborers from inside the struggle of labor, the head of the farmers’ labor union, people from around, laborers from the leather workshops, all came here. .from time to time some academicians participated in our activities in changing views and at the end of the week we marshed in Tuzla. It was the most effective action we have ever made in the sense of being seen and in the sense of reaching the people. We were very active and effecting every body and we were supported by many participants from outside.

B: Are there any civil society organizations or similar you are supporting or acting together?

Mehmet Kentel: There is nothing like this but wherever we went, we were in touch with different bodies. We cooperated with Limter-İş in Tuzla, the labor union of the Harbour and Shipbuilding. When we participated in the marshes of the First of May “Laborers day” we acted with DİSK and Gencsen. There are members of Genç sen among us. There were things done with them. There is no kind of behaviour saying we do cooperation with this or that civil society organization or political party or policy, or similar. In any action we take we share works, you demand help from these; you talk with this ... that kinds of things we do. For example when we marshed to Tuzla, DISK (labor union) gave us shirts to be wearred, and we walked with those shirts and this marsh became topic in the Cumhuriyet nationwide newspaper.

B: Do you remember the exact date?

Mehmet Kentel: It was on April 19, i.e it was on the main topic of Cumhuriyet on Sunday April 20. It was at first page of several newspapers. It was shown on the NTV etc.... There was direct connection of the regressive AKP opposition, that’s why Cumhuriyet gave this event on the first page, not merely because they were with the laborers in a sense. We could not see the behaviour saying “how nice they are supporting the struggle. But it was a good sign at showing how important the matter was. And from that point of view, personally, there we went into a serious differentiation. There was a gain of power together with Tuzla...And there were many groups from ODTU (*METU*) and Gebze Technology Institute, and from another university more than 100 people articipated in our marsh. There was unification with the laborers there. It gave us a sense of success and furthermore several people, other groups, groups from Bosphorus University, began to think that there is something like this, there is something we can do, this consciousness began to be improved later on. The power over there

made the people think and interrogate themselves about who we are, what we are? Why am I standing here, to do what? Until that time there were not so many questions...i.e. until that time several unrests the feeling of responsibility and the feeling of having common things began to separate...I am socialist, and I have a view of solving problems, what are you thinking? The other began to say "I am an Islamist; I forgot to mention that at the same period we had an important action for headscarves.

B: At that time there were Young Civilians, I suppose?

Mehmet Kentel: Actually, one of our members is from Young Civilians.. There might be some more people from the Young Civilians in the movement. However for me I do not wonder about from where the member is, I did not feel any need to learn or to know. Because we were going out of our meeting to there other meeting, for example that meeting was done in EMEP, and later it would be a meeting of Young Civilians, but we never cared about the details. We organized a press release in the headscarves activity. It was a little different thing, the main topic if it related the ladies and the groups, Islamic groups demanded help from us. They asked us about what to do. At that time we were organizing various activities and thing in the Faculty of Education. There was always a problem for the ladies to enter into school campuses since I registered at the university, I have been here since the year 2004, in comparison with other universities, our school was the most lenient, and maybe Bilgi University, for these who are wearing the scarves, I do not know but they were free atmosphere for them. There was a problem for them at the faculty of education, as they would give them disciplinary penalties; therefore they demanded help from us to develop reaction against that. And we participated in this and in that reaction we marshed between the north campus to the south one and that kind of thing...We weared headscarves, and some one headed people also supported that, but mainly the men and young boys weared the head scarves. It is something like this. Later on, after Tuzla or so, especially in summer the people

that came together side by side because of some troubles and agonies began to fall apart from each other, because of different senses and different focus of interest. We were affected all because of that thing... at that time there was some arguments among the left may be not merely left alone but among all the opposition that effected the agenda meanwhile...For example Sevan Nişanyan's pouring the urination and gaita on his wife, and the fight between Etyen Mahcupyan and the feminists effected us a lot and the criticism made against the left wing in the Taraf newspaper affected us. Some people reacted against that criticism very sharply, and some people among us were merely reacted against the criticism and the reactions. Generally, we were affected by this discussion... and some people felt that they become and stayed away in this process.

B: Was there a discussion or have you entered into a discussion on whether there is differentiation between the left and the right of today towards the Interrogating the Darkness?

Mehmet Kentel: Yes, we have entered into discussion, they met several times. There is something like this that some group of friends are determining the things while some other people were not interested at all, for example people from Bosphorus, of Hisarustu they were all together, I have not such kind of relations with them, some more jobs to do, we were doing something, what were we doing? I have a relation. And actually their personal relations, topics they discussed, were reflected to us... But we also talked i.e. who were we? Were we leftists? Of so... say... and for example the question about who were we, what is going to happen to us were a very tuff argument and tensioned. Okay, we are doing big jobs but, only three people are handling ther whole work , because there is nothing relating us and fastening us together, that day I was free, I am not available, I will go to the cinema and things like this. All the works to be done are collected and directed to three or four people. That is the case, how to say, we have arrange it as a structure in one case or another, we have to establish a

club or we have to establish a party, some of us supporting that idea while some of us were against the idea saying that those kinds of things break us and our spirit and causes us corruption this was the thing belonging to us: And in case we establish a party what kind of party shall we organize? Are we leftist? If it remains to me; of course yes, the thing that I understand from the left wing is the main concrete that is holding this structure. Some of us were asking whether we became very leftist or not on the labor side. Once upon a time it was intensified on the labor affairs. Things like this were lived and practised, as a result, some of the people around felt away from that atmosphere and I was among them.

