

Visual activism in a digital era:
Mobilisation through images
in the Gezi Movement and the Anti-Coup Resistance

A Dissertation

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Abstract

This dissertation examines contesting practices of visual activism in the social movement environment of today that is largely shaped by digitality. Despite the substantial amount of research on the role of the Internet and social media in the emergence and trajectory of social movements, little is known about how mobilisations with incompatible political goals influence each other on digital platforms and in visual terms in particular. Addressing the ways in which online visuals mobilise people in contemporary social movements across political divides, this study shows that political imageries developed on different sides of a social conflict can be remarkably similar in form and content despite their diverging viewpoints. At the same time, the study argues that the possibilities of developing a perennial character of images online is a crucial factor in configuring the interaction between political divides and that leads to the rise of common and anonymous people as icons that mark social movements in digital societies.

Accordingly, the dissertation offers a comparative analysis of still images collected in relation to Turkey's 2013 Gezi Movement and 2016 Anti-Coup Resistance, two popular mobilisations that had diverse political goals. In order to address both the images produced and disseminated online during the peak times of the mobilizations as well as the extended low-level activism that continued beyond these peaks, data collection covers a five-year period between 2013 and 2018. Photographs and illustrations found on social media platforms, blogs, and digital news portals are analysed through *grounded visual analysis*, an original model combining the qualitative approaches of grounded theory with established visual research methods. Following a sociological methodology but at the same time drawing from Art History, Cultural Studies, and Media and Communications, this dissertation also makes an interdisciplinary methodological contribution to the study of social movements.

Furthermore, in order to interpret the findings, the project combines *framing*, a much-used theoretical approach in social movements research borrowed from Goffman, with *everybody*, a concept that can be found in the work of de Certeau and, to some extent, in the growing literature after Deleuze and Guattari's work on *affect*. The results of the study show that photographs establish similar visual frames, yet with certain differences, across political divides, while illustrations contribute to these frames in diverse ways. Some of the illustrations consolidate them, and others, particularly those that remediate photographs, promote certain figures that sharpen, deepen, and layer the initial frames, paving the way for the iconisation of images.

Ultimately, the study highlights the convergence and struggle over the symbolic dimension of social movements with incompatible political goals and situates the mobilising role of ordinary figures as the main focus of visual activism today.

Keywords: social movements, visual research, digital media, grounded theory, Turkey

Zusammenfassung

Diese Dissertation handelt von konkurrierenden Praktiken des vorrangig auf digitaler Ebene verorteten visuellen Aktivismus gegenwärtiger sozialer Bewegungen. Während viele Studien die Rolle des Internets und sozialer Medien in der Entstehung und Entwicklung sozialer Bewegungen untersucht haben, ist weit weniger erforscht, wie verschiedene Formen der Mobilisierung mit an sich unvereinbaren politischen Inhalten sich über digitale Plattformen untereinander in ihrer visuellen Ausdrucksart beeinflussen können. Diese Arbeit untersucht die Art und Weise, in der Online-Bildmaterial Akteure gegenwärtiger sozialer Bewegungen über politische Gegensätze hinweg mobilisiert, und unterstreicht, wie die politische Bildsprache, die von entgegengesetzten Seiten eines sozialen Konfliktes entwickelt wird, trotz divergierender Positionen eine bemerkenswerte Ähnlichkeit in Form und Inhalt aufweisen kann. Zugleich argumentiert die Studie, dass die zeitliche Verstetigung von Online-Bildern die Möglichkeiten des Austausches zwischen politischen Trennlinien maßgeblich bedingt, und dadurch die Herausbildung von anonymen und gewöhnlichen Menschen als Ikonen vorantreibt, die soziale Bewegungen in digitalen Gesellschaften kennzeichnen.

So ist die Dissertation dem Vergleich von unbewegten Bildern gewidmet, die zwei massenwirksamen Mobilisierungen mit unterschiedlichen politischen Zielen entstammen: die Gezi-Bewegung von 2013 und die Gegenmobilisierung zum Putschversuch von 2016 in der Türkei. Die Datenerhebung erstreckt sich über einen Zeitraum von fünf Jahren (2013-2018). Diese Zeitspanne ermöglicht eine Untersuchung sowohl jener Bilder, die während der Phasen intensiver Mobilisierung produziert und verteilt wurden, als auch des niedrighwelligen Aktivismus, der über diese Höhepunkte hinausging. Den sozialen Medien, Blogs und Online-Nachrichtenportalen entnommene Fotos und Illustrationen werden anhand der Methode der *grounded visual analysis* untersucht, ein originelles Forschungsmodell, das den qualitativen Ansatz der *grounded theory* mit etablierten Methoden der visuellen Forschung kombiniert. Durch die Verbindungen eines soziologischen Forschungsausgangspunktes mit Ansätzen aus der Kunstgeschichte, den Kulturwissenschaften und den Medien- und Kommunikationswissenschaften, leistet diese Arbeit auch einen interdisziplinären Beitrag zur Methodologie der Untersuchung sozialer Bewegungen.

Zur Interpretation der Forschungsergebnisse kombiniert die Arbeit zudem die Methode des *framings*, ein oft genutzter, Goffman entlehnter, theoretischer Ansatz zur Untersuchung sozialer Bewegungen, mit dem Konzept „everybody“ wie es sich in dem Werk von de Certeau

und zu einem gewissen Maß auch in der Literatur, die auf Deleuze und Guattari' Arbeiten zu *Affekt* aufbaut, wiederfindet. Die Ergebnisse der Dissertation zeigen, dass Fotografien ähnliche, aber anhand politischer Trennlinien differenzierte, interpretative visuelle Rahmen schaffen, während Illustrationen diese Rahmen unterschiedlich bedienen. Einige Illustrationen bestärken diesen Rahmen. Andere, insbesondere jene, die auf Fotografien beruhen, setzen gewisse Figuren auf eine Art und Weise in Szene, dass die ursprünglichen Rahmen verschärft, vertieft und verdichtet werden, wodurch die Ikonisierung gewisser Bilder ermöglicht wird.

Letztlich beleuchtet die Studie die Angleichung und den Kampf um die symbolische Dimension sozialer Bewegungen mit unvereinbaren politischen Zielen und stellt die mobilisierende Rolle der ikonisierten gewöhnlicher Menschen als Schwerpunkt des heutigen visuellen Aktivismus heraus.

Stichwörter: soziale Bewegungen, visuelle Forschung, digitale Medien, grounded theory, Türkei

Introduction

Picture this: You live abroad, and one night, as you scroll through social media, you learn that your home country has been going through a military coup attempt. You worry about your friends and family, and your phone does not stop beeping for hours. You fall asleep as you are checking Twitter and Facebook to see what is going on. You wake up and check social media. The first thing you see on your feed is a photograph of a young couple in wedding costumes posing happily in front of a tank on a street that is just a stone throw's away from your former apartment. You feel disturbed. You go on checking the news and scrolling down social media feeds. Then you see other images. You feel more disturbed. You spend several months in this cycle.

This is how I spent the summer of 2016.

A military coup attempt hit Turkey on 15 July 2016. I was in the middle of reading and collecting information for my dissertation on the recent political mobility in Greece, Iran, and my native country, Turkey. Having closely followed the political events in these three countries, I was fascinated with the idiosyncratic humour and creativity in the anti-government protests in this part of the world between 2009 and 2013. However, looking at the images of the military coup, I had a profound realisation. I had never considered studying the creativity, satire, and humour generated by pro-government protesters. Indeed, it was not the bizarre combination of the armed violence and wedding costumes that disturbed me in that photograph, but rather the fact that it immediately reminded me of the anti-government Gezi Movement that emerged in Turkey three years earlier, in 2013, during which multiple images of newlyweds went viral on social media. The photograph with the tank in the background is just one example of how pro-government protesters could use images in similar ways. I saved that photograph on my computer.

In September 2016, I met someone who had been an active participant in the Gezi Movement and who left Istanbul to continue her studies in Berlin. She had been to Turkey shortly before we met, and she was horrified with the overall atmosphere at the time. When I asked her if she found any similarities in the aesthetics of the Gezi Movement and the pro-government response to the coup d'état attempt, she was upset about the question and declined firmly: "Ours was beautiful. This is just ugly propaganda." The topic suddenly became even more interesting to me. I could understand why she sympathised with the Gezi Movement, but I was not sure if the entire response to the coup attempt was only propaganda. It is common knowledge that contemporary governments use Internet troll armies to dominate social media

discussions, but what about ordinary people expressing their opinions in creative ways? What about grassroots initiatives and independent demonstrators involved in the response to the coup? What about the images produced and disseminated by them? What about the satire and humour generated by the pro-government but independent activists and disseminated through aesthetic means? Don't they deserve more than being tagged categorically as pro-government propaganda? These questions made me feel compelled to change my dissertation topic.

I opened the photograph of the young couple with the tank behind them. I put it next to another photograph from three years earlier that showed a couple in wedding costumes getting married in the middle of the anti-government protests. I knew I had to come to terms with my own bias. Both photographs were saying much more than a wedding scene, but I had not found it strange when I saw the photographs of various couples getting married and joining the protests in 2013. However, the one from 2016 was bizarre to me, as like as many other wedding photographs I saw on social media throughout the public events and demonstrations following the military coup attempt. The two photographs had much in common but were quite different at the same time. Certainly, this was not only about aesthetic value. These photographs were political. They were oriented toward diverse political goals through the portrayal of similar cultural symbols and traditions in the same society.

A few clicks on the Internet supplied me with thousands of images of couples getting married in the middle of street protests and demonstrations across the globe, including photographs, memes, collages, and illustrations. Wedding scenes seemed to be only one type of many spectacular images that had gone viral on social media. The range was broad: spaces, human and nonhuman figures, symbols, patterns, and recurring stances, mimics, and gestures. Each and every one of these could be part of a collective political struggle. These images have been stored on social media platforms and in online visual archives and are available to everyone, regardless of their political agenda. The activism of today's collective political struggle has been visual, digital, and perennial, but it has yet to be studied through a comparative perspective.

This study will offer a deeper investigation into competing practices of visual activism in today's collective political struggle, soaked as it is in digital modes of participation. Studies of social movements have traditionally treated visuals differently than textual data, in the sense of writing or speech. Scholars have approached visuals mostly as additional sources for verifying their ideas or as merely material to support empirical findings focusing on texts (Doerr, Mattoni, & Teune, 2013). Even if images are not entirely dismissed within the established canon of social movement research, they have hardly been considered as

constitutive components of a movement's symbolic dimension, as researchers have been more interested in verbal analysis of leaflets, banners, websites, or newspapers, and have mostly only assessed images based on their illustrative qualities (Doerr, Mattoni, & Teune, 2015).

Furthermore, the existing research on visual phenomena has focused mainly on anti-government and anti-establishment activities, neglecting the independent visual activism performed by pro-government and pro-establishment actors. Although the rise of right-wing politics worldwide in the last decade, alongside the global wave of protests, has drawn considerable interest among social movement scholars, empirical studies have tended to stay within a certain trajectory rather than making a comparison between mobilisations with incompatible political goals. By addressing these gaps, this dissertation will contribute to the social movement literature by providing an account of how contesting political imageries function and intersect in the age of digital media and visual ubiquity. Therefore, it pursues answers to the following question: What are the ways in which online visuals mobilise people in contemporary social movements across political divides?

As the Internet is becoming increasingly visual and indispensable to social movements, the question above is timelier than ever. Throughout the past decade, researchers have shed light on various key aspects of the role of digital media in social movements by analysing multiple events. Examples include the profile of protesters in the 2009 Moldova protests (Lysenko & Desouza, 2012); the geographical independence of participating in the Iran's Green Revolution (Morozov, 2009); creating collectivities in Occupy Wall Street of the US (Kavada, 2015); organisational models and intersectionality of online and offline spaces in mobilising public affects during the Arab Spring, from Tunisia to Egypt (Gerbaudo, 2012; Papacharissi, 2015); online action repertoires of anti-austerity movements in Greece and Spain (Theocharis, Lowe, van Deth, & García-Albacete, 2014); transnationality and temporality of hashtag use on Twitter from 2007 Wikileaks until the Gezi Movement of Turkey in 2013 (R. Buettner & Buettner, 2016); and models of framing and enacting humour online in the 2018 Velvet Revolution of Armenia (Abrahamian & Shagoyan, 2018). Although such empirical studies provide key insights into the social movement phenomena, they follow a logocentric strand that is predominant in studies on collective political struggle (Doerr et al., 2015).

As much as text, images have semiotic (Barthes, 1977; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), affective (Barthes, 1981; Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019a), and temporo-spatial (Schober, 2019a) qualities that are actively shaped by visual activism. A logocentric approach to analysing images and visual activism might lead to a limited understanding of their role in politicization processes and mobilisation dynamics, particularly when researching movements

with differing agendas. In this dissertation, I will argue that visual forms of expression and representation as well as activist practices around the content and form of images can be extremely similar even within a period of political variety. By studying two mobilisation cases from Turkey, the 2013 Gezi Movement and the 2016 Anti-Coup Resistance, I will show that constellations of actors' groups with incompatible political orientations, such as nationalism vs. globalism and/or progressivism vs. conservatism, eventually seek to build collective identities using similar components and evoke similar emotional dynamics through visual activism. Before I introduce the specific research questions of this study, I will first briefly discuss the existing research on visuals in social movements as well as methods commonly used to study collective political struggle.

Contextualising Visual Activism in Social Movements

A *social movement* is “a distinct social process” of public display that is “involved in conflictual issues with clearly identified opponents, [in which participants are] linked by dense informal networks, and share a distinct collective identity” (della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 20). A set of other terms, including *protest*, *rebellion*, *riot*, *uprising*, and *demonstration* accompany the concept in the social movement literature and have been elaborated by several scholars (Diani, 1992; della Porta & Diani, 2015; Snow, Soule, & Kriesi, 2004; Tilly, 2004). Throughout this study, I will refer to social movements as the main category of collective political struggle and will make use of other terms when referring to particular events taking place in physical spaces, such as urban areas, whether or not they are within a particular social movement context. *Visual activism*, on the other hand, can be defined as the marshalling of images in the service of wider political efforts (Bryan-Wilson, González, & Willsdon, 2016) in order to create forms of change in society (Mirzoeff, 2015) and alter discourses (Jones, 2009). Following upon this, *visual activists* should be understood as individuals, groups, and organisations who contribute to a particular political effort by taking part in processes of generating, altering, and disseminating visual materials.

Although the importance of images is not new to social movements, and visual activism has been part of collective action throughout the 20th century (DeLuca, 1999), social movement theories, like other social science areas, have relied heavily on a textual (linguistic) economy of knowledge (de Certeau, 1988; Pauwels, 2015). Only a general turn to pictures in social sciences and cultural studies toward the end of the century has brought the attention of social movement scholars to visual forms of expression. The production, dissemination, and

perception of images are established as part of an activist effort toward meaning-making and is thus a contested political process (Doerr et al., 2015).

Starting from the 1960s' paradigm of new social movements, theories of collective action have evolved from leader-run and top-down organisational perspectives toward acknowledging participatory forms of activism. In the advent of the Internet and social media, it became evident that social movements feature both collective and connective processes (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Gerbaudo & Treré, 2015). The impact of powerful images such as that of the 2019 Sudanese protests' *Kandaka* (Nubian queen), the 2016 Black Lives Matter's *Taking a Stand in Baton Rouge*, the 2013 Gezi Movement's *Woman in Red*, the images of people with Guy Fawkes masks in the Occupy movements around the globe, and the images of martyrs such as the 2010 Tahrir Revolution's Khaled Saeed and the 2009 Green Revolution's Neda Agha-Soltan, as well as their stylised remade versions, raise questions about their making and dissemination. These images refer to a specific visual form. They mostly appear as photographs and illustrations. Even though video activism can have a ground-breaking impact in a social movement context (Depeli, 2015), it is a photograph or illustration that primarily captures our immediate gaze in digital media and claims to be influential. How to locate and analyse these images is open for contributions.

Encompassing a wide range of social movements and local protests, studies in the last decade highlight the necessity of analysing the symbolic sphere through a visual lens and discussing various practices, including but not limited to building collective identities (Gerbaudo, 2015), developing narratives (Neumayer & Rossi, 2018), constructing discourses (Wetzstein, 2017), and emotional and affective dynamics (Flam & Doerr, 2015). Some scholars focus particularly on social media platforms and trace the transitions between photography and illustration (Arda, 2014; Olesen, 2017), while others work on online and offline transitions of visual representation (Lotfalian, 2013). Needless to say, a portion of these studies remains outside the sociological canon and draw from cultural studies, art history, political science, and media and communications.

In an effort to map the field of visual research in social movements, Doerr and her colleagues (Doerr et al., 2015) divide the variety of sociological studies into two main canonical strands: Accordingly, the first strand follows the interpretation of Goffman's concept of *framing* (Goffman, 1986) and its application to social movements (Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986). Framing in social movement studies has been a pioneering approach to investigate the meaning-making processes, particularly in an effort to respond to the cultural critique on structural perspectives (Polletta, 2004). Framing literature, however, relies largely

on linguistic production of meaning, and a systematic approach to address visuals has yet to be developed. The second canonical strand of visual research in social movements is composed of studies that follow Tilly's concept of *repertoires of contention* (Tilly, 2008). The concept has been particularly useful in studying the cumulative activist experience and the growing toolbox of collective action that has inspired social movements across the world. Yet empirical studies built on the concept take on the instrumentality and diffusion of the visual elements of the repertoire and hardly attribute a central role to visuals. In other words, greater attention is paid to the ideologies and political positions as motivating structures behind visual activism, with the possible implication of neglecting the ways in which visuals mobilise people. This also means missing in particular the treatment of images as powerful protest-initiating agents, such as in the case of the Arab Spring (Castells, 2015; Lim, 2013), and therefore overlooking the social life of images and temporal factors.

In order to address the shortcomings outline above, we have to engage critically with the visual *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1984) of today's collective political struggle, where the making of an image is very much linked to repetitive representations of power (Castells, 2010). By going beyond social movements' ideological stances to examine social, material, and symbolic dimensions of visual activism, we can understand images' capacity for mobilisation within a wider social context that includes temporal and political variety. In this study, I am particularly interested in the contested visual strategies and tactics toward political expression and public positioning that transcend political orientations. Rather than discovering how images are instrumentalised by different movements for their diverse goals, I will show how images, in the capacity of their form and content, as well as the patterns emerging throughout a visual economy, can shape political contests, trigger and maintain affective dynamics, and construct fluid identities. Therefore, I ask the following questions for a detailed analysis:

- What are the contemporary practices of visual activism in political struggle?
- In which ways do images serve conflicting political agendas?
- What can images tell us about similarities and differences of affective dynamics across political divides?

Seeking answers to these questions may best fit the canon of framing, but not necessarily as the methodological tool it is often employed as. The framing model has evolved greatly over time and has developed concepts like *frame resonance* and *master frames*, besides the initial idea of *frame alignment* (Snow, Benford, McCammon, Hewitt, & Fitzgerald, 2014) that enables researchers to use it as an approach to understand social movement actors' strategies for convincing, recruiting, and mobilising people. However, as the framing tradition is

predominantly logocentric, I believe an interdisciplinary approach is necessary to pursue the aims of this project. I identify five interconnected areas where an interdisciplinary approach can inform this study.

First, we should acknowledge that digital media dramatically changed the established understandings of framing and collective identity in social movement studies. Observing recent movements such as the Arab Spring and Occupy, for which the Internet and social media were beyond merely a communication tool, Bennet and Segerberg suggest that individual online forms of movement participation are as decisive as the conventional collective spirit (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013), an argument that found considerable resonance among social movement researchers. Earlier theorisation of framing assumes that frames are constructed collectively by the organisers of social movements and go through social and political alignment processes with the contribution and response of social movement participants, media, and other actors (Snow et al., 1986). Bennet and Segerberg (2013) argue that pervasive digital communication technologies of today compel social movements to develop networked and crowdsourced *connective* framing practices alongside *collective* ones. Although existing framing models did not completely disappear (Gerbaudo, 2014; della Porta, 2014), social movements now increasingly rely on individual frames that are constructed by social actors of varying size, profile, and commitment. Approaching framing as a collective/connective practice and recognising the variety of constellations of social actors—ranging from individual social media users to government agencies engaged in constructing frames—can help us address the plurality of participation in digital-visual activism.

Second, existing studies rarely look beyond the peak times of social movements, which mostly coincide with street protests and/or Internet campaigns. However, we should acknowledge that the production and dissemination of images on digital media is not limited to acute crises. Images, particularly those on digital media, do not disappear after an initial emergence but stay in digital media to continuously affect the trajectory of movements (Ozduzen & McGarry, 2020). Instead of emerging acutely when the social conflict intensifies, visuals remain persistently on social media platforms, blogs, news portals, and archives. As images stay accessible to the public for longer periods, particularly those on digital media, they inspire further visual production in various formats, including transitions between various forms and genres, as well as between online and offline platforms. Using Lievrouw's adaptation of the *remediation* concept to activist media (Lievrouw, 2011), Mattoni's work on transitions between different genres of activist practices (Mattoni, 2017) can inspire us to address how photographic images grow into icons and how several illustrations follow these photographs.

Third, we should acknowledge the very existence of influences across political divides in the creative processes of visual activism. Research on social movements advances with foci increasing on left-wing and right-wing political tendencies. Among these, empirical studies on the political imagery of the Right has been less common and has concentrated on visualisations of leadership and archaeo-futurism as a matter of propaganda (Bogerts & Fielitz, 2018), while the left-wing movement's visual landscape is regarded within the lines of aesthetic plurality and transgressive value (Jones, 2009; McGarry, Jenzen, Eslen-Ziya, Erhart, & Korkut, 2019). These works, however, often analyse movements by staying within a single political tradition, and comparative studies are rare (Doerr, 2017). Consideration of the increased accessibility of the same visual repertoires on digital media, representation and communication models across political divides, and the similarities and differences in visual activism practices between collective/connective action circles with incompatible agendas are all topics we have yet to study.

Fourth, we should develop a perspective to analyse images beyond their quality of evidence to text. Images have bodily qualities that develop a historical and emotional legacy while aligning with a symbolic repertoire of a certain period of time, geography, social class, political tradition and the like. The meaning-making and resonance of images cannot be reduced to ideology as a plain framing-based reading might suggest; instead, it should be understood as an affective experience (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The more affective dynamics are a determinant factor in politics than pre-defined ideological positions (Iyengar, Sood, & Lelkes, 2012), the more the symbolic dimension becomes a fluid domain relying on crosscutting figures and symbols. This affective resonance of images can be studied further through concepts emerging in the field of cultural studies, such as *everybody figures* (de Certeau, 1988). Examining the representations of ordinary people engaged in collective/connective political action can open an analytical trajectory to understand how visual forms and content can establish the backbone of symbolic struggle in social movements.

Finally, considering the lack of tools that do not use logocentric means for analysing visuals in social movement research, the need of integrating new methodological approaches that can fit a framing outlook should be acknowledged. With its abductive reasoning and openness to integrate with other analytical tools, the qualitative strand of grounded theory is an ideal method for addressing the research questions of this study (Charmaz, 2006). Within the framework of this dissertation, I also aim to make a methodological contribution to the social movement literature by developing a *grounded visual analysis* tool by combining visual grounded theory (Mey & Dietrich, 2016) with visual social semiotics (Kress & van Leeuwen,

1996) and an affect-oriented iconological approach to images (Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019a; Schober, 2019b) before I bring in a framing perspective to the interpretation of the findings.

Contemporary visual activism is a compelling research topic, because it can provide novel insights into collective/connective identity processes in relation to practices of embodiment, which is a rare combination of analysis in social movement scholarship (Pabst, 2016). Although visuals are considered to be among ambiguous sources of data in the absence of linguistic information (de Certeau, 1988), they are essential to understanding how the symbolic dimension of social movements develops in a shared and, at the same time, contested fashion. In an era where people gradually read less but increasingly look, see, and watch more (Manovich, 2020), production and dissemination of images in digital media are vital both for in-group and out-group communication processes in social movements. Studying singular activist contributions directed toward a collective visual embodiment can shed light on networked mechanisms of “imagineering” in today’s political struggles (Routledge, 1997).

Contested Political Imageries Online and a Case Study

On the basis of the research questions and foreseen contributions, I will analyse photographs and illustrations to study a worldwide trend in the making and disseminating of images in social movements. The last decade, particularly after the Green Revolution in Iran following the 2009 government elections, movements increasingly relied on social media networks for getting organised (Gerbaudo, 2012), which led scholars to conduct research on networked affectivity in digital media (Papacharissi, 2015). Due to the proliferation of image-technology-integrated mobile infrastructures, producing images on the spot during street protests, such as smartphone photography, and designing illustrations after certain events, such as digital applications, become more accessible to ordinary activists without any prior technical skills.

From Occupy Wall Street in the US (Kim, 2015) to the Umbrella Revolution in Hong Kong (Wetzstein, 2017), activists have made use of photographs and illustrations to mobilise public affects. The photograph of the US Davis pepper-spray incident helped display the injustice that the movement intended to frame (Gamson, 1995), and several illustrations remediated the initial photograph and made it viral online. In Hong Kong, the umbrella became an outstanding symbol representing the collective/connective identity and the power of the

average citizen in the Umbrella Movement, while it was the yellow vest in the Gilets Jaunes of France, and the Guy Fawkes mask in Occupy movements around the globe.

Similar powerful images also emerged within the context of right-wing movements. Either as part of a particular campaign (Wodak, KhosraviNik, & Mral, 2013) or as a response to left-wing visual production (Doerr, 2017), these images had similar aims: to strengthen the bonds between the right-wing political actors, to construct a collective/connective identity, and the like. In some cases, movements such as the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street were engaged in the marshalling of images against each other's political goals where this contention was visible even on the street and attracted media attention. Other examples show us that consequent movements with incompatible political agendas can produce and disseminate images in response to one another's visual presence. The latter type of visual activism is observable and trackable particularly on digital media and is much less studied with regard to the amount of visual activism performed today. The contested visual dimension of social movements can be understood better by investigating digital images produced and disseminated online by mobilisations of contested profiles over a period that reaches beyond the peak times of street and online activity.

Due to their being separated by only three years, Turkey's Gezi Movement and Anti-Coup Resistance are ideal cases for a comparative study. They represent two emerging political camps within the last decade of political activity worldwide. Having expressed concerns about the environment, democratic processes, and social and economic rights, the Gezi Movement (hereafter referred to as "Gezi") can be seen as part of the Occupy movements wave. The Anti-Coup Resistance (hereafter referred to as "Anti-Coup"), on the other hand, has many similarities with contemporary right-wing movements that have populist tendencies and nurture nationalist and religious sentiments.

Started as a sit-in to protect a few trees in Istanbul's Gezi Park on 28 May 2013, the protests spread all over the country, giving way to one of the biggest social movements in modern Turkish political history. Clashes with the police left more than 10 people dead and thousands injured. Gezi quickly became a focus of attention in global scholarship with its outreach and impact on society and politics. The social and political atmosphere of the country changed irreversibly, while the ruling Justice and Development Party (*AKP* in short) started a period of persecution against the people who participated and/or supported the protests. Although it has been stigmatized and criminalized in official narratives, the overall experience of Gezi continues to mark a reference point in public discussions.

Three years later, on 15 July 2016, Turkey was shaken with a coup d'état attempt as photographs and video recordings on TV channels and social media platforms showed the military blocking streets of major cities, including Istanbul's Bosphorus Bridge. President Erdoğan made a live call on the news urging people to take to the streets and fight against the putsch. With more than 300 casualties and thousands injured, the demonstrators succeeded in neutralising the plotters and extended this resistance first to a three-week democracy vigil in town squares, and later to an ongoing campaign targeting any dissent against Erdoğan and the AKP, but particularly on the symbolic legacy of Gezi. While a considerable number of people including those in the international community suspected the authenticity of the plot, the country stayed under state-of-emergency rule for two years, a period that deepened the political gaps and further polarised the society over Erdoğan's ruling style and the AKP policies. Meanwhile, a referendum for constitutional change endorsed giving greater administrative powers to the presidential role and Erdoğan being elected for the position in summer 2018.

Throughout this short but loaded five-year period, Turkey's social and political climate has been highly affected by the consequences of these two events. The production and dissemination of images related to Gezi and Anti-Coup continued uninterrupted during this time. Political actors on both sides have produced and disseminated a high volume of visual materials through digital platforms and, most of all, in the form of still images such as photographs and illustrations. These efforts quickly turned into a polarisation of two political circles, placing Gezi as the ideological counterpart of the Anti-Coup on both the symbolic and material level (Küçük & Türkmen, 2018). Social media has been a tool for communication, a catalyser for evoking and cultivating public affects, and an incubator for visual practices.

It is important to note that I do not consider these two mobilisations simply as a movement and a counter-movement disputing a single case. Not only are their points of departure too different for such a comparison on equal terms, but so are the overall construction processes of each case as well (e.g. bottom-up vs. top-down mobilisation). My interest lies in the visual practices in connection with digital media that go beyond the limits of the structures and organisational processes of the collective action paradigm. Hence, this study will focus on the digital and visual activity over a span of five years, from the beginning of protests at Gezi Park (28 May 2013) until the day after the second anniversary of the military coup attempt and success of Anti-Coup (16 July 2018). The ways in which images were produced and disseminated are highly dependent on the technological affordances and availabilities during the time of these political mobilisations.

Therefore, the data collection sites are mainly social media platforms, with Facebook and Twitter being the main sources, due to their high use not only for communication in the country (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2018) but also for political purposes (Saka, 2018). The data on these sites will be supported by event-devoted archives, blogs, and news portals, as some of the social media accounts were shut down during this study and a number of websites served as stable visual archives of the images produced and disseminated throughout the events.

Plan of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Following the current one, Chapter 2 offers a review of the existing works in the field that leads up to drawing the theoretical framework of this study. Main approaches on social movements are elaborated from the emergence of such terminology up to the present, with a particular emphasis on cultural analysis in social sciences. This chapter also makes a point on the culminating interest in political imagery after the 1960s, considering the movements of those years as predecessors for the contemporary ones, particularly for their organisational profiles, creative methods, and engagement in visual practices. Moving through early examples of social movements using the Internet, the ways in which contemporary technologies substantially changed the field of contentious politics are discussed. Various examples from the subsequent decades provide insight into understanding how innovative communication tools and digital platforms helped collective political struggle get organised and alter its methods of engagement with creative materials.

The chapter also shows that visuals play a greater role in political mobilisation than has been previously acknowledged. This gap grows bigger in research on contemporary social movements and their engagement with digital media. The discussions will also cover the establishment of photography and illustration as fields of study and their engagement in political sphere. Production and dissemination of photographs and illustrations across the political divide are conceptualised as a collective/connective struggle over meaning, going beyond the understanding of these as mere tools of communication or intervention.

The problematisation of political imagery is twofold: First, visual activism practices and image production and dissemination in political settings are discussed through the theories of aesthetics, symbolic interactionism, and post-structuralism. Differences and similarities

between these practices in conventional and new media are given nuance. Second, the iconisation of protest images that have been prominent in politicization processes is discussed. Development of political imagery is elaborated through the examples of the recent rise of right-wing movements and their intensive engagement in digital platforms and appropriation of visual elements; examples from the contexts of the US, Europe, and the Middle East aim to extend the political spectrum of the study and go beyond the canonical progressive movement studies.

Moreover, Chapter 2 incorporates the existing literature review on social movements with the state-of-the-art approaches on digitality, visuality, and affectivity in order to build the theoretical framework of this study. The meaning and the extent of use of certain terms within the perspective of the dissertation are clarified, including *activism*, *movement*, *mobilisation*, *image*, and *digital*, among others.

Chapter 3 explains the methodological logic of the study, which is based on an original approach what I will call *grounded visual analysis*. Building on the interpretative line of *grounded theory* (Charmaz, 2006), I apply its basic methodological steps (e.g. coding, memo writing, sorting, theoretical sampling) to studying digital and visual media. The field of visual analysis in grounded theory is still in its infancy, and only few examples are available (Konecki, 2011; Mey & Dietrich, 2016). Therefore, I use a mixed approach, drawing particularly from Mey and Dietrich's work on visual grounded theory and combining various methods from sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, art history, and geography. I consulted works on digital and visual ethnography methods (Pink et al., 2016; Pink, Kurti, & Alfonso, 2004; Rose, 2016) for research design and data collection stages, visual social semiotics (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001), and iconology (Johnson, 2012; Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019b) during coding, memo writing, and interpretation, and framing (Goffman, 1986; Pauwels, 2015; Snow et al., 1986) and interpretative methods from visual culture (Schober, 2019b) during the theoretical sorting. I will suggest that frames and everybody figures are two useful approaches to make sense of the visual grounded theory results.

Moreover, essential background information on the visual and digital ecosystem of Turkey's politics is also provided in this chapter, with brief historical background of the contemporary situation and a general view of cultural elements and symbolic interaction in Turkish contentious politics.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to presenting the research results in two main sub-chapters. The first part is dedicated to the analysis of photographs disseminated through digital platforms

(social media, blogs, archives) during and after the activist mobility peaks both online and offline in order to show the relationship in the patterns of representation and politicization efforts between two cases. Both Gezi and Anti-Coup photographs display that the demonstrators (and social movement participants in general) attended to similar visual frames, although they claim to be holding incompatible if not hostile positions. Going beyond the initial ideological standpoints that create binary opposition and facilitate the process of constructing injustice frames thereby, the comparison between two sets of photographs reveals a variety of shared themes at work in developing visual identities and mobilising public affects. As social movements of the digital age observe sporadic and ephemeral participation, the chapter suggests a reconsideration of visual frames in social movements as territories of assemblage that intersect and contradict with each other.

The second part of Chapter 4 takes the comparative analysis on convergence and divergence a step further. It recognises that a common practice is to remediate photographs from street protests into illustrations as part of an iconisation process. As the analysis of these remediations advances, it is revealed that most of these replications focus on everybody figures that are “ordinary” people engaged in political action in the events of Gezi and Anti-Coup. While it was an assumption of this study that those remediations would feature certain commonalities and differences in terms of the frames listed in the first part of the chapter, the focus on “ordinary” activists has been an unexpected outcome of the grounded visual analysis. With their intermediary role between the individual activist and the collectivity of the movement, these representations of ordinary people can be further discussed through Deleuze and Guattari’s term *becoming everybody/everything* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The chapter also briefly covers the extended social life of these replications in the form of popular culture items that are intended for everyday use, such as space signs, prints on fabric, objects, etc.

Chapter 5 wraps up the discussion and concludes the dissertation in the form of an epilogue. It emphasises further the main findings of the case studies and the relevance of these to contemporary debates in the social sciences.

All translations regarding data analysis and interpretation are mine, unless otherwise is stated.

Theoretical and Analytical Context

The contemporary landscape of political struggle is essentially symbolic and encompasses a contest over the visibility of actions through digital media. This includes, but is not limited to, social media platforms, blogs, digital archives, and news platforms. Through the history of social movements, media has always been interested in visually expressive forms of protest, such as banners, costumes, and graffiti (M. Glaser & Ilic, 2006; Hariman & Lucaites, 2007; Veneti, 2017). Political imagery is not merely a compilation of visual products and performances occurring during street protests; it extends to printed images and other symbolic items produced in support of movements elsewhere.

From Delacroix's *Liberty Leading People* (1830) to Naji al-Ali's *Handala* of Palestine (1969), and from the photos of historic figures, such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Che Guevara, to iconic moments of protests, such as the 1989 Tank Man in Tiananmen Square, visual materials may take us on a historical journey through political contention. Some of these works were probably not produced with the explicit purpose of visual activism, in the sense of having a predetermined goal to mobilise images for a political purpose by staging a particular scene, but rather with other intentions, such as performing an artistic practice or fulfilling a journalistic task. Most probably, Delacroix did not imagine his painting would become one of the most appropriated visual allegories of social movements through the history of visual culture (Poyraz, 2013; Shilton, 2013), nor did the Tank Man of Tiananmen intend to become a global icon of the power of the small against the big (Hariman & Lucaites, 2007; Hillenbrand, 2017). The same would apply to joyful moments in demonstrations (D'Amico, 2008; Hariman & Lucaites, 2007) or to appropriating a historical figure for other purposes, such as the mask of Guy Fawkes before it becomes a global icon of protest (Call, 2008). The production of the image might be outside the inventive aesthetics (Demos, 2016), yet its correspondence to the political field or the ways in which it is consequently modulated in a social movement context might be labelled as visual activism.

So, what are the theoretical roots and historical considerations of visual activism, or, that is to say, collective and activist practices around political imagery? Which lines of thought are there in the social movement literature on the making and distributing of images? What are the ways in which visual activism can be studied in the contemporary digital scene of social movements shaped by crowdsourced/networked action?

Seeking answers to these questions in this chapter, I will make a critical review of how the main social movement theories that emerged in Europe and across the Atlantic and have

been dominant in the literature have approached the visual. The purpose of this review is to have a broad understanding of the existing research on the symbolic dimension of social movements and to identify analytical concepts that can be useful to address the questions posed in the first chapter about visual practices of activism around the genres of photography and illustration in times of social conflict. The chapter moves through the classical theories of collective action to more recent paradigms developed after the 1960s, such as *resource mobilisation*, *political process*, and *new social movements*. As the analysis of visual practices is closely related to the cultural strand of social movement research, I will pay particular attention to how proponents of cultural approaches are engaged in these discussions and will eventually make an assessment of the political imagery and visual activism in the second half of the 20th century and the contemporary digital era.

This review will help develop the central lines of the discussions in this study and will constitute the analytical framework. I will argue that it is necessary to adopt an approach that rests on three pillars: To begin, we should examine the visual struggle around meaning-making from a cultural perspective in order to study the symbolic dimension. Second, we should conceptualise this struggle as a crowdsourced practice that is composed of both offline and online actions with the involvement of multiple actors. Last but not the least, we should consider visual activism not only as a reactionary practice but also as a creative one that is nurtured by social, historical, and cultural structures, as much as by the political agency of those actors.

The Classical Paradigm of Social Movements

Culture was an important concern in the classical paradigm of social movement research that is known as the *collective behaviour model* (Polletta, 2008). However, culture was understood rather as a given condition for irrational behaviour in these models than as providing an analytical ground for studying political struggle. The old paradigm regarded social movements as sudden bursts that disrupt the regular social fabric. Based on Durkheimian social cohesion theories, the society was seen as a mechanical system prone to irrational waves of collective behaviour (Buechler, 2004). Until the 1970s, researchers regarded collective behaviour as dissatisfied crowds formed by negatively-charged individuals (Le Bon, 2002; Smelser, 1965). Contagion of this ephemera would only make the crowd more dangerous, driving people hypnotically from a normal state to a pathological one (Smelser, 1965). Crowds were seen as spurred by inner passions and motivations that were provoked externally. People were assumed to be easily fooled into believing that they were disadvantaged. Seeking to satisfy

their pathological desires of gratification, collective behaviour would be inclined to violence. Demonstrators were thought to be able to commit any crime, induced by a state of collective frenzy, which they would not have perpetrated otherwise. Afraid of such angry crowds themselves, scholars of the time developed a highly negative understanding of collective behaviour and considered it harmful to the integrity of the society (Goodwin & Jasper, 2015).

The way classical social movement theories treated visual activism, or, in plain words that would fit to the understanding of the time, “the use of visuals”, is shaped by such an understanding of collective behaviour. Classical theories believed in the power of words but also in the limited capacity of crowds to think sophisticatedly. Movement leaders would make use of images to provoke and manipulate people (Le Bon, 2002; McPhail, 1989; Smelser, 1965). Visualising ideas would be effective in getting crowds into a state of fantasy and channelling their energies for engaging in barbaric acts (Le Bon, 2002). A fixated mental image constructed by the leader often represents the reasons for the grief of the crowd, a motivating and catalysing target of the violent action. This mental image is supported by simple figurative symbols, which are carefully selected to incite fear and hate or submission and loyalty. Such an understanding of the imagery falls under a duality as suggested later by W. J. T. Mitchell (Mitchell, 1987). He makes a distinction between the “lower form” of the image that is a graphic representation and the “higher form” that is “internal, organic, and living” (p. 25). So, for the classical paradigm, the lower form of the image pragmatically serves the higher form in order to consolidate hierarchies and establish temporary structures of feeling and thought, all to allow leaders to exploit people’s desires and hysterias during momentary eruptions, such as the craze and panic that would destabilise the social.

Various scholars provided comprehensive critique of the classical paradigm from the 1960s onwards (McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Snow et al., 2004; Tilly, 2004), with particular attention to the negative classification of emotions (Jasper, 1998). The cultural analysis that was supposed to occupy a central point, as mentioned above, was reduced to patterns of organisational hierarchies, leadership models, and communication, which was more likely to describe common symptoms of dispersed flocks of individuals rather than to study static or dynamic structures. The critique of the classical paradigm makes two points clear in terms of visual activism and is therefore important for the purposes of this chapter. First, the classical paradigm regards communication in the light of the *hypodermic needle theory*, which was popular in the 1920s and 1930s and claimed that media could directly influence behaviour (Danesi, 2009). The top-down understanding of the communication structures parallels the relationship of the crowd with images: Movement leaders seek to mobilise people to produce,

modify, and disseminate images that can provoke and seduce them and incite their anger. Second, as collective behaviour was considered hysteric action, the production and dissemination of images were seen as one-sided proactive attempts. Classical theories saw little interaction between conflicting parties through the processes before or during the marshalling of images. Classical approaches continued to exist in the later decades, but their accuracy was largely disproved by a new generation of scholars, particularly after a wave of movements emerged in western societies in the late 1960s that changed the social paradigm (Buechler, 2004).