B: Why?

Mehmet Kentel: Because the way used in the reflection of the things discussed in the agenda was not the ones I liked and the way I might accept in that movement. I took it like this, and I saw the system getting us out of our accepted way, and forcing me to ask myself where you are? Where is the place you stand...I felt like this... It was not a merely action that when something like this happens that would mean this or that, it was not like this, really, according to what is going on I might be leftist or so... it is never like this. But the process of establishing was like this. The following period I went to France, and the Tea House (*Çayhane*)¹¹⁴ was established at that time, according to me, the tea house is a stuff in the center of the people living in the same school in the daily life. There is nothing so large such as Interrogating the Darkness, they are not concerned to reach wide range of people as Interrogating the Darkness did. There is an important reality of course, as far as I understand, the social sciences club (SBK) students are the bodies established the tea house, and further more the thing must be thought is that I am not in the movement, I do not know. For example, nowadays they are organizing labor week and they are participating in the activities and they are supporting them, they are announcing it. They are not doing as it is closed for the

¹¹⁴ It is a kind of conglomeration that students steep tea and do not pay money if they don't have. It is constructed as against the closing of the center canteen of Bogazici. (Erken, Mehmet, "Çayhane Açıldı", URL: http://www.dunyabizim.com/news_detail.php?id=1092, 8 May 2009.)

others, they are always there, they are showing their existence, and their alternative standing. Those who drink tea are putting as much money as they like on the center of the table, if they do not have any money they do not pay any money... They are rather different from the others and they are in very good stand. In very middle of the campus. I am following through the e-mails there is unrest of the president of the university, they are going to develop a reactionary protest against him.

B: All right, is there any new social movement in the world or in Turkey you brotherhood? Or how is your general stand or look on the Interrogating the Darkness against the world social forum?

Mehmet Kentel: As I told you, as far as it has a very loose structure, it does not even have any structure, there is no stand for the social forum at all. Now there might a little bit a little more stand as they have more compact structure, but we, for example, thought to do stuffs, to do student social forum and later the World Social Forum would follow up. We intend to accumulate all the opposition groups in the universities of Turkey at the Bosphorus University. Later, there was no powerful stand to do this, also the disorganization, in one sense is good in the other sense is bad, nobody showed enough energy to establish that. Because when Hrant Dink was murdered the energy is coming out automatically, and you catch it, nevertheless in order to get active thing out of positive thing you have to get energy out. The tea house is a good example, of a result of energy. But we could not do the social or the similars, although we thought in all details. There is no movement we consider as a brother movement but as far as we were in communication with we did many activities. Actually, there are many people they are related with some movements and thanks to this, they are getting information through those movements automatically, and we are being in communication i.e. ... The young civilians are doing the same for example...

B: Say Stop to Racism and Nationalism

Mehmet Kentel: Say Stop for the first time we collected the “we interrogate the darkness” a young man said that we are establishing a movement we call Say stop to racism and nationalism (*İrkçılığa ve Milliyetçiliğe Dur De*), let us establish and let us do it, he came to our school to offer it, we talked and the stuff...It all happened like this, we always went to the activities of the others, for example the event May 1, participated in the marsh as the students of the Bosphorus University. We stood over there side by side with the Genç Sen and supported them, and supported Limter-İş also. There was no any continuous link; we did not establish any link or stuff... with any body at all.

B: The Interrogating the Darkness reminded me radical democracy. Either the way bringing the people together or being effected from the agenda and having organization, touching each other or so...

Mehmet Kentel: Yes, there is side face like this, it is correct. But, if you ask whether we think the same about the theory, you can hardly find someone likes Laclau, Mouffe but there is never a kind of behaviour saying we read it so let us do the same, nothing like that. There are things coming out of arenas, filtered from the areas opened by the life, the things coming from the forced things by the life itself, this culture came around like this.

B: Theoretical back plan? I am sure you were affected, am I right?

Mehmet Kentel: Of course; there is a great deal of theoretical accumulation, on the individual level. But it was not that we saw this and read this so let us does it, it is not like that... But the people are consisted of those who are aware of what is going on worldwide, and the people are following all the activities around and practising all the new acts and innovations and they are all getting the experience of the events.

B: All right, is there any movement worldwide you were affected?

Mehmet Kentel: It is very difficult to answer that question, because we were at the same classes with our friends in the activities and practices , it was very difficult to remember whether our friend explained his idea or his story in the class or some where else so we got into application of the idea...I do not remember.. There is nothing like that. Those people did very good and useful things. Let us do the same, there is not such kind of things, those people are very good let us do same as they did, there is nothing like this, but in general, there are a lot of things we might be effected, at least there energy created by them, there a great number of people that could be effected and could have energy out of that they are doing beautiful things, There is no need for perpendicular organization, and bureaucratic formation at all. We can make a lot of things horizontally coming side by side...

B: Actually, this is one of the reasons which are making the movement a new social movement.