A Paradigm Change: Late 1960s and Onwards

The new wave of movements challenged the existing approaches to the foundations of political collectivities and introduced perspectives on a post-industrial society where new forms of affiliation and association are acknowledged. The understanding of the social increasingly moved toward a constructivist one, while the validity of the static and hierarchical models of leadership and movement organisation were put under question. Instead of assuming the installation of a leader by an external force or by chance, the analysis shifted to the social, political, and cultural dynamics that interactively constitute the conditions of leadership (Morris & Staggenborg, 2004). Not regarded merely as followers any longer, people taking part in social movements started to be considered instead as participants that have agency to influence leaders, take part in organisational mechanisms, and claim roles in leadership.

Similarly, the organisation and communication within the social movements are considered multi-lateral and also, to a certain extent, horizontal. The act of communication is situated as a constitutive element of the social agent (Melucci, 1996). Visual activism is no longer a part of a one-sided, negative-emotion triggering process but is instead a component of dialogic meaning-making. Still, the understanding of this symbolic dimension and the approach to the visual vary greatly across different theories.

The new generation of studies developed in two distinct schools, which nurtured one another only to a limited extent (Buechler, 2011). The North American social movement scholars, including economists such as Olson (1971), went toward examining the rational conditions and motivations shaping these new movements through resource mobilisation theory and political process theory; meanwhile, their European peers were engaged in a critique of Marxist theories and synthesised models that recognise the hazards of modernity and post-

industrial societies, such as new social movements theory (Buechler, 1995; Williams, 2004). Such theories made significant changes in the understanding of social movements that were associated with spontaneous emotions of a negative character. Both schools approached visuals in different ways according to the canons they originated.

Rationalising the movement

Early studies on the new paradigms of social movements have disregarded elements and actions of symbolic value. Criticising the earlier focus on negative emotions, North American scholars rejected the irrationality of collective behaviour. Inspired by American right-wing scholars' studies, which sought foreign agency in collective behaviour as provocation instead of taking people's grievances into account, McCarthy and Zald (1973) shifted their analysis away from grievances and focused on benefit-oriented motivations, resulting in emotions being taken out of their analysis. They suggested that social movements indeed work rationally, like those of a company aiming to maximise its profits. They developed the *resource mobilisation theory*, which conceptualises people and objects as resources to be mobilised by social movement organisers for the body of the social movement organisations, which themselves are part of a social movement industry within a social movement sector. In this model, participants are fully conscious of their rational actions, articulate their demands in a logical way, and are part of an organisational hierarchy but without being exploited.

Another strand in the North American tradition is the *political opportunity theory*. According to this theory, individuals respond collectively and rationally to the changes in politics within structures of "interest, organisation, mobilisation, opportunity, and collective action" (Tilly, 1978, p. 7). Known also as *political process theory*, it takes into account the existing structures that shape the society and how the political conditions change to allow collective action to take place. Although the term "structure" might first seem to also address culture, the approach mainly refers to cognitive processes of identifying moments of political opportunities in the social, political, and economic system, and of collective decision-making steps for social movement organisers (Tilly, 1978). Together with resource mobilisation theory, I will refer to this strand of approaches as *rational action theories*.

Rational action theories also rationalised visual activism. Various cases of producing and disseminating images are seen as part of an activist toolbox, some sort of collection of modules that can be consulted when needed or transported across different movements.

According to Tilly (2004), social movements accumulate and share repertoires of contention due to growing knowledge and experience as participants take part in several movements. This approach constitutes a profit-oriented model that attributes material value to the established practices around images. Acts such as urban sit-ins with mocking banners, the occupation of buildings while making their façades the showcase of a movement, and the chanting of slogans in remarkable costumes (the list could contain many other examples), contribute to social movement repertoires that are outcomes of chronological and cognitive learning experiences. These practices existed before the concept of the social movement was born and were adapted to the political struggle context, building an activist toolbox. They were repeated and consequently renewed due to the outcomes of each experience (Fahlenbrach, Klimke, & Scharloth, 2016). Rational action scholars regard photographs and illustrations as part of a repertoire, a collection of creative items to be consulted according to the marketing strategy of a movement. They maintain that images, as well as other forms of cultural products and practices, are not only single items to utilise from an existing repertoire but also constituents of the symbolic order where a social movement grows and operates (Polletta, 2004). Image production and dissemination are considered as assets that have systemic applicable values in another contexts (Soule, 2004). Images, in connection with cultural products, are assessed rather on a cost-benefit scale, such as artefacts that help recruit more people to the movement (Adams, 2001).

Rational action theories find considerable resonance in social movement studies today and blend in well with other forms of analysis. Their ground-breaking role in challenging the classical approaches is much recognised, but it is at the same time criticised for failing to address the symbolic dimension of movements, such as the meaning of human agency and fluidity of emotions (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999), and for favouring rationality over the classical paradigm's irrationality the expense of cultural inquiry (Polletta, 2004; 2008). Critics suggest more dynamic approaches are needed to address the symbolic dimension of collective struggle (Jasper, 2014b; Polletta, 1997; 2008; Ullrich, Daphi, & Baumgarten, 2014). Cultural sociologists insisted that practices around images, like those around other symbolic elements, cannot be considered as randomly available products that are disposable upon request. They are embedded in the culture and should be seen as part of interactive processes within social movements.

On the other hand, given that social movements are considered as organisations maximising their profit with a few people acting as movement leaders, rational action theories did not move far from the top-down approach of their predecessors. In this sense, the selection,

production, modification, and dissemination of images are organised and overseen by a small elite capable of mobilising others, even if those others are no longer considered hysterical crowds. Such criticism triggered rational action scholars to reach out and search for ways to integrate *meaning* back into theory.

Snow et al. (1986) suggested a novel approach based on Goffman's (1986) *frame analysis* at a time when rational movement theories received high amounts of criticism. Frame analysis is concerned with symbols and their role in the construction of meanings on the individual and group levels. Frames should be understood as schemata of interpretation organising individual experiences and governing how people are disposed to perceive and decode messages in their quotidian interactions (Goffman, 1986). They provide context to meaning and imply a capacity to alter it. Framing has been influential as a method in analysing political communication and was later appropriated into social movement studies in an attempt to explain the processes of movement participation. The relationality and socially constructed nature of frames caught the attention of social movement scholars who sought to address the shortcomings of rational approaches. The functions of frames as modes of punctuation, attribution, and articulation (Snow & Benford, 1992) that accentuate a particular injustice in a social situation (W. A. Gamson, 1985) offered a promising lens to conduct more dynamic and interaction-oriented analysis. Frame analysis provides social movement studies with a powerful operational tool to address the symbolic dimension, especially because of its focus on the how the collective struggle is formed and how the collective message is communicated in particular.

The turn of rational action theories to framing promises an interest in the forms shaping our understanding and interpretation in addition to the content. Frame analysis's applicability to the visual sphere is also remarkable (Goffman, 1979), even if this remained logocentric and studies integrating framing and visual analysis stayed on the margins of social movement research, except for a few notable works, for a long time (DeLuca, 1999; Lahusen, 1996). Recent examples of visual research in social movements make attempts to take frame analysis out of the context of rational action theories and offer insights for using it in the context of the connective action logic of digital media (Berkhout, 2015; Doerr & Teune, 2008; Olesen, 2013). I will return to the framing concept later in this chapter.

Before closing this section on rational action theories, I would like to draw a few conclusions on their contributions to the social movement literature and their importance for this dissertation. First, the affirmation of emotions brought equivalent terms of discussing conflicting parties. It meant studying societal interaction over a disputed topic rather than one-sided unexpected behaviour. According to this view, social movements would emerge in an

environment shaped by frames and would subsequently develop frames to convey their rational claims and actions (Welgrave & Manssens, 2005). This is valid not only for movements that stand up against the government, which was the main point of analysis in classical literature, but also for movements that are in conflict with each other. Nevertheless, scholars concentrated on the construction of frames in short periods of time and how the frames influenced peak times of the protests, while neglecting the temporalities and persistence of conflicting frames over longer periods. For example, studies that show the emergence of frames on both sides of the abortion/pro-life dispute through the years remain rare (Staggenborg, 1991).

Second, the understanding of interactive framing, however, has not reflected well on intra-movement communication. Frames are considered to be mostly developed by the movement organisers and leaders and to be only adopted by other people. The public opinion is taken into account, but it is the movement leaders who would modify and align frames according to the feedback they receive from other circles. Studies that challenge this idea came only with the advent of social media and sought to address the increasing emphasis of social movements on leaderless action and spontaneity in constructing frames. This will be further elaborated in the following pages of this chapter.

Third, most of the studies that combine rational action theories with framing are logocentric. Conducting a frame analysis of political imagery suffered from such approaches that interpret the visual only through frames set by the available textual selections, relying on the discursive structure or written documents and slogans that precede an analysis of the nontextual. A frame-oriented search for meaning is pursued on the verbal level and joined by the visual only after this step, often to verify the results or to illustrate how frames could be transferred to yet another medium. Visual activism, on the other hand, becomes merely a labour of crafting and articulating existing frames in visual forms when images are considered as available tools in the movement repertoire. Various cultural scholars mention a risk of not successfully addressing the symbolic dimension by simply including frame analysis in the agenda of rational action theories, as long as social movement participants are considered as all-rational actors with solid long-term commitments based on a political strategy (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999; Polletta, 2008).

Finally, framing should be understood both as a methodology that is closely connected to discourse analysis due to its logocentric approach, as mentioned above, and as a theory. Conducting a research on visuals, I find it relevant to attend the latter for the purposes of this study. By using framing approach as a theoretical model, we can make sense of how social movements develop strategies and tactics to convince and mobilise people.

Although rational action theories are indebted to European sociological thought that is built on the works of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim, they emerged and developed mostly in North American scholarship (Buechler, 2011). Their interest in models that can provide means to address their own shortcomings also stayed within the studies that emerged in North America, such as the framing model. They adopted concepts only to a limited extent from their European peers, most notably the collective identity approach developed by Melucci (1989; 1996). These two traditions followed quite distinct pathways in studying social movements. In the following section, I will review the response of the European scholarship to the change of the social paradigm in the late 1960s, bringing the discussion to date.

New social movement theory

Following a Marxist/Hegelian trajectory, the European scholarship of social movements interpreted the classical paradigm through class conflict dynamics (Crossley, 2002). In this sense, the position of images was similar to that of the classical paradigm in the North American version (Jonsson, 2008), as this tradition was also highly normative in bringing philosophical, political, and cultural issues together (Buechler, 2011). The impact of the change in the late 1960s pressed the need for revision. The European scholarship on the new generation of movements differs greatly from rational action theories. The so-called *new social movement theory* (even a plural version of the word as “theories” might fit due to the multiple contributions) is based on Marxist literature, but contains significant critique of fundamental concepts, including those belong to the symbolic dimension, such as identity (Melucci, 1989).

New social movement theory suggests including noneconomic factors into the analysis of movements and recognising social actors that are outside the clusters confined to production-related proletarian class (Buechler, 1995). Several scholars have documented these contributions to this literature (Baumgarten, Daphi, & Ullrich, 2014; Buechler, 1995; Johnston & Klandermans, 1995; McAdam, 2000; Melucci, 1996; Polletta, 2008; Williams, 2004). New social movement theory is more interested in the “content of movement ideology, the concerns motivating the activists, and the arena in which the collective action was focused—that is, cultural understandings, norms, and identities rather than material interests and economic distribution” (Williams, 2004, p. 92). It is oriented toward an inquiry of the ways in which movements are formed, the novel methods and tactics used to reach out and mobilise people, and the role of culture in the emergence and trajectory of the movements.

In his review of new social movement theories, Buechler (1995, p. 442) collects the popular foci of analysis under six main categories: (1) Symbolic action and cultural sphere, (2) processes that promote autonomy and self-determination, (3) salience of post-material values in contrast with materialism, (4) fluid formation of affiliations that lead to collective identity, (5) social construction of grievances opposed to structural affiliation, and (6) decentralised networks of communication and action. According to this framework, new theories point out a number of characteristics of social movements of the time that deviate from earlier ones, which would be meaningful to analyse only within the new set of cultural and social paradigms introduced by post-industrial society. A crosscutting feature of new social movement theories is that they strive “to theorise a historically specific formation as the structural backdrop for contemporary forms of collective action” (Buechler, 1995, p. 443).

New social movements theory considered culture as homogenising structures of subjectivation, and urged for a moment of creating counterculture, which is the dispersed efforts of creating alternative spaces in power relations (Peters, 2015; Touraine, 1980). Touraine (1992) defines social movements as a matter of standing for an individual identity. Considering the collective political struggle as a process of reflexivity, he suggests that the subjectivation imposed by mechanisms of mass production, which results in a fragmented modernity, is challenged by micro-level identity-seeking efforts. For Habermas (1981), new social movements have a defensive character and are born as a reaction to the colonisation of the *lifeworld*, a Husserlian concept that he developed further as a social background for communicative action. Representing a seam between the dominating system and lifeworld, social movements oppose hegemonic culture by reconfiguring the symbolic system and creating temporary spaces of resistance. This symbolic struggle materialises in new understandings of activism. For classical theories, activism is simply an ephemeral, irrational state of barbaric crowds abused by their leaders that target the political and economic elites. For rational action theories, activism is absolutely a way of reason, and its target varies accordingly from changing a regime to taking over a government to simply passing a law.

New social movements theory, on the other hand, suggest a form of activism that can symbolically penetrate into the highly bureaucratic layers of industrial societies and make a “revolution of everyday life” (Vaneigem, 2001), meaning to question modern and routinised practices in private and public. Sprouting as a form counterculture-making, activism is considered as the effort to reconfigure both the collective and individual subjectivation processes (Blackman, Cromby, Hook, Papadopoulos, & Walkerdine, 2008). Scholars like de Certeau (1988) suggested that an ordinary person in society, a contemporary passive consumer

individual, a *common person*, is capable of altering the structures imposed by the modern state. He saw individual and ordinary ways of feeling, thinking, and doing as potential domains to start challenging established power relations that construct and regulate a modern life of mass production and consumption.

Including interdisciplinary contributions, we can observe that the approaches in new social movements literature from the 1960s onwards unfold in two ways in terms of assessing visual activism that are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The first approach to visual activism develops in relation to aesthetics of protest and finds ground more in the fields of humanities and cultural studies. It is concerned with visual activism as a politically-charged practice of making the invisible power relations visible (Martini, 2017) before symbolically deconstructing and subverting them. Several art collectives were influential in the rise and trajectory of the movements during the 1960s that made visual production and dissemination an indispensable part of activism. Guy Debord (1931-1994), the co-founder and the most renowned member of the Situationist International, understands visual activism as a way to challenge the systemic domination and restore the symbolic order outbalanced by the material. He uses images (and videos) to show that modern forms of iconic representation alienate and depoliticise the society in his *Society of the Spectacle* (Debord, 1970). Situationist International used visual representation as critique of modernity and advanced capitalism. Composed of avant-garde artists, political theorists, and other scholars, it found intellectual ground in Dada, a conceptual art and literary movement expressing discontent with the increased violence, nationalism, and massive destruction caused mainly by World War I (Teune, 2005). Subversion, distortion, and re-situation of the messages of hegemonic powers through photomontage was a major practice of Dadaists (Firat & Kuryel, 2011).

This tradition of triggering an unusual worldview and playing on the Marxist concept of alienation as a political tactic can still be found in today's memeification culture (Schober, 2009; Shifman, 2014) and, ironically, is also widely used by right-wing activists online (Bogerts & Fielitz, 2018). Emotional dynamics of collectivities, politically-charged symbolic actions, and temporo-spatial aspects of movements are at the heart of this strand of research. It pays a particular attention to how images move us, due in part to its particular focus on aesthetics. This is also evident in the close relationship of documentary photography of the time and social movements. Several photographers were involved in the movements of the 1960s' not only as observant documenters but also as participants (Harper, 2012). These works helped increase the visibility and recognition of movements around the world.

The discussions developed in this first strand toward visual activism, however, rarely find place in the second one. Habermas (1981), Touraine (1992), Castells (2004), and Melucci (1996), who are suggested as the representatives of four main traditions among new social movement theories (Buechler, 2011), focus little on analysing images, although the recognition of the *power* of images is very present in their works. Interpretations of visual activism stay within a dualistic understanding of symbolic struggle, skipping the plural sense of meanings and ambiguity that can be interpreted in various ways. Images are treated rather as a given category of the symbolic universe that addresses similar cognitive and emotional faculties across a bipolar political setting, such as hegemonic culture vs. counterculture. Melucci's *collective identity theory* as one of the new social movement theories can be a good example to this, as images along with a variety of symbols are seen as catalysers for constituting collective identities. Melucci's early writing considered symbolic assets to be in service of developing collectivities, in terms of belonging or superficial ways of expressing eagerness to group action (Melucci, 1989). This approach renders the image ("symbols and symbolic means" in Melucci's terms) as a property of merely the political realm, skipping that of the social. His later work revises this and conceives symbolic interaction as a constitutive and ambivalent actor of hegemonic subjectivation processes and as the potential domain of social movements (Melucci, 1996) that "challenge the instrumental logic of systemic domination" (Buechler, 2011, p.162). Yet, this elucidation has hardly made it to visual research and the analysis of images along these lines. The limited empirical works on visuals tend to analyse explicit political associations of the imagery, which falls mostly on a scale of bipolarity, such as images that appeal to the hegemonic culture and those that appeal to the counterculture.

New social movement theory has been particularly influential in social movement studies over the past 50 years. There have been some efforts to combine these two strands, particularly those analysing creativity and humour in the social movements after the 1960s. Drawing upon works of Bakhtin (1984) and his concept of the *carnavalesque*, researchers sought to interpret symbolic acts of protest as a practice of building identity (Firat & Kuryel, 2011; Yeğenoğlu, 2013). Although very inspiring as an approach, such efforts suffered from focusing on the moment of performative experience and therefore only the peak times of street protests. Very often, the analysis of visual activism coincided with interpreting the slogans and humorous catchphrases written on banners in photographs, rather than on the visual qualities of the image.

In addition, they reproduced the dualistic perspective of culture and counterculture. This limiting perspective can also be seen as part of a general shortcoming of new social movement

theory in that it attributes to the movement merely a responsive role in a dual setting. Given the fact that the social movements of the time demanded more freedom and exercise of rights, these theories often place social movements in an almost exclusively *progressive* trajectory, stretching out to a macro-level analysis of the phenomena. Cohen (1983) points out a number of binary sets in order to illustrate the difference in approaches between classical (rationality of modernity) and new (cultural model) scholars: “formal vs. substantive rationality, instrumental reason vs. value fundamentalism, universalism vs. particularism, ethic of responsibility vs. ethic of ultimate ends, strategic vs. exemplary action, formal vs. participatory democracy” (p. 98). She sees the efforts of the new approaches as generic and romantic and as failing to address the nonutopian claims of the new movements that are actually tangible and coherent when deemed in a specific cultural context. Additionally, Pichardo (1997) criticises the new social movement theory for developing a framework that fits merely a left-wing trajectory and for considering the right-wing only the unwanted other, thus failing to address the need for a more inclusive analytical framework to understand movements that spread across the political spectrum.

In the advent of the Internet and social media, some scholars suggested that we need new approaches to social movements as digital platforms introduce new ways of participation (Gerbaudo, 2012), which eventually increases the level of ambiguity and plurality in the meaning of images and in how visual activism takes place online. So, we have to go beyond the paradigms that were introduced after the new wave of movements in the 1960s and 1970s and that prevailed in social movement theory until now in order to have a better understanding of the emergence and trajectory of political imagery in detail. Recent analytical approaches to the study of visuals within a social movements’ context seek to bring different approaches together, including those of rational action theories and the legacy of new social movements. I will now elaborate on these approaches with particular attention to those studying visual activism and various processes around political imageries.

Visual Activism Beyond the Established Canon

Although the symbolic dimension has been stated as part of the social conflict and images are recognised as powerful elements in political struggle, a distinct line of inquiry into visual forms of activism in relation to social movement studies has hardly developed until recently, with certain exceptional efforts (DeLuca, 1999; Lahusen, 1996). As social movements incorporated different forms of mediation, with a culminating variety after the proliferation of

the Internet, the assessment of the established canon of social movement research has been greatly challenged.

Going beyond the understanding of practices of image (re)production and dissemination as a support measure to language-oriented findings or part of WUNC (collective worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment) display (Tilly, 2004), Doerr, Mattoni, and Teune (2013a) compile the existing visual research on social movements under three main foci: visual expression, visual representation, and visibility. According to this approach, image is a medium of communication without words but that comes with questions about the politics of image in contentious environments and issues of power around its appearance in public. This perspective relies on a set of established fields of inquiry in social movement studies, particularly those advanced in the aftermath of the social paradigm change of the 1960s; yet it opens up to investigation the intersections of cognitive and noncognitive effects of the image. Being “an important resource for protest actors to express themselves,” images should be considered also in relation to “their impact on collective identities and emotions as well as their role in framing and representing protest and in the mobilisation of resources” (Doerr, Mattoni, & Teune, 2013b, p. xvii). Such affirmation suggests a shift in prevailing approaches in social movement research aimed at preventing a limited approach to visual activism as merely a performative feature of political contention (Tilly, 2008), and instead accentuates its particular role in affecting how people think, feel, and act.

Drawing on the burgeoning literature on visual research in social movements over the past decade—one dominated by the increasing engagement with social media—some salient themes and outcomes should be outlined in this review. A first and very popular locus of inquiry is collective identity. Several researchers highlight that visual activism has been helpful in building and expressing the collective identity of a movement (Arda, 2015; Daphi, Le, & Ullrich, 2013; Gerbaudo, 2015). These works refer to a processual identity-making rather than a finalised product, similar to the collective identity concept developed by Melucci (1989). Images take part in this process as constitutive elements through which various actors contribute to making and sharing of cultural codes (Zik, 2018a). Feelings of sympathy and solidarity are articulated through images, thus subscribing to a sense of “we-ness”, while showing a distinction from the “other” that is often addressed as a negative element in the process of collective identity building. The switch from collective action to connective action is an issue that has been addressed by only a few researchers in terms of visual analysis (Adi, Gerodimos, & Lilleker, 2018; Lim, 2013; Lotfalian, 2013).

The second locus is the analysis of the ways in which movements communicate through symbols. This corpus of research focuses on images as a source of data in order to analyse discursive practices (Wetzstein, 2017), emergent narratives (Neumayer & Rossi, 2018), and action frames (Cruz & San Cornelio, 2018), as well as the visual rhetoric at work among these elements. Borrowing the term “image event” from DeLuca (1999), Jones (2009) maintains that image events come into being in a variety of forms in both conventional and innovative ways, but also observes a penetration and invasion of image in practices of the establishment and initiatives that demand change. As social media platforms allow researchers to conduct retrospective analysis through large data sets, using hashtags and keywords, it is easier than ever for media scholars to study communication patterns on these platforms. Yet, this type of highly text-dependent digital ethnography does not have the same features for visual research. A major part of the visual analysis in this cluster follow textual discourses and narratives in order to locate the images. This is an inevitable result of the digital construction of images online, and visual researchers should be careful to not repeat the shortcomings of a logocentric analysis.

The third salient theme is social movement image repertoires, which can be considered together with diffusion of images across movements. Informed by Tilly’s (2004) concept of “repertoires of contention”, these studies analyse images as tools for collective action and visual activism as a tactic for protest (Earl & Kimport, 2011). Traditionally, social movement image repertoires grew through the photographs taken by the journalists during the peak times of the protests. Photojournalists captured the visual landscape of the movement and accentuated it as a visual phenomenon. As mobile technologies have become part of social movements, researchers have paid more attention to the contribution of activists to such image repertoires and also to social media’s role in the diffusion of images across movements. The concept of “repertoires of contention” builds on rational action theories, and the studies it informs mostly examine the factor of rational choice and the cognitive learning process through generations of activists, including how a certain type of collective action is invented, practiced, and added to the activist library, so to speak. The noncognitive aspects are partly addressed by the studies flourishing around collective memory, which can be listed as another emergent theme.

Visual culture and memory studies can be counted as the last salient locus in social movement scholarship. Although collective memory has been addressed by various researchers, works focus on narratives and a wider symbolic dimension, where symbols are most popularly addressed (Abăseacă, 2018; Gongaware, 2011; Zamponi, 2019). From a cultural and memory studies perspective, collective memory is different than history and is understood as a socially

constructed matter that is composed of the individual remembering of experiences but also of representations, practices, and information: an ever-changing shared affective notion (A. Assmann & Conrad, 2010; Navaro-Yashin, 2012). A large part of the studies on the memory of movements claim that social movements are not completely spontaneous phenomena and are instead rooted in history (Abăseacă, 2018; Flesher Fominaya, 2014). Despite the strong reciprocal relationship between the visual landscape and the collective memory of social movements, studies in relation to images are rare, with certain exceptions (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010; Awad, 2017; Lotfalian, 2013). These studies mostly focus on social movement iconography, and in general are informed by protest photography.

The empirical works on visual memory in social movements investigate the reappearance of symbols and symbolic objects through social movement history, the appropriation and remediation of iconic photographs across movements, and visual activist efforts to challenge the hegemonic historiography (Raiford, 2003). This line of research provides methodological perspectives that are particularly important for the purposes of this dissertation. Along with the theoretical insights it draws from memory studies, this cluster of scholarship seeks to understand how cultural patterns and figures that are widely accepted over long periods of time are merged into contemporary social conflicts and become points of attention for visual activism. Although empirical studies remain generally within the same/similar tradition of social movements (e.g. leftist/liberal movements), scholarly efforts that study collective memory as an analytical mechanism within the symbolic dimension offer valuable examples that can help with the image analysis intended in this research.

A few observations can follow this review on research loci. First, social movement scholars often pay more attention to images with embedded text, such as a photograph that captured a banner in a street protest or an Internet meme with a script (Hristova, 2014). This type of study certainly represents an interest in images and offers valuable insights about the symbolic dimension of social movements; however, it might fall short in its analysis of the semiotic and affective qualities of the image, which is recognised as having a powerful impact on the movement dynamics, and exclusively prioritise text over image. Although intertextuality is an integral part of social inquiry (Marcus & Fischer, 1999), interpreting the image according to the content and meaning of the script runs the risk of placing the image in a supplementary role to language.

The second observation is that comparative studies across politically contrasting circles are extremely rare. Researchers have been attending to political imageries affiliated with various political traditions and the ways in which movements challenge the hegemonic

symbolic order with a counter-image (e.g. culture vs. counterculture as described above). This perspective involves the risk of positioning visual activism as having a one-way reactionary status, as in new social movements studies, and of considering the established symbolic order as a rather static structure that is addressed by the visual activist. However, as Doerr and Teune (2011) show, the establishment also continuously develops strategies and tactics to respond to such challenges, which makes political imagery and visual activism a constant battleground rather than a one-way political communication. The establishment responds not only through its official structures but also in a form of activism. In addition to the efforts performed through official channels, as digital media offers convenient infrastructures for participatory politics, the independent online users can join the establishment's work. On social media platforms, this contest takes an even more dynamic form that extends to examples of participatory propaganda (Repnikova & Fang, 2018; Wanless & Berk, 2017).

Third, visual studies on contemporary forms of participation to mobilisation appear to be a burgeoning crosscutting field. A great part of this research is interested in the ways in which an image is constructed by multiple actors (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010; Papailias, 2016). Although the topic has occupied scholarly research in the past, particularly in the field of iconic imagery (Alexander, Bartmanski, & Giesen, 2012), the intensive use of digital media in post-2009 movements opens new areas of discussion in relation to connective action.

Throughout the above review of literature starting from the classical paradigm of social movements up until today, I have showed the engagement of social movement scholarship in visual research. Parallel to these contributions that employ a sociological perspective, visual analyses of social movements have been conducted in other disciplines as well, including international relations and political science (Bleiker, 2018; Olesen, 2017), media and communications (Mortensen, Neumayer, & Poell, 2019; Neumayer & Rossi, 2018) and more interdisciplinary fields, such as visual studies (Bryan-Wilson et al., 2016) and cultural studies (Memou, 2013), although these are not clear-cut distinctions. Most currently, researchers point to the well-established methods of art history and to various works on protest aesthetics and argue for the inclusion of interdisciplinary visual approaches to social movement studies (Doerr et al., 2015; Eyerman, 2015; McGarry, Jenzen, Eslan-Ziya, Erhart, & Korkut, 2019c; Philipps, 2012). Analysing visual practices in the contemporary social movement environment, this dissertation intends to contribute to these debates. To illustrate how social interdisciplinarity can help social movement research go beyond the established canon when studying visual activism, I will pinpoint and explain further below two processes, namely visual framing and remediation, which will also be essential concepts for conducting this study.

Visual framing through photography

The basic philosophy of photography lies in the simplistic understanding of the practice as a straight-forward representation of the world, which is still largely valid both in the popular and academic sense (Flusser, 2006). A photograph is often accepted as evidence (Burgin, 1988), as a display of reality through documentary photography rooted in the social science canon (Harper, 1988). Exceptions to this understanding can be found in anthropology (Bateson & Mead, 1942), as the attention to photographic analysis and visual forms of meaning-making has developed much earlier there than in other social science disciplines.

Photography has been involved in documenting moments of political mobility since the Paris Commune of 1871 (Memou, 2013). Earlier examples displaying such resistance offered a different insight than engravings (e.g., Francisco Goya's 1810-1820 series, *The Disasters of War*) and paintings (e.g., Eugène Delacroix's 1830 *Liberty Leading the People*) of mass events. In the first half of the 20th century, despite the increasing popularity of photography, several newspapers preferred hiring illustrators to draw realistic scenes from political events in order to avoid the high costs of printing photographs. As cameras and printing technologies evolved, photography became a means to record what was happening at that very moment. Activists proudly showed up in photographs in order to certify their involvement in the movement, which in turn did not always end well for them. It was not difficult for the authorities to recognise the Paris Communards who smiled into the cameras and arrest or kill them (Memou, 2013). Surveillance technologies of today serve similar purposes, as both activists participating in protests or those demonstrating open support for a movement via social media platforms often pop up on governments' radars, as Gezi and other examples show (Amnesty International, 2013; 2018). Still, with the involvement of journalism and with the technological advancements of the 20th century, photography gained an even more crucial role in political struggle around the world by communicating the feeling of the moment, mobilising public affects, and inspiring a Images from protest actions, particularly those from the second half of the 20th century, such as the *Burning Monk* of 1963 (Figure 1) and the *Tank Man* of 1989 (Figure 2) were featured among the 100 most influential images of all time by *TIME* magazine. Both images are considered as displaying reality, in the sense of documenting evidence of what was happening at the time. Taken by photojournalists, these photographs "furnish evidence... and offer an accurate relation to visible reality", bringing those moments to "immortality" (Sontag, 2005, pp. 3-8).



Figure 1. Browne, M. (1963). *Burning Monk* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <http://100photos.time.com/photos/malcolm-browne-burning-monk>



Figure 2. Wiedener, J. (1989). *Tank Man* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <http://100photos.time.com/photos/jeff-widener-tank-man>

Burning Monk won a Pulitzer Prize for Browne, while *Tank Man* was nominated as finalist in 1990. Former U.S. President John F. Kennedy said of the Browne photograph that

“no news picture in history has generated so much emotion around the world as that one” (Toong, 2008, p. 61). Widener’s shot was equally strong, creating a long-standing icon of the symbolic capacity of a single individual to resist overwhelming power. It immediately joined the protest iconography, or the social movement repertoire, one can say, as a progenitor of thousands of remade images, both staged and not staged, and visual activism around the representation of such dramatic scene (although almost all to be manufactured in and consumed by Western circles).

Tank Man is so strong as a protest icon that it has been obscured in Internet searches in China, and yet the image continued to nurture various forms of visual activism in the country (Hillenbrand, 2017). The identity of the person who stood in front of the tanks is still a mystery today. However, the overall composition of the photograph continues to be a progenitor of various staged performances of the scene, both in political and popular cultures.

Burning Monk, on the other hand, captured the tragic scene of the monk Thich Quan Duc’s self-immolation, which influenced almost all other similar fatal protests thereafter (Biggs, 2006). Naming self-immolation itself as visual activism is not straightforwardly easy in either practical or ethical terms and also goes beyond the focus and limits of this study. Nevertheless, dissemination of such images in contemporary social movements, such as the case of Mohamed Bouazizi (1984-2011) of Tunisia, whose self-immolation is regarded as the starting point of the 2011 Arab Spring, are discussed within the lines of visual activism and framing (Doerr et al., 2015; Lim, 2013) for purposes of mobilising public affects (Schankweiler, 2017), creating collective identity (Lim, 2013), and aestheticising protest (Shilton, 2013).

Photography, particularly in this age of digitality, has long gone beyond Sontag’s notion of providing evidence. Even though it still has the function of a gateway to reality, it also shapes that reality. Lim (2013) argues that it was not only the image of the moment but also the rigorous framing efforts around it that were effective in the emergence and trajectory of the 2011 Tunisian Revolution, noting that Bouazizi was only one of nine people setting themselves on fire to protest the Tunisian government within a period of six months preceding the protests.

A photograph’s physical frame limits our perspective and disposes us in a certain way to look at “the reality out there” from a specific angle that shapes our gaze. The partiality of our gaze affects our engagement in the proposed reality. Similar to viewing an image through a particular angle, frames in social life not only direct us toward *what* we think, feel, and do, but also toward *how* we engage in these processes of thinking, feeling, and doing. When Snow and his colleagues introduced framing to social movement studies, they did not exclude visual

elements, but they did not necessarily pay attention to them either. Although images are considered an essential part of framing activity (Goffman, 1979), particularly in the media (W. A. Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992; Messaris & Abraham, 2001; Moernaut, Mast, & Pauwels, 2018), both conceptual and empirical research on framing in social movement scholarship has traditionally overlooked images (Morrison & Isaac, 2012). Most of the theoretical and empirical research rarely prioritises images when building on key framing notions in social movements, such as *frame alignment*, *frame resonance*, and *master frames*. Although not as a pre-given category, which would jeopardise the logic of grounded theory in the first place, Snow and Benford's framing concepts are analytically useful to link the meaning-making efforts in image production and dissemination processes to social movements.

In their first text, Snow et al. (1986) developed the term frame alignment pointing out to the a process of mutualisation of individual and social movement orientation and goals. According to this, frame alignment has four main processes: *frame bridging*, *frame amplification*, *frame extension*, and *frame transformation*. Frame bridging refers to linking ideally relevant but unconnected frames, which can happen both at the individual and collective levels. Frame amplification is about activating existing beliefs, values, and opinions to convince people join a movement. Frame extension refers to expanding a frame and including other compatible frames. Frame transformation refers to Goffman's *keying* concept, which is "a set of conventions by which a given activity, one already meaningful in some ordinary framework, is transformed into something patterned on this activity but seen by the participants to be something quite else" (Goffman, 1986, pp. 43-44). This happens when a social movement frame does not resonate with other frames and needs to be transformed.

Following upon this in their second text, Snow and Benford (1988) tackled frame resonance in relation to ideology and mobilisation. According to this, frames would be more compelling if they were relevant to people's "lifeworlds", meaning the ideational structures that already exist in the political field. They proposed three main framing tasks for resonance and mobilisation: *diagnostic framing*, which identifies a problem and attributes blame or causality; *prognostic framing*, which identifies strategies and tactics for solutions; and *motivational framing*, which is a call to arms that takes the prior two tasks further.

Finally, in their third text on framing, Snow and Benford (1992) introduced the concept of master frame. While frame alignment and framing tasks organise the goals and orientation of the movement, master frames link these collective action frames to a wider symbolic universe of social movements. The concept refers to a tautological process in which movements seek their symbolic roots in history and align themselves with other notable efforts while trying to

legitimise their claims and struggle (Swart, 1995). According to della Porta, Andretta, Mosca, and Reiter (2006), symbolic construction of master frames help multiply and layer movements' identities, while establishing a continuity between collective actors. A discursive populist rhetoric can also act as a master frame, just as in the example of "Occupy-style" popular mobilisations (Aslanidis, 2018).

These three essential texts lay the groundwork for empirical studies on framing in social movements. Accordingly, framing can be considered both as a theoretical perspective and a methodological tool in social movement research. Framing has become one of the most attended concepts in social movement studies, but a recent assessment shows that "frame diffusion across time and space" and studies on the "notion of cultural resonance", which are actually the fields of interest for this dissertation, are still few (Snow et al., 2014, pp. 37-38). Other areas, such as visual forms and multisensory genre, can be added to this list of understudied topics, although there are notable exceptions (DeLuca, 1999; Gitlin, 1980; Lahusen, 1996; Morrison & Isaac, 2012). The increasing use of social media in social movements and political communication has led to the further development of this perspective within the last decade. Bennet and Segerberg's (2013) study on movement frames in the digital age suggests the individualised construction of frames. This assumes a rather fragmented process of framing that they define as "connective" in addition to "collective", offering a new understanding of frame alignment. Von Scheve, Zink, and Ismer (2016) show that frames are constructed affectively, besides the existing ideational structures, which means that frame resonance can go beyond ideological backgrounds. Various scholars (Zamponi, 2019) underline the role of iconic imagery and visual memory in the emergence of frames, extending the genres of discursivity in social movements. Within the limits of this study, I will make use of the concept as a theoretical window for meaning-making, rather than as my methodological approach, which is explained in detail in Chapter 3.

Remediation and iconisation

Remediation is a concept originating in media studies that is explained in detail by Bolter and Grusin (1999) in relation to the Internet and cyber-cultures. They coined and further elaborated the term in order to complicate the popular "repurposing" of the media industry. According to their study, remediation is a defining characteristic of new media. Borrowing Bolter and Grusin's term, Lievrouw suggests that remediation as a political act "borrows, modifies, samples, and remixes existing content, forms, and expressions to create new works,

relationships, interactions, and meanings” (Lievrouw, 2011, p. 219) While she acknowledges the indispensable position of the Internet for today’s activist cultures, Lievrouw also underscores the fact that remediation could be seen in the pre-Internet period, such as in the Dada of the early 20th century and the Situationist International of the 1950s and 1960s, which inspired new social movements in terms of creative action.

Appropriation is another much older term that is used for similar cases of “repurposing”. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Modern and Contemporary Art*, appropriation is “the use of pre-existing objects or images with little transformation” (Chilvers & Graves-Smith, 2015). It is a central concept related to the notions of originality and authenticity of artworks and gained currency also in popular art circles in the 1960s. The concept is widely used in the field of art but has recently also become popular in social movement studies (Galis & Neumayer, 2016; Gerbaudo, 2012; Treré, 2019). Internet memes can be considered prominent examples of appropriation, as contemporary digital adaptations of the subversive art of Dada and of the Situationists’ *détournement*, a technique that appropriates a particular object or artwork for the purposes of political expression. Various individuals and organisations involved in the Global Justice Movement of the 1990s, most notably the Canada-based Adbusters Media Foundation, produced memes with and without making use of photographs. Very present in today’s social media, Internet memes are produced about almost anything (Shifman, 2014). Depending on the context, appropriation is used with both positive and negative connotations in the research literature and it is not my intention to draw clear borders between such applications. There are situations where practices of remediation and appropriation overlap; however, I do not intend to embark on the task of drawing a concrete line between those examples. For the purposes of this dissertation, I find the term *remediation* particularly useful in the study of visual labour in relation to illustrations produced from photographs. I will still make use of the term *appropriation*, but only when referring to a smaller scale of effort, such as reworking, copying, or adapting aesthetic elements inside an image, when a certain symbol or concept is adopted in the process of remediation.

Transformation of media, the central notion of remediation, happens in various ways. Building on Lievrouw’s activist interpretation of remediation and studying data activists in Italian and Spanish anti-corruption campaigns, Mattoni (2017b) observes two different types of remediation practice in social movements in terms of the reception of data in a certain medium and its transformation into another. Comparing the 15MpraRato campaign in Spain and the Riparte il Futuro in Italy, she argues that these two groups of data activists responded to corruption-related data by different remediation techniques, in addition to other differences in

their background and organisational models. In Spain, for instance, 15MpraRato activists transformed the digital data they received from an email communication leak into a form of theatre play that they performed across the country. Mattoni calls this transformation between media from digital email communication to theatre performance “hard remediation”. By defining it as “hard” she points to the travel of the data from “one technology to another” (Mattoni, 2017b, p. 738). In Italy, on the other hand, the data activists transformed the data they received online from politicians into info-graphics by using various visualisation techniques. The visuals were published on the Riparte il Futuro website and were disseminated on social media platforms. As the data does not travel into another technological realm but stays on digital media in the Italian case, Mattoni calls this “soft remediation”.

Following Mattoni’s model, examples of remediation of photographs in both “hard” and “soft” terms can be found through the history of social movements and activism. For hard remediation, Marc Riboud’s *The Ultimate Confrontation* photograph of the 1967 demonstrations against the Vietnam War in the United States, in which a single protester offers a flower to a group of soldiers, or its contemporary, *The Flower Power* photograph by Bernie Boston, taken during "March on the Pentagon", have been repeated endlessly in a theatrical fashion in numerous protests up to this day. Similarly, the famous artist-activist Ai Weiwei recreated the scene in Nilüfer Demir’s saddening photograph of Alan Kurdi, the Syrian toddler who was washed up on the Turkish coast in 2015 (Papailias, 2018).

As the framework of this study has a particular focus on digital media, soft remediation can provide a useful window through which to analyse the illustrations and their aesthetic connection to photographs. Soft remediation is a technique employed by activists to create icons of protest. Illustrations, whether produced by professionals or amateurs, remediate photographs by working through their content and composition at different levels while intentionally maintaining a visible and strong reference to the initial photographs, which are often the most iconic ones from the events. Hariman and Lucaites’s (2007) definition might be helpful in remembering what an iconic photograph is:

... photographic images appearing in print, electronic, or digital media that are widely recognized and remembered, are understood to be representations of historically significant events, activate strong emotional identification or response, and are reproduced across a range of media, genres, or topics. (p. 27)

Iconic photographs constitute a gateway to recognising and understanding the movement, a point of acknowledgement of the collective political struggle, and a medium of

public outreach. They evoke greater public resonance and help popularise the politicisation process. Accordingly, three main remediation patterns can be distinguished. First, the remediated photographs belong to a deceased person who is identified as a movement martyr. Recent examples include the photographs of Carlo Giuliani of the 2001 Anti-globalization protests during the Genoa G8 Summit (Lanslots, 2017), Alexis Neda Agha-Soltan of the 2009 Iranian Green Movement (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010), Alexandros Grigoropoulos of the 2008 Greek Riots (Kornetis, 2010), Khaled Said of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution (Olesen, 2013), and Berkin Elvan of the 2013 Gezi Movement (Arda, 2014). Photographs of these martyrs were remediated as illustrations and disseminated online. The remediations are unlikely to be visual documents of a tragic death but are rather based on the victims' casual photographs from daily life or simple portraits. In this pattern, the victim depicted in the illustration becomes publicly recognised after their death, and while this recognition arises due to the mass media coverage, it is also partly due to the repetitive exposure to the person's visual legacy, as the illustrations help make the photograph become an icon.

Second, the photographs selected for remediation belong to a renowned personality related with the movement who can be either a historic or a contemporary figure. Photographs of historic personalities such as Mahatma Gandhi of the Indian Anti-Colonial Movement, Emmeline Pankhurst of the British Suffragette Movement, and Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr., of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement appear as illustrations in various occasions of human rights activism. Today, renowned people such as politicians, celebrities, and famous activists are often drawn as illustrations based on their photographs. In these images, people's clothing style, body type and facial features can be immediately distinguished due to their appearance in photographs or other audio-visual means of mass communication. In this pattern, the person has already been associated with the movement or is an icon themselves, and the remediations then serve various purposes from satire to campaigning. Certainly, these two pattern types may also overlap when a famous personality is accepted as a martyr as a consequence of their activist engagement and their photograph is remediated into illustrations, as in the case of Ernesto "Che" Guevara (Cambre, 2014).

The third pattern is, however, quite different than the previous two. The illustration is based on the photograph of (an) ordinary person(s) from among the public engaged in a political action. The person might be subjected to violence in the photograph or even be killed as a result. They might be persecuted or maltreated as a result of the photographic evidence of being part of a movement. Yet, although the name of the person in the image might become publicly known later, the photograph itself becomes more famous than the person in it so that their names

are hardly ever remembered. Recent examples of this pattern are the shirtless young man gripping a Palestinian flag in one hand and swinging a slingshot over his head with the other in Gaza in 2018 and the Sudanese woman in a white dress in the 2019 protests against the government. Although the names of both were revealed later, the images are more recognised than the people. In some cases, the identity of these people that are in such iconic photographs is never revealed, as in the case of Jeff Widener's *Tank Man*. The remediation of these photographs as illustrations emphasises the ordinary profile of the person who could be anyone, which brings us to a key notion in the iconisation process that this study will focus on: Everybody figures in social movements.

Everybody figures are representations of the ordinary person in the society but are also variants of ideal types that they invite people to be. The concept can be found in de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life*, a seminal work in the cultural studies field. He describes everybody (also referred as *nobody* in his text) as an ordinary person in the society, who is capable of reconfiguring the social by creating a resilient *topos* in an abstract sense. This philosophy finds its inspiration in Lefebvre's conceptualization of space as a social construct in modern capitalist societies. Besides being a product of modern times, space "is also means of control, and hence of domination, of power; yet that, as such, it escapes in part from those who would make use of it" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 26). Thus, Lefebvre does not describe an absolute domination of space, on the contrary, he suggests that it maintains an unoccupied domain that may offer the conditions to undermine such an attempt. Everybodies' spatial reconfiguration is a political claim and invites the public to take part in it. The utopic dimension created by an everybody figure "protects the weapons of the weak against the reality of the established order" (de Certeau, 1988, p.23). It refers to where the societal experience, the collective memory of the symbolic political struggle is stored and remains as a potential powerhouse for the mobilisation of ordinary people.

Variants of everybody figures have constituted points of sympathy as much as antagonism within the political imagery for centuries (Schober, 2019a). The representation and description of what is good and what is evil cannot escape political interest, and much of the propaganda images produced through the 20th century work within a similar understanding. Summoning gestures of national personifications of various countries, such as the Uncle Sam of the United States, are intended to recruit people for the army or other national assignments; other figures spread ideas of industrial and land development and praised work (Jordan, 2015); some others are intended to install certain ways of consumption and behaviour (Niyazioğlu, 2016) and life style according to state policies (Altan, 2005; Niyazioğlu, 2016). Countless

depictions can be found in the history of political imagery, such as the personalisation of an enemy threat in the propaganda posters of war periods (Vuorinen, 2012), anti-Semitic and anti-Ziganist illustrations (Rash, 2012), and photographs and illustrations of migrants and refugees (Wodak & Forchtner, 2014).

Moreover, images that are produced by or that capture the action of people affiliated with a certain political tradition can be used for antagonism by people of the contesting tradition. 20th-century propaganda images can provide many examples of this, but a recent example of this remediation practice is the case of the police officer who pepper sprayed a group of protesters at the University of California, Davis in 2011. The photograph of the incident was remediated into several illustrations. The police officer was singled out from the photograph and used in a subversive way in Internet memes. In addition to and often in contradiction with pro-establishment uses, everybody figures have a crucial role in social movements and the context of activism.

With the rise of the Internet and digital media and with the advent of the so-called “connective turn”, a major change in everybody figures in political imagery is that they refer to real ordinary people and not just semi-fictive characters, as was the case of Uncle Sam or other images of propaganda. The iconic *Tank Man* photograph of 1989 is probably one of the images that pointed to the shift to come in the visual representation of everybody in the social movement scene. Remediated endlessly both in offline and online environments (Hillenbrand, 2017; Ibrahim, 2016), the image still serves as an anchor to visualising issues of repression, bravery, and—most of all—how the greater state apparatus can be challenged by a seemingly lesser power, by a single individual. In 2019, this process was much faster for the photograph of the woman in white traditional dress of the Sudanese protests, hailed as *Kandaka*, the Nubian queen. Several illustrations were on digital media along with her photographs and videos within a few days, remediating the scene in visually tempting and attractive ways.

However, I do not claim that everybody figures were based merely on fictitious characters in the past and now only on real people. This should be clear. What I suggest is that, with the popularisation of digital media and technologies, a growing tendency toward ordinariness can be observed within the visual landscape of social movements, and this is evident particularly in the remediation of photographs showing ordinary people engaged in political action.

Lievrouw (2006; 2011) relates the dramatic increase in activist remediation practices to the rise of the Internet and digital media. As traditional media gatekeeping has evolved

considerably, the diversity and number of remediated works has also reached an unprecedented number. Going beyond photography's earlier interest in documenting social movements that also led to capturing such iconic images of protests since the 1960s (Harper, 2012), the connective visual activism attempts to accentuate the power of these everybody figures by remediating them. For de Certeau (1988), representations of everybodies function as popularisers of ideas and public positions; however, it is also of the utmost importance to observe how they are used, manipulated, or, in the terms of this chapter, "remediated" in the process:

The presence and circulation of a representation (taught by preachers, educators, and popularisers as the key to socioeconomic advancement) tells us nothing about what it is for its users. We must first analyse its manipulation by users who are not its makers. Only then can we gauge the difference or similarity between the production of the image and the secondary production hidden in the process of its utilization. (p. xiii)

As in the cases of *Tank Man* and *Kandaka*, iconic images of everybody figures across the social movement scene are remediated by numerous (re)producers before being disseminated on digital media by numerous users. In this sense visual activism involved in this process should be handled within a multiple-actor action scheme rather than an organiser-led and predetermined one (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). In the contemporary social movement environment, soft remediation is part of the collective/connective efforts to popularise the movement (Mattoni, 2017b). The very practice of remediation is a political contribution, as much as it is an aesthetic intervention to the photograph. Besides professional illustrators, activists with no background or built skills as such have access to various easy-to-use software that can be downloaded even on smartphones, enabling them to generate illustrations in an instant. The wider and more transnational a mobilisation gets, the more difficult it becomes to identify participants involved in the manipulation of everybody images. Yet an analysis of the changes made to images can still provide valuable information for understanding the transformation and extension of everybody figures in the context of social movements. The remediation processing of photographs into illustrations breaks or enhances what a photograph displays and modifies its mobilisation potential.

Analytical Framework: Visual Activism in Contemporary Times

Following della Porta and Diani's (2006) definition of social movements as phenomena that "share a distinct collective identity", "are involved in conflictual issues with clearly identified opponents", and "are linked by dense informal networks" (p.20), I will utilise the analytical framework I proposed in the beginning of this chapter. It rests on three main interrelated pillars and speaks to these characteristics respectively: first, the approach to the notion of symbolic struggle in social movements as informed by the visual research literature that may help better understand contemporary ways of meaning-making through images in collective political struggle; second, as resituating collective action in today's world of digital connectivity where reality is networked and crowdsourced as much as the social; and third, in the conceptualisation of visual activism as not only a reactionary representative practice but also as a creative one that opens up the possibility for inter-pictorial interactions that can be traced semiotically and affectively across different genres beyond spatial and temporal limitations. Discussing these three aspects of political struggle in relation to the conceptual and practical research on visual activism might provide an operational framework for analysing the ways in which visual production and dissemination take place in digital media today.

Symbolic struggle

According to Bourdieu, symbolic power works through institutions and practices that are set in discursive and nondiscursive means. Capable of constructing the immediate meaning of the social world, symbolic power cannot be reduced to figurative communication in terms of social interactionism. Similar to the Foucauldian understanding of power and the interactional quotidian structures through which it emerges and configures social relations, Bourdieu (1991) sees symbolic production as a distinctive domain where symbolic power is at work in the service of the dominant class (p. 163-168). It is constructed and shaped toward the benefit of prevailing groups that have the primary instruments to influence and determine the borders and content of socially accepted ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. Melucci (1996) contends that the symbolic struggle in such an environment is performed in mundane interactions in the political realm that are embedded in a symbolic production that engages with public affects.

The symbolic production aims for building a collective identity that binds participants of a certain social movement together around the claims of a political cause and/or against another group or entity. Besides the process of building a collective identity, this kind of identity

development is inherent to several aspects of social movements, first and foremost to the processes of generating collective action frames (Benford & Snow, 2000). Scholars mention that aestheticisation practices, such as singing, dancing, painting, and acting, among others, contribute to the construction of collective action frames (Noakes & Johnston, 2005), suggesting that framing is part of the symbolic struggle and that it capitalises on intrinsic and reproduced symbols.

Reflections of these discussions on symbolic production can also be found in the burgeoning literature on populism. Populist forms of mobilisation engage in symbolic struggle in a more aggressive way, in terms of addressing public affects. The political divides are defined rather temporarily and affectively, rather than on the basis of ideology (Iyengar et al., 2012). Von Scheve et al. (2016) show that framing is performed affectively through media, and so the emotions in public can be shaped, particularly in times of crisis when populist actors gain considerable strength. What Mouffe (2018) calls a “populist moment” is a period where “passions” increasingly take over the process of thinking, feeling, and acting within the political context. Welcoming the consideration of emotions in politics, she urges a populism from the left in order to fight the increase of one from the right. At the same time, several interpretations of Laclau’s (1977) seminal work on populism look at collective action through the lens of discourse and rhetorical power (Aslanidis, 2016; de Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017; Stavrakakis, 2017) drawing a parallel to Bourdieu’s (1991) definition of symbolic power:

Symbolic power – as a power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world and, thereby, action on the world and thus the world itself, an almost magical power which enables one to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained through force (whether physical or economic), by virtue of the specific effect of mobilisation – is a power that can be exercised only if it is recognised, that is, misrecognised as arbitrary. (p. 170)

Both structural and cultural factors can be merged to play a role in the symbolic struggle. Social movements may rely on ideology for discursive framing (Aslanidis, 2015) and use the power of ideological symbols together with culturally accepted motifs for gaining recognition and resonating with the public. In this sense, symbolic production aims at increasing symbolic power through both discursive and nondiscursive mediums that may operate in a certain ecology characterised by “affective publics” (Papacharissi, 2015b). These publics are affectively constructed and shaped by mediated interactions and affordances around them. Going through various examples of political debates and social mobilisations in India, China,

Sweden, and the United States, Schroeder (2018) shows how social media affordances can become powerful instruments for intended polarisation and blame attribution.

The symbolic struggle, however, can even be aggressively polarising and does not always engage in exclusive ways of symbolic production. Social movements often attend and try to fit within the acceptable limits of discursivity that are set by the establishment, such as the ruling class or the government, or by widely attended value systems, such as religion (Noakes & Johnston, 2005), seeking to get recognition and increase their symbolic power. Similar trends can be seen across various political traditions today, including the alt-right activists' making of Internet memes, which was originally a subversive practice with roots in the "leftist" social movements of the 1960s. Activist practices across political divides might even coincide and merge into one movement, as seen in Hong Kong, Romania, and the Ukraine (Abăseacă & Pleyers, 2018). As the ideology is no longer a definitive political divide, but its components are rather appropriated in order to serve the movement's aims, the symbolic heritage attached to a certain ideology also becomes contested. This dissertation provides insights into the convergence and difference of practices around images between movements that are formed both affectively and ideologically by studying the symbolic dimension of the contemporary collective struggle, namely the production and dissemination of photographs and illustrations.

As W. J. T. Mitchell (1987) suggests, images are not merely signs but are actually vital signs that generate sensations of fear, hope, and desire by being the metaphors of the feared, hoped for, and desired. Not only the images we create but also the actions performed around images, such as in the examples of fear of images leading to iconoclasm, also reflect the dynamics of social relations. With the "pictorial turn", societies increasingly began to use images for provocative communication (W. J. T. Mitchell, 2013). Images become holders of human ambitions, memories, and values that go beyond communication, signification, and persuasion. Rose (2014) argues that images can reveal "social identities, processes, practices, experiences, institutions, and relations" (p. 37). Then, in the same way, images can challenge all these listed norms. Symbolic struggle, and the processes of image making and dissemination that constitute visual activism are, therefore, a pursuit of challenging values and meaning-making as much as of representation and visibility.

Conducting a qualitative analysis on the symbolic dimension of social movements, a few aspects come to the forefront after such discussion in relation to the research questions of this study. An initial one is the increased awareness of symbolic struggle. Whether they aim to overthrow the government and change regimes or not, contemporary movements are well aware

of the fact that acts of protest and claim-making are supplied and/or pioneered by the fight over meaning-making, and, moreover, in visual terms, to be precise. This can be seen in the great effort invested in production and dissemination of images both in online and offline contexts. Movements commit to symbolic action in varying ways, from taking iconic photographs, where a political meaning is constructed, to making stylised images, where several layers of symbols compete to make a point about movements' aims and claims.

In addition to iconisation and styling of visuals, symbolic struggle through political imagery takes place on a scale of experience and discursivity in relation to the political agenda. This shows itself best in whether an image reflects the real situation where its content becomes the most prominent feature, such as with the *Woman in Red* photograph of Gezi, or if it pertains to an abstract set of ideas where its form steps ahead, such as with the illustrations that remediate the same photograph. Last but not least, symbolic struggle in contemporary movements is fashioned by digital connectivity. Rather than a movement elite shaping symbolic production or leading figures in society who can inspire the visual practices of political action, the current social movement environment seems to be calling for participants who would concurrently join in such processes either remotely or on site (Papailias, 2019). The next section will follow up on this last aspect of the symbolic struggle.

Networked image and connective action

Students protesting at Tiananmen Square in 1989 used fax machines in order to reach the global press (Stimson, 2005). It was a historical moment for using technology during the action of a protest in order to bypass censorship and contact multiple media outlets elsewhere. Only five years later, Zapatistas took this a step further by directly reaching everyone who had Internet access. It was on 1 January 1994 that the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* in Spanish and EZLN in short) issued their declaration of war against the Mexican state; soon afterwards, they seized several towns in the southern state of Chiapas in Mexico, while making sure the whole world knew about it through online communiqués. They are often cited as the first political movement to use technology and communication networks to that extent, thus inspiring the following generation of movements while transforming global solidarity measures into a "fabric of opposition to much wider policies" (Cleaver, 1998, p. 622).

Use of the Internet in political struggle has gradually grown in the past decades. Although the early research on the role of the Internet in social movements tackled the question of whether online collective action offers something completely new or merely supports the movements in “real life” (McCaughey & Ayers, 2003), contemporary studies consider the digital as an integral part of social movement contexts (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Kavada, 2015). The “offline” actions find further resonance and amplification online, particularly through social media where individuals contribute to the dissemination of these images. Mobilisation of (*digital*) affects in social media helps mobilise (*nondigital*) public affects in the streets, and vice versa (Gerbaudo, 2012). As the digital increasingly becomes an essential part of the quotidian, online experience goes beyond being a medium that communicates what happens offline and instead becomes a part of it (Markham, 2003). Social media seem to play the biggest role in bringing the level of online communication close to that of “real life” interaction, as one can be more than a passive consumer and have different roles in the process (Fuchs, 2017). This participatory aspect, although questionable due to the privately-owned status of social media platforms and the company’s implicit control over user outreach, comes with the potential to instantly generate, alter, and post digital content worldwide.

The possibilities of participation in social movements through digital technologies also change the ways in which visual activism is practiced today. Although their communiqués were just wordy text free of images due to the limits of the Internet bandwidth back then, EZLN was well-versed in symbolic struggle. They made several images available to be used on websites affiliated with the movement (Memou, 2013). They pursued a political imagery that would invoke the collective memory of historical figures (Jansen, 2007), build a collective identity of resistance (Stallabrass, 1997), and mobilise public affects toward the movement’s goals (Suarez, 2003). The visual narratives they created relied on urban outlets such as murals and banners and personal attires such as that of Subcomandante Marcos, the EZLN spokesperson who hid behind a balaclava during public appearances, as well as various other cultural products and handicrafts that can be called “Zapatista art”. The visual activist practices that flourished around the EZLN were certainly not limited to the efforts of those that established themselves in the Lacandon Jungle of Chiapas. Through transnational solidarity networks, both individuals and independent media institutions such as Indymedia participated in developing a political imagery of the movement.

Considering this example of solidarity networks around the EZLN and the ways in which they contributed to the development of the symbolic universe of Zapatista struggle, one might argue that the symbolic production in social movements has already been for some time

a “networked” action. What contemporary digital media introduces is an instant and constant networked-ness of visual activism, from production to dissemination of images and from their framing to appropriation—but in almost a concurrent participation setting. Today, creating political imagery and building visual narratives do not only depend on photojournalistic work or on a creative entrepreneurial team behind the movement organisation, but indeed on several individuals who simply have access to the Internet and become active on social media platforms.

A participatory product that involves many hands and resources (W. J. Mitchell, 1992), digital images come both with a sense of urgency and repetitiveness (Rose, 2016). Since the second half of the first decade of the millennium, smartphones and other mobile devices have been equipped with more and more powerful image production and editing technologies that allow a technically average-skilled user to actively participate in visual communication. The same devices also become more integrated with social media platforms to disseminate images and interact with other users in an ever-expanding visual ecology. Image-sharing services such as Flickr were followed by those offering even more interactive services, such as Pinterest and Instagram. Well integrated with image-based platforms, Facebook and Twitter are among the most popular social media platforms for activists’ public communication. “Posting on social media is overwhelmingly visual.” Report Miller et al. (2016, p. 155). They argue that a reason for this, in addition to the increased visual production capacities of smartphones, is that the communication has become “more accessible to those with lower levels of literacy” (p. 170). People’s interaction with the images on such platforms tends to be short-lived but constant, inviting the viewer to move on to the next portion of information in whatever form. However, the digital images remain on these platforms, and we are exposed to them repeatedly, although often through various resources, due to a set of algorithms at work on said platforms. Digital images are subject to modification and appropriation, as not only their intrinsic meaning but also their framing have become plural (W. J. Mitchell, 1992) and highly ambivalent (Bens et al., 2019).

The ambivalence of the digital and networked image in social movements can be observed in two different aspects: First, the proliferation of digital images does not always bring a complete challenge to the established understanding of social structures. The visual landscape of contemporary social movements is composed out of the connective action of individuals (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012) who might pursue solidarity in political aims but have little consensus on the depictions of established structures in the society. A number of scholars welcomed the novel insights presented in Bennet and Segerberg’s work on connective action

and individualised production in social movements while also recognising the persistence of collective action and multiple media that social movements use (Gerbaudo, 2014; della Porta, 2014). Gerbaudo (2015) also argued that the use of the same or similar avatars as social media profile pictures shows the viral construction of collective identity in social movements and poses even a contradiction to individualised connective action. The visual ecologies developing in the coexistence of collective and connective action include a series of images that might both challenge and comply with the usual representation and reproduction of hierarchies, gender roles, and polarisations, among other themes, which are relevant to the objectives of this study. Studying visual activism in the public sphere in the context of the 2011 Tahrir Movement in Egypt, Awad (2020) suggests that the offline urban space has become a contested territory for visibility between the activists and the government. The activists' murals and graffiti on the walls of Cairo do not only communicate the demands of the movement but also (re)constitute the place of activists (or of the social movement in general) in the society. Over the course of the protests and in the aftermath, the contested urban space created by visuals became a hybrid one including both the streets and walls of Cairo and digital platforms at the same time.

Second, going beyond the physical possibilities of mobility, the digital space of a social movement often provides the outsiders with more chances to participate and interact with insiders. People who disagree with the political agenda of a social movement can intervene by appropriating images in digital media and disseminating them on social media, sometimes also posting within an online community such as a Facebook group, or under more temporary constellations such as hashtags or the comments section of social media posts that are intended to promote the movement itself. This means that people who are opponents of a social movement can share the same space online (obviously also the offline space) and interact with others but can hardly be counted as participants who constitute the movement.

The first point might seem natural due to the variety of individual backgrounds and imaginaries. However, existing studies on social movements, particularly those influenced by rational and structural approaches, often relate the symbolic production processes to a movement's organisational mind (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999), which does not always fit with the connective logic of the Internet age (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). The second point can be observed in the social media encounters of people with conflicting agendas both during and in the aftermath of the peak times of social movements. Appropriated versions of photographs in the form of memes and illustrations can be examples of this. Although the appropriations across political divides may not be a completely new phenomenon (Mattoni & Doerr, 2007), the intensity has reached an unprecedented level today. The same or similar images are

appropriated in both subversive and affirmative ways as part of connective actions appealing to conflicting agendas while at the same time making the digital and visual space a battleground of visual activism.

Following the Occupy Wall Street Movement's example, the political struggle over the image has not been limited to various practices between the activists that appeal to the outgroup derogation, expressed in the "We are the 99%" frame and the responses of the establishment that represent the "1%". The political variety displayed in networked visual activism today goes beyond the conflict of two sides. Therefore, an analysis in this direction should be extended to other activist practices that generate and appeal to a frame that diverges from the Occupy Wall Street Movement but can still employ or construct a frame similar to "We are the 99%", such as those that can be found in the Tea Party Movement that emerged concurrently and situated itself against the "1%" as well. On the other hand, the political imagery that confronts a growing dissent can be favoured and supported by the establishment. The establishment can also literally employ people who produce and disseminate images against a social movement. However, labelling all of those image practices that might be on the side of the establishment and against the dissent would simply reduce the analytical lens to predefined categories and structures and ignore the affective nature of the moment as well as the agency of the activists (Mouffe, 2018).

Bennet and Segerberg's model is helpful here, as they point out three types of connective action that are organisationally brokered, organisationally enabled, and crowd enabled, without implying any superiority among them (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013, pp. 13-14). Certainly, these represent ideal types and intersections, but such a model still highlights varying degrees of networkedness at work in the contemporary social movement scene. From the Adbusters Media Foundation's pioneering of the Occupy Wall Street Movement (Kavada, 2015) to the movement parties that emerged within the last decade (della Porta, Fernández, Kouki, & Mosca, 2017), organisations are engaged in shaping the symbolic universe and performing visual activism alongside individuals and groups while allowing their own symbols and political iconicity to be shaped by the movements. Visual activism can emerge within a crowd-enabled connective action and serve a grassroots movement, while practices around image production and dissemination can be backed up and further endorsed by political parties at a later stage. On the other hand, it can find roots in an organisationally brokered setting, such as being part of state propaganda, and then transform into being practiced within an organisationally-enabled or crowd-enabled connective action. One study shows that the contemporary examples of propaganda are much more participatory than in the past, encouraging and enabling individual framings as well as appropriating various content and style of political imagery that emerges

on the “other side” of the political spectrum (Wanless & Berk, 2017). This type of production and dissemination of images on an interactive basis is further enhanced by digital media.

The networked logic of the image offers two important outcomes in relation to the analytical framework of this study. First, the networked image is not an entirely a new concept but encompasses a major difference today. Image production and dissemination have always been to some extent networked, considering the efforts coming from solidarity groups and supporters located both locally and globally. However, digital media tools enable these efforts to match and perform concurrently. The connective logic of collective action works at an instant and paves the way for constructing spontaneous and resonant frames. This is very different from how rational action and post-1960 theories have conceptualised meaning making. At the same time, social movements did not completely abandon the “old” ways of visual activism. Top-down or reactionary processes of symbolic struggle have hardly disappeared from the social movement ecosystem but rather exist in parallel to connective ones.

Second, the networked image process can stretch the borders of a certain political tradition and even transcend political divides. Categorical oppositions across ideologies, such as the distribution of wealth and power, may not explicitly be welcomed, while symbolic constructions can be hijacked or sneaked in through those so-called borders. In a period when digital tools have the capacity to enable anyone to become a media content producer and distributor, the construction of networked images cannot stay limited to a social movement proper. Framing and arrangement of images, certain patterns and symbols in their production, and technological affordances that take part in both production and dissemination of images demonstrate an intrinsic political variety.

To address these features of the networked image in today’s digital-intensive social movements environment, we have to treat visual activism as a transferable connective practice that can flourish on ambivalent grounds, which I will outline in the final part of the analytical framework of this dissertation.

Visual activism as a practice

A practice-based approach to visual activism can be helpful for locating certain common processes of action in the collective/connective making of political imagery. Such an approach does not claim to generate an over compassing causal theory in between events but rather intends to offer a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) of the embodied visual experiences in

political struggle. By focusing on material, symbolic, and social dimensions, I draw from Bourdieu's (1984) *theory of practice* in order to investigate visual activism, and I find his concept of *habitus* particularly useful in the study of noncognitive performances. A practice-based lens on visual activism can shift the analytical target from institutional structures that enable political events to the contextual knowledge that makes particular collective actions possible. At the same time, theory of practice doesn't primarily focus on the political agency of actors but on the actions that actors take, which can provide shared and transferable patterns in the routinised acts of image production and dissemination instead of a general perspective for understanding the process related to the aestheticisation of politics.

Visual activism, a practice that is viable in a politically contentious context, becomes a domain of encounter enabling actions to address these three sections. Although the material, symbolic, and social sides of visual activism as a practice are highly entangled, I will outline them separately for analytical reasons as follows.

The *material dimension* of visual activism refers to three basic actions around the image, namely the production, such as shooting a photograph or designing an illustration, the intervention, such as modifying an already produced image or appropriating a photograph for an illustration, and the dissemination, such as posting an image on social media platforms. The image becomes an object that can be exchanged and altered within an ecology of images that is shaped by digital affordances and social media (Manghani, 2012; Manovich, 2017). The materiality of visual activism is contingent upon several technological possibilities and variations, such as the mediums of the image produced, the mediums it is appropriated into, and the social media platforms it is distributed through, to name a few. Flusser (2006) calls the "invention of technical images" one of the fundamental changes in history, meaning the production of images through increasingly complex apparatuses that function by means of optical, chemical, and mechanical systems. From showing what is absent, images have moved to being a testimony of the seen (Berger, 2008), a common understanding particularly after the camera obscura. Today, producing an image can be totally free from the essential principle of photography that translates optic information to chemical representation. Mobile technologies are capable of producing images on an optic-to-mechanic principle, and even merely mechanic production is also possible. Materiality of the image is becoming equal to the space it occupies on the data disk and measurable to the digital specifications such as the resolution and number of pixels.

The materiality of visual activism is not only related to the evolution of the technical image but also to the ways in which the images are made and handled for political purposes.

Images can give way to fake news, a common phenomenon of the post-truth era, which was at the same time a purposeful appropriation of subversive action by the Situationists. Hybridity of visual activism characterises the material configuration of visual activism. Practices of visibility on the street, such as the symbols worn by activists and the graffiti drawn on the walls, are captured by the camera and transferred into digital media as photograph or illustration, among other audio-visual media. The immediacy of such transfer plays a great role in constructing this hybrid experience, as are the mobile devices that are capable of making it. With the proliferation of smartphones with visual production and editing features, images are now produced right in the middle of the street protests, edited and modified, and distributed across various social media platforms. At the same time, the photograph of a certain moment, object, or person, whether it is already part of the symbolic challenge or not, is appropriated as illustration, as several examples from the Arab Spring to the refugee crisis show (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010; Fawzy, 2018; Olesen, 2017). With such change (or extension) in the medium of the image, its materiality also changes (or extends) within the political discourse. Visual activism in digital terms, therefore, is a highly remediated practice, and its material dimension is entangled with the symbolic and social.

The *symbolic dimension* of visual activism refers to the process of meaning making through images, including the ways in which images are framed and appropriated. The *Journal of Visual Culture*'s themed issue on visual activism suggests strong links between the concept of framing and the activist practices that enact visual forms and methods (Bryan-Wilson et al., 2016). Visual activism accentuates certain aspects of an object or event while masking others according to a politically-charged purpose. As W. J. T. Mitchell (1987) argues, image has always been a conflictual medium, and to understand the conflict we have to look for the "message without a code" (Barthes, 1977), in addition to those that are clearly framed and reduced to certain signifiers in Barthes' terms. This argument parallels the visual arts discussions on form and content that I mentioned at the end of the last section on symbolic struggle. Content defines the subject of an image; in other words, what the image is about. It is the "meaning" and "feeling" one gets from an image. Form is the means through which that subject is expressed, how the meaning is presented to the viewer. However, visual activism is not a neutral practice, and the way content is formed can fundamentally change the meaning that content has and thus becomes part of the meaning-making process. Form does not only let us see the content but lets us see it in a very particular way, shaping our experience and interpretation of that content as Goffman (1986) also pointed out in his frame analysis. Building on that, Snow et al. (1986) suggested various concepts, such as *keying*, *fabrication*, and

layering, that movements perform while framing the form and content of their messages and activities. For Bourdieu (1984), content and form are necessarily opposed to each other. They constitute a contest in meaning-making, and we have to distance ourselves aesthetically from the image in order to understand the impact of this contest on the image. Conceptualised as a practice, visual activism also functions on a scale of form and content when producing and disseminating images. It engages with a political discourse and either challenges or supports it through efforts directed toward both content and form. To illustrate with an example: A souvenir-like photograph of protesters performing a quotidian activity, such as collecting garbage in the park during the Gezi protests, is not visual activism per se; however, disseminating this photograph in a particularly framed way that underscores the solidarity spirit and environmental/urban concern is indeed. This also gives a transferable quality to the meaning-making. The image of the garbage collection, therefore, becomes a performative political statement (McGarry, Jenzen, Eslen-Ziya, Erhart, & Korkut, 2019c) that poses environmental concern as a value of the social movement and at the same time distinguishes the activists from the negative other that harms the environment, i.e., the government. At the same time, the same image produces a counter-argument to the government's allegations against the activists that blame them for littering in Gezi Park. The use of the photograph of a quotidian activity through various framings makes it an agent of "symbolic power" and part of the political struggle. Similarly, tracing the images of Che Guevara, Cambre (2014) shows how the same or similar images with a particular political association can be used in contradicting cases, and how the power of the image is appropriated for various purposes, even for profit-making occasions. Images are central to "symbolic and communicative activities" (Rose, 2014, p. 27), and the framing of images toward a political purpose is a core practice of visual activism.

As mentioned above, the use of framing approach to social movement studies has stayed mostly on the cognitive side. Frames are categorised as diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational. Such operational frameworks suggested by the framing approach in social movement studies may need additional tools in order to analyse visual activism, considering the cultural critique it previously received about addressing the emotional dynamics of the protest atmosphere and the symbolic challenge of collective political struggle. In line with the study of emotions in social movements and the role of moral panics in mobilisation in particular (Jasper, 2014a), empirical studies show that affective dynamics play a role in framing processes, in addition to reflexive and deliberative interpretations (von Scheve et al., 2016). The affect approach to political mobilisation has so far taken into account the social media interactions, yet through a logocentric perspective as discussed earlier. With an effort to extend

this perspective to visuals, Schankweiler and Wüschner (2019a) suggest studying the iconological practices of Aby Warburg (1866-1929). According to Warburg, images have transgressive features that go beyond being simply communicative or representative materials. They carry a complexity of historic, cultural, and affective properties that is developed and modulated in relation to other forms and norms of visualisation. Although certain framing actions aim to enhance the “symbolic power” of the image, the motion or movement in the image intensifies this power to affect. Intensity, which is a key concept in the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), points to a transitional state of affect rather than a pre-described emotional status such as anger or happiness. Using examples of viral images from the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, Schankweiler and Wüschner (2019a) offer an affective reading of images disseminated on social media platforms and argue that the social movements’ symbolic struggle in the age of digital media can be better analysed if these intensities encoded in motions or movements are taken into account. Their contribution also points to an important task in visual activism, which is the analysis of the iconicity of certain images. Schankweiler and Wüschner traced the iconisation process of the photograph of a woman dragged on the ground by police officers during the protests in Tahrir Square in Cairo. Her upper body was exposed, showing a blue-coloured bra, and was photographed before it became an icon of the movement through a series of image styling performed by the activists. Iconisation of photographs through styling of images is becoming increasingly popular in social movements. These photographs capture crucial moments that frame injustice, seek to recruit participants to the movement, or display a collective claim over an issue. Memeification of these photographs can easily be linked to the subversive aesthetic practices that have emerged through the 20th century. However, the networked efforts of making illustrations and icons out of photographs almost concurrently with the first appearance of the photograph is somewhat new. It marks an important shift in symbolic struggle and deserves scholarly attention.

The social dimension refers to the interactive and collective, yet conflictual aspect of image production and distribution. Here, I will outline this dimension in two aspects with regards to ingroup and outgroup dynamics, rooted in Tajfel’s (1982) social identity theory. In this fashion, first, visual activism should be understood as part of a collective political struggle, a relationality of a group of activists with a shared material and symbolic cosmos are engaged in common or similar modes of action. This refers to an ingroup sociality based on solidarity and favouritism (Wetherell, 2009). Visual activism can be considered within the collective efforts of building a movement identity, and this is one of the underlying perspectives of this study. The proliferation of smartphones, social media apps, and the increased immediacy of

digital participation in political events has put the formation of collectivities in question, as discussed earlier (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). The feeling of “we-ness” is increasingly substituted with highly personalised patterns of action, thanks to technology-based networking. Self-motivated individuals act through digital media and align their “personal action frames” with very broad but loosely defined frames, such as the “We are the 99%” of the Occupy Wall Street Movement or the “Gezi spirit” of the Gezi Movement (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). Following this model, one can argue that the social dimension of (digital) visual activism is a connective practice that is primarily led by networked efforts of visual framing within an understanding of ingroup solidarity, rather than one that is driven by a social movement’s collective identity whose process is influenced by a particular ideology or group affiliation.

The second aspect of visual activism’s *social dimension* is outgroup derogation. Social movement scholars agree that the collective identity process includes establishing an “unwanted other” that serves both as a constitutive part and as an instrument for formulating attribution frames (Benford & Snow, 2000). Although less studied in social movement literature, the “establishment”—the state, business circles, policy influencers and so on—responds to the symbolic challenge of the dissenters (Fahlenbrach, Klimke, Scharloth, & Wong, 2011). This response may vary from simply taking a particular direction in decision making to a government’s resignation. However, the symbolic struggle a social movement engages in during its emergence and trajectory goes beyond a contest with the official discourse and practice of the establishment. Visual activism is practiced on a wider sociality, and there are several “rival dissents” on this spectrum that might coincide with certain aspects of both the social movement and the establishment. The social dimension of visual activism requires an analytical engagement with the ways in which various practices coincide and contest in political imagery.

These two dynamics determining the inclusivity and exclusivity of groups materialise in contemporary visual activist practices in a particular way. Social movements increasingly take up photographs taken in street actions. Some of these photographs are tagged as iconic, such as Jeff Widener’s 1989 *Tank Man* of the Tiananmen Square protests in China, or, more recently Jonathan Bachman’s 2016 *Taking a Stand in Baton Rouge* in the Black Lives Matter Movement. As either amateurs or professionals, various illustrators design images that build on these photographs by bringing certain elements in the photograph to the fore. The central figures in these photographs display an ordinary demonstrator who could be anyone from among the crowd yet who is stating a firm political position. The demonstrator represents a particular side of the conflict that can be identified as the inclusive aspect, while staying in contradiction with

the other side that is the exclusive aspect. Although such photographs are recognised as providing powerful tools for mobilisation (Castells, 2015; Doerr, Mattoni, & Teune, 2013a), the social movement literature hardly tackles the iconisation process of these figures in detail, with certain exceptions in cultural sociology that examine protest imagery (Bartmanski, 2012). However, such works do not capture the ways in which these images seduce and mobilise people by changing across visual genres, namely from photography to illustration, in today's symbolic struggle of digital and networked actions. On the other hand, scholars from the field of visual studies do address similar figures in social and cultural productions from advertisements to literature and take a critical view on consumption and production of quotidian codes in society (Schober, 2015; 2019a). These works build on the concept of "everybody" (de Certeau, 1988) that can also be analytically useful for this study while explaining the appeal of the central demonstrator figures in protest imagery. The universal appeal and inclusion of these images on the one hand, and the confrontation with and exclusion of another particular group on the other, establish a core feature in the social dimension of visual activist practice that Therefore, situating visual activism as a practice can help us better understand the ways in which people are mobilised in contemporary social movements. It can offer a deeper perspective into the routinised processes of doing visual activism and can highlight peculiarities in image production and dissemination that often go unnoticed in collective/connective action. Bourdieu's *theory of practice* approach allows for going beyond political traditions and taking into account the aspect of modularity for a balanced analysis between structure and agency (Haluzá-DeLay, 2008). As Mattoni (2020) also observes in her cross-country research on the activists' daily engagement in digital media, the material, social, and symbolic dimensions can take similar forms in different contexts, while the political agency of the actors can vary considerably. Practices of image production and dissemination that emerge in one setting can be studied in another, provided that emerging material, symbolic, and social dimensions are contextualised. In empirical research, this could lead to the possibility of analysing a particular practice in its own singularity, while also enabling us to compare not only the practices present in social movements with similar political orientation and ideology but also those within different and even conflicting camps.

At the same time, as this review of the literature and suggested analytical framework shows, a visual study in social movements can benefit greatly from the existing research but would flourish more if it were to go beyond the limits of the established canon on social movements. The classical paradigm of social movements and its critics put hierarchies and participant motivation under a spotlight, while new approaches that emerged after 1960

introduced novel ways of addressing the symbolic dimension in collective political struggle. With the advent of the Internet and social media, visual activism has become a prominent—if not the most prominent—component of social movements and, what’s more, a field of research that several disciplines attend to. As the use of technology becomes a central point of attention in social movement research, we should also study the emergence and trajectory of images online and their contribution to collective/connective action. Theoretical insights developed in various disciplines can be transferred to social movement studies and applied to visual research. Recent literature in the study of affect and emotions, as well as other works rooted in media and communication research and cultural studies, including those that analyse visuals through semiotic and iconological lenses, offer useful tools to make sense of the political imagery in a comparative setting. The following chapter on methodology will attempt to merge some of these tools into sociological research.

Methodology

In Chapter 2, I reviewed the main lines of sociological research in the study of social movements and various approaches to visual activism. The present chapter demonstrates how this literature and the analytical framework inform my research design and strategy, elucidating the empirical approach and the methods of this study. The chapter also provides background information about the fieldwork before explaining in detail the steps taken for collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data.

Research Design

To address the ways in which visual activism mobilises people in contemporary social movements, this dissertation examines the political imagery of mobilisations constructed through digital-intensive collective/connective actions. Informed by the practice theory and its application to visual activism as described in the previous chapter, the project is designed as a comparative case study to better answer the questions about political varieties. Case studies offer a unique opportunity to understand how practices are performed in different settings. By analysing two cases with diverging political goals, this research aims to examine similarities and differences in visual activist practices emerging in social movements with conflicting political agendas. This type of research requires an in-depth engagement of the researcher in the field of empirical research and in the collection of comprehensive data.

By studying the 2013 Gezi Movement and the 2016 Anti-Coup Resistance in Turkey, I explain a wider social reality that can be observed across contemporary social movements. These two cases exemplify today's social movement environment in various ways. Since 2009, when the first so-called Twitter/Facebook protests broke out in Moldova and Iran, social movements have used digital media effectively (Gerbaudo, 2012; Papacharissi, 2015a). They have relied heavily on the production and dissemination of visual materials online (Doerr, Mattoni, & Teune, 2013a) and have maintained both collective and connective forms of activism (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; della Porta, 2014). Furthermore, the Gezi and Anti-Coup cases provide a good example of visual activism from diverse and, what's more, conflicting political perspectives. Gezi emerged out of a grassroots environmental concern and a resistance to plans for urban transformation on 28 June 2013 in Istanbul before quickly spreading to the entire country. The protests continued through the summer and grew into citizen initiatives that strove for widening civic and democratic space (Inceoğlu, 2014). Gezi is identified as an anti-

government protest; it is a movement standing against authoritarianism that demands the protection of human rights and the widening of democratic space in general. Anti-Coup, on the other hand, emerged as a response to the military coup attempt that took place on 15 July 2016. Although the coup's authenticity is still doubted internationally, the clashes between the military and civilians radically changed the country's politics and everyday life. Besides the government's endorsement and adoption of the demonstrations, many civil society organisations, civic initiatives, and individuals still express commitment to Anti-Coup, organise events around certain topics and dates, and continue producing and disseminating images related to the coup attempt. Anti-Coup quickly developed a pro-government identity and holds onto it until today.

At this point, one can also doubt the participation in and organisational structures regarding Anti-Coup in a similar way to doubting the authenticity of the coup attempt. As President Erdoğan urged people to organise against the military, the entire popular response can be considered within the populist efforts of the government (Taş, 2018) and would raise the question as to whether it should count as a "movement" at all. Yet those who participated in the demonstrations during the clashes and in the aftermath are explicit about their understanding of the resistance as a genuine grassroots mobilisation (Görgülü, 2016; Turkey News Cameramen Association, 2016).

This dissertation presents a comparison of visual practices between Gezi and Anti-Coup because of their representativeness of contrasting political stances rather than a comparison between two processes with equal distance from the government, which would be an ideal but unrealistic case selection. Remembering della Porta and Diani's (2006) definition of a social movement as a distinct social process with aspects of conflict between clearly identified opponents, connection of individuals and initiatives through informal networks, and the construction of collective identity can be useful for clarifying the orientation of this comparison. Such comparative study needs a close analysis of the emerging factors on both parts and a clear definition of the researcher's position, which is given in detail below.

Research Strategy

The study follows a qualitative approach that can provide a deeper insight into the symbolic dimension of social conflict. Qualitative approaches are employed widely in social movement studies since they provide a detailed analysis of complex political processes that are

contingent on social and cultural factors. Researchers who study the four main visual research areas in social movement studies as outlined in the previous chapter, namely the construction of collective identity, communication through symbols, the building and use of image repertoires, and visual culture and memory, often rely on qualitative methods for interpreting the specific local/social realities in a relative yet coherent way. Philosophically rooted in the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm of qualitative research (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2017), the methodology of this study is oriented toward understanding the reconstruction of the symbolic dimension through images that are produced and disseminated as a result of visual activist practices. Accordingly, the study makes a contribution to the methodologies developed in the cultural strand of social movement scholarship that inquire into socially constructed patterns beyond the structural and cognitive conditions of political mobilisation. In contemporary social movements where visual activism is networked, which is to say, where the processes related to the marshalling of images and the construction of political imagery are individualised as much as being collective, an interpretive approach provides the necessary tools to explain the ways in which practices are performed within certain periods of time.

The strategy of this research, therefore, is embedded in its analytical framework in a way that allows for a better understanding of visual activism today. It aims to address three emergent aspects of the analytical framework for a visual study in social movements. First, the contest over meaning-making constitutes a prominent component of the symbolic struggle (Doerr, Mattoni, & Teune, 2013b), and digital media is a forefront domain for this battle in contemporary social movement environments (Mattoni, 2017a). Despite the fact that street protests (meaning the offline sphere) continue to play a decisive role for the visibility of a movement, such visibility relies very much on digital media engagement in political terms, including the production, manipulation, and dissemination of photographs from street actions, as well as further depictions of offline events, messages, and claims in other forms (e.g. illustrations). Hence, this study considers digital media as a primary domain of fieldwork. Images that capture and convey happenings, emotions, and ideas related to Gezi and Anti-Coup are considered as data as long as they are present and accessible in digital form online independent from their initial medium of production.

The second aspect is related to the production and dissemination of images in digital media through networked action over extended periods of time and beyond the peak times of the movements (Awad, 2020; Zik, 2019). Years after the movements abate, the activists continue producing new images about the movement or circulating and referring to the old ones on digital media in ways that can still mobilise people (or keep people politically alert) around

the issues that concern the movement. Production and dissemination of politically charged images related to dissolved movements is not an entirely new phenomenon, yet the current continuity, multiplicity of participation, and outreach are unprecedented. Such observation is true for the Gezi and Anti-Coup cases but also for others, such as the Arab Spring and Occupy movements. Even the activists of the 2009 Green Movement of Iran, one of the first movements to be identified with the intensive use of social media, continued introducing new images for an online public during the Wounded but Hopeful Campaign in 2016. Therefore, it becomes necessary to look beyond the most active times of movements and to take further visual activist efforts into consideration in order to have a better understanding of the evolution of practices.

Finally, the modularity of visual practices, with their material, symbolic, and social dimensions, influence the research strategy. Visual activism through digital media is directed to various types of images. On the material level, photographs and illustrations are two major genres that are extremely popular in social movements' online interactions, and they offer different experiences to the viewer. Also, the conditions under which they are produced can be significantly different. Although it is possible to design photograph-like illustrations with today's technology, photography emerged as and is still considered proof of reality (Flusser, 2006). For this reason, photographs taken during social movements play a major role in communicating about the movement environment and constructing the overall meaning-making mechanism of visual frames. Illustrations then sharpen, deepen, or loosen these frames in a number of ways. This is valid in a symbolic dimension as well. The meaning-generating elements in photographs and illustrations, from those that are semiotic to affective qualities such as colours, distances, and participants' age, sex, and gestures determine the potential visual impact within a politicisation and mobilisation process. These elements should be analysed and interpreted in relation to the historical, cultural, and political context. Lastly, the interaction between the political imageries of two cases requires us to take the sociality of visual practices into account. Not only do the activists within the same movement influence one another in terms of visual practices, but they also influence those from a conflicting movement (Neumayer & Rossi, 2018). The "interpictoriality in images" (Johnson, 2012; Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019a) should not be considered within the "closed" cosmos of a single social movement or political tradition.

Hence, visual activism in Gezi and Anti-Coup will be analysed in a comparative case study in the light of the analytical framework put forward here, which captures the contested processes of meaning-making, co-presence of collective and connective action, and the modularity of visual practices with a particular focus on digital media. To have a better

overview of the cases, I will provide contextual information on the research field in the next section, going into detail about the symbolic background of both Gezi and Anti-Coup, as well as about social media use in Turkey in general.

Contextualisation of the Field

This comparative study investigates visual activism around two main mass events that have recently changed the social and political scene in Turkey. The first one is a social movement that emerged in 2013 after the government's decision to demolish Gezi Park in the social and cultural centre of the city of Istanbul. Known as the "Gezi Movement" or "Gezi" in short, the protests quickly spread to other cities, becoming one of the biggest mobilisations in country's modern history. The movement attracted wide scholarly attention with its demands for bottom-up democratisation and plurality, organisational structure, and communication style (McGarry, Erhart, Eslen-Ziya, Jenzen, & Korkut, 2019b; della Porta & Atak, 2017).

The second one was born as a popular mobilisation in response to the coup d'état attempt in 2016, which came as a result of an intergovernmental conflict. Although its authenticity is internationally doubted, the demonstrators succeeded in stopping the putsch but suffered heavy casualties. This mobilisation, which I refer to as the "Anti-Coup Resistance" or "Anti-Coup" in short, emerged partly from a democratic popular response and partly as a result of President Erdoğan's appeal to the public. From the moment it emerged, Anti-Coup featured a number of social movement characteristics in its symbolic and tactical actions, which were much influenced by recent movements such as Gezi, the Arab Spring, and Occupy (Çizmen, 2016). The following period saw a mainstreaming of the pro-government account of the event rather than one made on democratic grounds, especially given the fact that the suggestions to investigate the political side of the event were turned down by the government itself.

This research intends to study the symbolic dimension of both events comparatively. Instead of a political and social analysis of the profile, organisation, and participation processes in two events, which has been offered by others (Altınordu, 2017; Küçük & Türkmen, 2018; Özen, 2015; Özkırımlı, 2014; Tufekci, 2017), this study engages with the practices of visual activism that emerged in both. Comparing visual activism in Gezi and Anti-Coup is by no means an attempt to discuss their overall formation, content, and meaning in equal terms. Scholars seem to agree that Gezi was an example of bottom-up mobilisation (McGarry, Jenzen,

Eslen-Ziya, Erhart, & Korkut, 2019c; Özel, 2014; Özen, 2015), while Anti-Coup was a good mix of bottom-up and top-down (Çiçekoğlu & Turan, 2019; Küçük & Türkmen, 2018).

With its creative environment, Gezi enabled a fertile ground for visual activism. Although several activists were persecuted in the aftermath of Gezi, the images produced and disseminated during the events still continue to appear both online and offline on anniversary days, in special printed and online collections, as avatars of social media users, and the like. The visual landscape of Anti-Coup on the other hand is very present in the daily life of an average citizen in Turkey. Often accompanied with statements and stories endorsing the government's politics, these images can be found everywhere from textbooks to billboards and from social media users' accounts to private galleries.

Symbolic background of the cases

The political dynamics of Gezi and Anti-Coup find their roots in the history of modernisation in Turkey. Shaped by a long-standing conflict between secular and non-secular forces, the modernisation process was interrupted several times by anti-democratic interventions. The modernist establishments introduced by the country's founding father and first president, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938), were not openly welcomed by all parts of the society. Among them, the constitutionally-unrecognised Kurdish minority communities and much bigger pious, pro-Islamic groups have been the motivators of structural fear on the part of the secular Kemalist establishment backed up by the military (Akgönül & Oran, 2019). Both circles are threatening Turkish modernism; one with its Kurdish national identity and the other with its religious one.

Founded and chaired by Atatürk himself, the Republican People's Party (CHP) is the oldest surviving political party (except for being closed for nine years following the 1980 military coup), and it claims a primary role in the establishment of a modern and secular regime. The CHP has often had a congruent agenda with the military and has seen it as a guarantor of the representative democracy. The military has intervened in politics several times since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, as conservative parties seem to prevail in the political scene and take bold steps to make judicial changes. CHP's nationalist, Jacobin, and statist features are Turkish politics' defining characteristics as well (Akgönül & Oran, 2019). The Turkish state built a cult around Atatürk, making his images, statues, and words into symbols of the path to enlightenment and modernity. Widely considered as a national saviour,

public regulations and private initiatives wanted to make sure people were exposed to his legacy on a constant daily basis throughout the republican period (Zık, 2018a). Following this rigorous secular agenda came at the expense of repressive measures on human rights and freedoms. Several incidents in the 1990s, such as the ban on the veil in public institutions and universities, and the 1998 imprisonment of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, then mayor of Istanbul, for inciting religious hatred through reading a poem, are still fresh memories.

Religious symbols such as the Quran and veil, along with national ones, such as the flag and country maps, became contested items during the modern history of Turkey. The same applies to political leaders that are associated with any of those symbols, as in the case of Atatürk. That is why many have felt that secularism, synonymous to democracy in Turkey for decades, was at stake, when Erdoğan left prison and made his way to the parliament in 2002 (Zık, 2018b). Although his Justice and Development Party (AKP) has no official objections to secularism, its conservative profile, links to leading pious figures, and most of all, its ambitious operations as the governing party to subordinate the military power have been more than enough to mark them as an enemy in the eyes of secular citizens (Akgönül & Oran, 2019). The AKP is currently the largest political entity representing conservative politics, and its ideational basis can be traced back to other conservative parties in the country's history (Türk, 2018). The party openly adopted a populist discourse and agenda (Aytaç & Öniş, 2014) and embarked on a project to replace Kemalist elements in the character of the nation state with Islamic ones, while glazing Erdoğan's figure as the new cult of the leader (Yilmaz, 2018).

Gezi's overwhelmingly secular profile (Varol, Ferrara, Ogan, Menczer, & Flammini, 2014; Yeğenoğlu, 2013) made it an easy target for the AKP, as the movement could be dismissed and blamed throughout its duration as reanimating the existing secular/modernist and non-secular/conservative tensions. As the government carried on with a series of persecutions against those involved in the protests and extended it to a larger circle of opponents, another major challenge came with that military coup attempt on 15 July 2016. The authenticity of the military attempt is doubted internationally, as the government rejected the opposing party's proposals to extend the investigations to a political level. Erdoğan blamed the coup on the Islamic cleric Fethullah Gülen, his former ally who lives in exile in the United States. In May 2016, the community network led by Gülen was classified as a terror organisation and called FETO (the Fethullahist Terror Organisation).

Repetitive coup d'états in the name of guarding the Kemalist institutions of Turkish democracy throughout the second half of the 20th century still weigh in the collective memory (Çiçekoğlu, 2019). Although the military has peaked in the polls on institutional trustworthiness

in the past and ideas such as “Every Turk is born a soldier” are not uncommon (Altınay, 2004), images of tanks, uniforms, and boots remain a reminder for many of the suffering under the military regimes of the time.

A performative response accompanied the street resistance against the putsch and was orchestrated through an imagery that affirmed the state power and promoted the idea of superior control (Altınordu, 2017). Several individuals actively took part in this visual campaign of the government and even took it further in the following years, producing and disseminating several images that refer to the putsch to reproduce a symbolic world of 15 July 2016. Photographs of the clashes with the military and scenes of democracy vigils were instrumental to show both suffering in the hands of the coup plotters and the show of strength against them (Küçük & Türkmen, 2018). Illustrations that followed the events and appropriated the photographs endorsed the government narratives while giving way to several others. This being said, the efforts to challenge and intervene in the symbolic dimension of the political struggle are certainly not limited to the photographs and illustrations and not even only to the visual sphere. Songs, slogans, computer and board games, performances, memoirs, exhibitions, and many other creative works are still being produced today.

Social media use in Turkey

The photographs of Gezi and Anti-Coup disseminated on social media during the first days of both events were an important motivator for people to take to the streets (KONDA, 2013a; 2014; 2016a; 2016b). Turkey’s Internet penetration rates at 70% (Newman et al., 2018), with approximately 90% of the urban population accessing online news weekly (Yanatma, 2018). In 2013, when Gezi started after a Twitter message calling for action, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter had already been attached to the names of some of the uprisings around the world. As the conventional media was under heavy censorship during the protests, people relied on social media communication (Tufekci, 2017), and the trust in conventional media still remained very low by 2018 (Yanatma, 2018).

Nevertheless, social media has been an underestimated venue for the government, as senior government officials commented negatively on social media users but then opened their own accounts. Similarly, results of a public poll published shortly before Gezi confirm this, as a majority of the conservative respondents thought that the Internet and social media were not good for the society (KONDA, 2013b). Saka (2019) mentions that the number of Internet and

social media users rocketed after the Gezi Movement. On the other hand, social media was resituated as a space of contest where pro-Gezi and pro-government (later joined by and co-constructed with Anti-Coup) narratives are produced and rivalled. The AKP government hired thousands of Internet trolls to follow the protests and conduct such operations (Karatas & Saka, 2017; Saka, 2018).

The censorship and persecutions of journalists after the failed coup attempt fuelled public interest in social media even further. As of April 2019, Statista figures show that Turkey ranks ninth in the world, with 37 million Facebook users (Statista, 2019b), and seventh with 8,56 million Twitter users (Statista, 2019c) in terms of social media use. Numbers for Instagram and Pinterest, two leading social media platforms with a particular focus on visuality, are even higher. Turkey is in sixth place with 34 million Instagram users (Statista, 2019a) and among the top five countries in the world for desktop computer traffic on Pinterest (Statista, 2019d). Such a vivid environment of social media makes the digital environment in Turkey an extremely interesting field of research study, but it certainly comes with challenges, which I will include in the following description of the fieldwork process.

Research Method

As discussed in the previous chapters, images are often neglected or considered secondary data in the predominantly logocentric social movement research canon. This type of analysis is prone to be pre-driven, and meanings from other forms of data might be involuntarily imposed onto image interpretations. Indeed, researchers often include images in their studies as a way to confirm findings based on other forms of data (Mattoni & Teune, 2014) This study intends to prioritise images for analysis and focuses on the genres of photography and illustration. Photographs and illustrations that were produced and disseminated through digital media within the context of Gezi and Anti-Coup are considered as potential data. Regardless of the first format of production—meaning digital or nondigital—the very criterion for consideration is that the images are disseminated on digital media. However, limitations about the digital-visual field play an equal importance in determining the methods of data collection and analysis.

The process of collecting and analysing images as primary data poses challenges on its own. Within Western scholarship, images are not always considered as clear statements in visual form, especially when a verification source for the deducted meaning is not available

(Liebenberg, 2009; Pink et al., 2004). In the case of images found online, the producer of the image is not always obvious and the sources that disseminate the image can be multiple, which would easily lead to secondary interpretations.

Limitations apply to present visual research methods used in social movement studies as well. The social movement literature hardly offers a comprehensive method for the study of visuals. Methods such as semiotics and frame analysis remain logocentric in the literature and offer no tools for the selection and collection of images but rather only for the description of the content and composition of the image. Iconology, an art historical method that lies at the margins of social movement studies, provides means of interpretation in a retrospective fashion. All these methods are useful to describe the images analytically in different ways, and there are good reasons to combine them in this study. A mixed-method approach allows for a deeper and layered understanding of image practices in social movements. Rose (2016) encourages researchers to mix methods in visual studies, as this might help examine the variety of meanings in the image. Underlining that the plurality of methods can be beneficial to the discovery of contradictory meanings, she also warns researchers to consider the compatibility between multiple approaches. While suggesting a mixed-method, I am aware of the possible frictions in applying these methods concurrently. An overarching systematic framework of analysis seems to be necessary, which makes me turn to *grounded theory*.

Grounded theory and its use for visual analysis

Grounded theory was the method that Glaser and Strauss (2006) developed for their study on the influence of awareness in interacting with dying people. Their book *Awareness of Dying* was published in 1965, during a period when the positivist and quantitative approaches prevailed while interpretive and qualitative ones were found unscientific due to the unsystematic organisation of theory writing and the incapacity to convey qualitative research experience in a consistent manner. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* was published in 1967 with further explanation of the method. In this study, I follow the constructivist strand of grounded theory best represented by Charmaz (2006). Acknowledging the interaction between the researcher and the data and arguing that the existing accounts of grounded theory assume an unbiased view of external reality, Charmaz suggests that the analysis and interpretation of data should include more reflexivity.

Despite the popularity of grounded theory in a variety of research fields, including sociology of health, organisational studies, software engineering, and the like, social movement scholars have only recently become interested in the method (Mattoni, 2014). Yet Mattoni (2014) observes that social movement scholars employ several steps of its data collection and analysis, although they do not fully operate within the grounded theory framework.

I find grounded theory relevant to this study for three reasons that are linked to its principles. First, it is *systematic* but not necessarily a mechanical or systematised method. It is “guided by well-founded activities that have been clearly articulated in the form of a set of heuristics or rules-of-thumb” (Bryant, 2017, p. 90). Second, it is neither inductive nor deductive, but *abductive*. It requires empirical checking between data and theory, a principle not to be confused with testing theory (Charmaz, 2006). Third, it is a *constant comparative method*. It suggests examining one piece of data against another piece both within and across data and data sets through the analysis and development of theory (B. G. Glaser & Strauss, 2006, p. 105), which provides a role of “checks and balances” (Corbin, 2017, p. 302). Furthermore, grounded theory is particularly useful for conducting research on political themes due to its rejection of objectivity claims, emphasis on reflexivity, and consideration of the researcher’s position, among other qualities (Charmaz, Thornberg, & Keane, 2017).

Grounded theory is not widely applied to visual research either, but there are a few attempts at adaptation. A prominent example is Suchar (1997) who argues that grounded theory can constitute a very valuable basis for visual sociology. In his photography analysis, Suchar employed grounded theory and applied its basic steps to visual analysis. These steps, which are explained below, show us the logic of grounded theory and are therefore useful to cover here, as the method of this study will also follow them accordingly.

Gathering rich data: Suchar formulates his research questions before starting his fieldwork, which is a photographic study on gentrification. Over months of shooting, he collects what Charmaz (2006) calls “rich data”, including photographs, fieldnotes, discussions, impressions from encounters, information from media outlets, and the like.

Memo writing: Suchar writes one or two paragraphs of descriptions of what he sees in each photograph, combining this with the other information he has. Charmaz (2006) mentions that memo writing should start from the beginning of the research, although it logically belongs to a later stage of analysis. However, as Suchar’s analysis is based on visual data, memo writing becomes even more important for an earlier stage of the study, as it is a crucial part of the coding steps.

Initial coding: This is an open coding process, where the researcher tags data with labels. Having examined and compared the photographs closely and written descriptions, Suchar turns to the text (memos) for this step. The initial coding process aims for data selection, separation, and sorting out to construct the “bones of the analysis” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 45). He comes up with a structure through scrutinising the text.

Focused coding: After the initial coding is complete, Suchar is able to go on with a more selective and conceptual coding. He gets back to the codes and compares them against each other and with the original data. This process brings about new categories and concepts. Charmaz (2006) mentions that a type of axial coding is suggested by Corbin and Strauss (1990) in relation to focused coding. Although she is not sure about its usefulness to the process, she suggests drawing links and marking correspondence between the focused codes.

Theoretical coding: Bringing focused codes together, Suchar goes further with the preliminary concepts that can lay the basis for constructing a theory. Theoretical coding, according to Charmaz (2006), can sharpen the analytical edge radically. She suggests looking for abstract models of relationships between substantive codes that emerged in the focused coding. Suchar comes up with more stable code constellations and proceeds with presenting the results.

Theoretical sampling: This stage is where theoretical codes are compared against each other before being grouped and finalised. Although it is a logical step toward the end of the theory construction, Charmaz (2006) suggests that theoretical sampling should be performed also in the beginning of and throughout the study.

The two founders of grounded theory have the motto “all is data” (B. G. Glaser & Strauss, 2006), yet, systematic efforts to include visual data have continued to stay at the margins. Some researchers including Konecki (2009; 2011) and Mey and Dietrich (2016) take Suchar’s work further and build with different models of *visual grounded theory*. Konecki develops a method integrating sequential image analysis, while Mey and Dietrich argue for an approach that allows for looking at various elements in the image concurrently and also for dealing with multiple images at the same time. They suggest that images should be “scanned” in a way that introduces the researcher to code structures, prominent and less prominent elements, stories, messages, and the like.

Despite my similar standpoint, I found that I should further modify Mey and Dietrich’s method. The reason is that the visual grounded theory they developed has a core tool based on Breckner’s (2007; 2010) *segment analysis*, in which she suggests singling out certain elements

(segments) in images and analysing them separately for a comprehensive understanding. Mey and Dietrich apply Breckner's tool before proceeding with the coding and memo writing steps of grounded theory. Although Mey and Dietrich's visual grounded theory merged with Breckner's segment analysis is a well-developed approach, such a mix would hardly be useful for a comparative case study in social movement imagery. The model can address the third pillar of the analytical framework related to the modularity of images but can fall short in tackling others, namely, contested meaning-making and methods for conducting a diachronic study. Semiotic and iconological approaches, which can be useful in addressing these points, are dismissed in Mey and Dietrich's model, suggesting that both methods rely on external factors, including historical associations, and not allow for an image-immanent analysis. However, as Konecki (2019) also recognises in his later work, the symbolic dimension of social movements is not an isolated cosmos where images appear without any historical, political, and cultural context or motivation. They are results of cognitive and emotional labour performed in a collective/connective environment. Therefore, it is necessary to come up with a model informed by grounded theory, yet one that can accommodate variables such as temporality in the analysis (Konecki, 2019).

Grounded theory's strength lies in the well-structured methodological steps that lead to constructivist research results. At the same time, it leaves room for mixing methods. Charmaz and her colleagues (2017) argue that mixing grounded theory with other methods may contribute to the development of the constructivist paradigm. In this study, I incorporated visual social semiotics and iconology methods into grounded theory, using them as analytical tools for certain steps of coding and memo writing. However, as this suggestion brings in a methodological diversity, I prefer to call this model *grounded visual analysis*. Grounded visual analysis follows the basic steps of grounded theory as suggested initially by Charmaz (2006) but is also informed by Mey and Dietrich's (2016) model, while at the same time it turns to visual social semiotics and iconology for coding each image and interpreting its meaning. In the following pages, I will first elaborate the methods of visual social semiotics and iconology, and then I will explain how they fit into the overall structure of grounded visual analysis.

Visual social semiotics

Semiotics is universally known as the study of signs. A number of visual approaches in sociology are based on semiotic approaches that explain the relationship between social practices and signs (Zuev & Krase, 2017). Initially based on a linguistic system, semiotics

“provides insights into the signs about signs that are social organisation” (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1992, p. 240). The production of a sign depends on the context and is influenced by the cultural and social background, as well as by the context of exposure and interaction. According to this, seeing a photograph on a social media platform would lead to a different interpretation than seeing it in a gallery. Roland Barthes (1915-1980) has been a pioneer in investigating visual signs through a semiotic system. His *Mythologies* are a series of meditations in which he deconstructs meanings (signifier) of several abstract ideas and objects (signified) (Barthes, 1972). In addition to linguistic interpretation, he offers two levels of semiotic analysis in his example of the 1955 photographic cover of *Paris Match* magazine. At the *denotative* level, he describes the literal meaning of the photograph, which is that of an African boy appearing in a French military uniform. At the *connotative* level, he looks behind the literal meaning, deconstructing ideas of the nation, value system, beliefs, and cultural norms that are at work in the photograph.

Visual social semiotics, on the other hand, is suggested by visual researchers as a critique of Barthes’s work. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) argue that Barthes’s semiotic analysis neglects the sociality of the actor who produces the image and therefore the sociality of the image in the first place. They advocate for a social semiotic approach acknowledging the ambiguities in images that may contradict one another across various uses of an image or within the same image itself. The Barthesian method to interpret an image, particularly in terms of photographs, targets the alignment of “extra-pictorial discourses, visual cultures, or connotations of objects with the image segment itself” (Mey & Dietrich, 2016, p. 14), meaning that it relies on existing language structures. Barthesian semiotics suggests that the linguistic productions and pre-existing structures in the society determine the meaning in the image (Hodge & Kress, 1988), which can not suffice to interpret visual activism in the context of social movements, as this is a multimodal process engaged in symbolic struggle.

Instead of translations of language to a visual medium, visual social semiotics understands the image as itself a social construct. It is neither a new theory of semiotics nor a full model, but is rather an application of a form of inquiry within semiotics (van Leeuwen, 2005). It goes beyond Barthes’s deconstruction of cultural values and beliefs as the ultimate point of analysis and examines the potentials of meaning-making that need to be activated through a system of power and ideology. Moreover, a visual social semiotic approach recognises that the images are reconstructions of reality and can also “lie” (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001). Taking into account activist tactics such as subversion (Lievrouw, 2011; Mattoni & Doerr, 2007), this recognition comes forward as especially useful for conducting a visual

analysis in the highly ambiguous environment of social mobilisation processes (Bens et al., 2019). The method follows the following principles as three steps for analysing the meaning in an image (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), which are essential for its employment within the framework of grounded visual analysis:

Representational meaning is conveyed by the “participants” in the image. The researcher should assess the intrinsic value of the people, objects, and spaces in the image as well as their concrete or abstract relations between one another. The roles of these participants in creating, maintaining, and conveying narrative structures through their representative characteristics are a point of analysis.

Interactive meaning refers to the distance, contact, and point of view of the representatives (participants) in the image. Facial expressions and gestures, the visibility of body parts, and the position and distance of the participants all come under analysis.

Compositional meaning is related to the layout, colours, and spatial arrangement of the image. Following this principle, the researcher asks questions about the salience of elements, the information value according to their placement, and the continuity and discontinuity of participants and narratives in the image.

These principles are originally based on Saussurean and Barthesian analysis, but they go further in terms of the sociality of the production and dissemination of the image. They are useful in identifying power relations and ideological notions that are decisive in meaning-making. Such an approach fits well with the grounded visual analysis model developed for this study, as it helps to analyse images produced and disseminated in a contested (digital) environment and where multiple social actors are involved in those processes.

However, visual social semiotics hardly attends to Barthes’s later work that highlights the “unrepresented” in the image, or what he calls *punctum* (Barthes, 1981). In *Camera Lucida*, Barthes advocates that meanings are not only bound by cognitive interpretations and structures but also through an affective relationship. He suggests the term *studium* to describe a photograph, which is the conventional way to pursue a semiotic analysis, and yet another term, *punctum*, to describe the impact of the illogical associations in the image due to the viewer’s personal experience and memories. Barthes observes some affective qualities in the photograph that are not represented visually but can be sensed personally (Shurkus, 2014). Unlike his rigorous model of analysis for *studium*, unfortunately, he does not really elaborate *punctum*. Mey and Dietrich (2016) suggest that the term has a close relation to iconology, the methodology I will visit in the next section. I believe that iconology as an art historical tool can

complement and work well with visual social semiotics within the framework of the grounded visual analysis model.

Iconology and pathos formula

Iconology and *iconography* are often used interchangeably. Introduced first by Aby M. Warburg (1866-1929) and later refined by Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) through the study of “particular visual motifs” in the “context of 16th-century art collecting”, it is “both a method and approach to studying the content and meaning of visuals” (Müller, 2011, p. 283). In their works, Warburg and Panofsky initially used the term iconography but later adopted iconology, suggesting that the first term provides a descriptive account of visuals based on dual comparisons, while the second is a visual interpretation that investigates the symbolism of images. Iconology is a method to interpret “symbolism as a form of metaphor and metonymy that places meanings constantly in motion” (Johnson, 2012) through which Warburg calls *pathos formula* (Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019b). Unlike the traditional dual comparison method of art history, pathos formula adopts a transdisciplinary approach to images in order to study their relationships with one another that extend over time and geography (Becker, 2013). Rather than the content or style of the image, pathos formula intends to locate affective intensities (Massumi, 1995; Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019a) that move the viewer, as Barthes (1981) similarly suggests with the term *punctum*.

Iconology addresses a dimension that is missing in visual social semiotics. Although one can locate and interpret the social construction of content and form of images through visual social semiotics, this approach does not offer the tools to conduct a comparative and diachronic analysis concurrently. Iconology “is not interested in an evolution of styles, but in the formal iteration of expressions of pathos that constitute a memetic series, which he [Warburg] calls *afterlife*” (Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019b, p. 221), without being limited to emotional contexts. His *Mnemosnye* is an unfinished compilation of images on panels that displays how pathos is expressed throughout history through metaphors repeated in certain forms (Johnson, 2012). For Warburg, metaphors have affective forces that are “stored” within the images and can survive over time. These metaphors are embedded in our visual repertoire of understanding, meaning-making, and feeling.

Iconological analysis was suggested as a means of interpretation of “intrinsic meaning or content, constituting the world of ‘symbolical’ values” (Panofsky, 1955, p. 40). However,

since iconology has a strong diachronic perspective, the construction of symbolical values should not be understood to be limited to certain epochs, which could lead to an analysis bound to narrow disciplinary boundaries (Becker, 2013; Didi-Huberman, Rehberg, & Belay, 2003). As social movements can be traced retrospectively in terms of their organisational structure and action models (Zamponi, 2019), the processes related to the symbolic dimension are also informed and inspired by former or concurrent political struggles.

Iconology allows visual researchers to analyse images through an inter pictorial reading that complements the semiotic interpretation. Warburg's pathos formula offers a powerful methodological tool to conduct affect-oriented analysis. The transgressive qualities in the image act as a display for pathos that can be traced back in time, even to antiquity. Warburg's study is based mostly on depictions of the human body. He observes the ways in which certain body forms and parts, stances, positions, and gestures, as well as ornamental bodily figures, etc., seduce us. They weigh in the collective memory and intensify our moments of seeing the image. The relationship and tension between the figures are also interpreted in a traceable and reasonable way. Iconological analysis does not intend to reach an objective interpretation but rather offer a consistent and plausible account of the experienced intensity—of being affected by the image encounter (Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019a). Such a method becomes important for this study, as it looks beyond the impact of existing structures in visual practices and cognitive qualities present in the image. At the same time, it will be applied to two cases that include continuity and rupture in visual forms of expression both in temporal and spatial senses. Given the fact that this study deals with the symbolic dimension of visual practices, an affect-oriented approach may lead to adding a different analytical perspective in the study of images within social conflicts. Furthermore, this study addresses the similarities and differences between affective dynamics across political divides.

Including Warburg's approach in the overall analysis can offer more comprehensive answers to the questions of this study. In the next section, I will elaborate on the grounded visual analysis model I have developed. I will outline the steps of analysis and explain how I incorporate iconological and semiotic approaches.

Constructing a grounded visual analysis model

Following the steps of grounded theory is important in order to make sure results are consistent and the desired depth of analysis is achieved. A major difference in the constructivist

strand is the exclusion of axial coding due to a potential limiting impact on the qualitative interpretation. Charmaz (2006) suggests that the researcher should make links between emerging categories throughout the focused coding step instead. I take this advice and follow the steps in Mey and Dietrich's visual grounded theory while developing grounded visual analysis as outlined below:

Step 1: Gathering data. This is the introductory level to the research, where the overall research question is formulated and detailed. The strategy is defined, and the research field is selected. Here it is also important to decide whether context information will be sought and the ways in which it will be compiled (Mey & Dietrich, 2016). As grounded theory allows for engaging in the field without prior theory or contextual information, such a decision would also have an impact on the interpretation and therefore highlights the importance of reflexivity. The researcher starts collecting images according to the research questions and sets data parameters related to time frame, location, genre, and the like. Data gathering continues until it is sufficient to run an initial analysis. However, the researcher continues collecting images until reaching what grounded theorists call "data saturation" (Charmaz, 2006), indicating a level of maturity in coding.

Step 2: Preliminary analysis. At this step, the researcher makes an outline of the image collection and creates an inventory. This can give an initial idea of the field and the variety of information. Some questions that can lead this step include: Are there different genres of images? What is the source of the images? Are they available on multiple sources, including online and offline media? Are there any specific metadata attached to the images related to the context of their production and dissemination that can help or hinder making an inventory? Preliminary analysis is only meant to give a snapshot of the field and to identify what kind of data is collected. Then the researcher can proceed with coding, while staying open for further data collection. Another important decision to make at this point is whether to use computer software for data analysis. This can be decided according to the size of the corpus but also according to the compatibility of the software with the data type.

Step 3: Coding and memo writing: Grounded theorists generally consider coding and memo writing as separate steps, especially in the case of analysing interviews. However, in grounded visual analysis they are highly intertwined processes, and this is where visual social semiotics and iconology come in as mutually complementary methods. The coding process is related more to visual social semiotics, and memo writing to iconology.

During the initial coding process, the content of images including human and nonhuman elements, such as people, animals, symbols, colours, shapes, and gestures, are tagged with keywords. Each coded element is compared against first the whole image and then the entire data set. The initial codes lay the ground for applying a visual social semiotic approach. Following strategies of representative, interactive, and compositional interpretation (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), the researcher produces focused codes that categorise the initial codes according to frequency of emergence and/or importance (Charmaz, 2006). At the final level of abstraction comes the theoretical coding, which points out particular relationships between the focussed codes and integrates them.

Memo writing starts with data collection. The researcher notes down feelings, ideas, and impressions that arise from encountering images. Although not exclusive, memo writing in grounded theory is for fragmented notes rather than precise depictions. In grounded visual analysis, memos are collections about the experience of being exposed to the image. Each image is attached to a memo, which would eventually help in conducting an iconological analysis. Memo writing is closely linked to coding but constructs an analytical structure for the affective experience of the researcher.

The overall process of coding and memo writing includes several iterations of going back-and-forth. The two analytical tools, visual social semiotics and iconology, ideally complement each other, but contrasts should also be expected while working through codes and memos. These contrasts can point to certain changes in the meaning of images in time or through image transition practices such as remediation and appropriation. These can also help identify the ruptures and continuities in the image and should be further elaborated during the interpretation of the data.

Step 4: Interpretation and integration of other forms of knowledge: Mey and Dietrich (2016) argue that the need for contextual and theoretical information at the time of interpreting data highly depends on the research questions and the decision of the researcher. An image-immanent interpretation with a minimum amount of background knowledge is possible, as is approaching the images with expert knowledge and/or an insider view of the context. Either way, reflexivity is a central issue in interpretation particularly in visual research. In accordance with Mey and Dietrich, I believe the researcher's exposure to the context as well as to theoretical and conceptual knowledge can be integrated at several levels of interpretation. This can help to make sense of the data more profoundly in highly context-dependent interpretations, such as in the case of social movement research.

Step 5: Formation of categories and theoretical sampling. This is the step where the interpretation of codes and memos reach a level of maturity. The categories signify the development of conceptual knowledge around the codes and should be refined in accordance with the research questions. The step should lead to generating theory through the categories.

Step 6: Integration of image/text categories. In this final step, the researcher makes sure that the theory-making through images is relevant to other forms of data. Some of the images might include an embedded script and some images might be strictly attached to an existing particular discourse element—in the case of this study this might concern political slogans, hashtags, and other forms of verbal and textual productions in the social movement environment.

Developing this grounded visual analysis model enabled me to analyse images as primary data in social movement research. The method is suitable for comparative research, as it allows for analysing different data sets both separately and together. Based on the grounded theory structure, it accommodates the use of other established visual methods, namely visual social semiotics and iconology for certain analytical steps. In the next section, I will go through the application of the model to the case study of Gezi and Anti-Coup.

Application of the Grounded Visual Analysis Model

While applying grounded visual analysis in my research, I had a similar question to that which grounded theorists have generally had: Should I include contextual information in my analysis? I decided to do so for three reasons. First, I was raised and lived most of my life in Turkey, which makes my observations and interpretations inevitably biased. Furthermore, I had close experience of the physical environment of both the Gezi and Anti-Coup cases. I talked to numerous participants who identify themselves with either one or both cases concerning their political background, their motivations, and their understanding of symbols. I am an active social media user and have been exposed to the political imagery of both Gezi and Anti-Coup over several years. All these factors make it impossible for me to examine the data with a blank mind when making image-immanent interpretations. Not only what I see but also how I see these images is shaped in a certain way after my experiences.

Second, I believe that in a comparative case study like this, it can be an advantage to have thorough contextual information and first-hand knowledge, provided that the researcher acts and interprets reflexively. In this study, this meant keeping a certain distance to the data,

going back to the same data several times with long intervals in between, verifying my interpretations through different sources, and, even more, opening my data to the people who have limited or no introduction to the context.

Third, collecting visual data online according to certain research questions is practically more difficult than collecting textual data. Although the Internet becomes more visual every day, it is still a networked world based on script. Searching through search engines and social media platforms works mainly by typing into a search box. Therefore, it becomes necessary to be familiar with the cases and context and in order to conduct search activities online by applying necessary parameters.

Contextual background of the symbolic dimension of the Gezi and Anti-Coup cases and brief information on the use of social media are provided in the earlier pages of this chapter. The application of grounded visual analysis is informed by this knowledge and conducted accordingly.

Gathering data

Gezi started on 28 May 2013 and Anti-Coup on 15 July 2016. So I took 28 May 2013 as a starting date for the dissemination of images related to Gezi and 15 July 2016 related to Anti-Coup. I selected 16 July 2018 as the final date for the data collection related to both cases, which is the day after the second anniversary celebrations of Anti-Coup's success. This date is also not far from another landmark event for the changing of social and political paradigms that are tightly linked to the impact of the military coup attempt. President Erdoğan took oath and assumed office on 9 July 2018, following Turkey's adoption of a presidential system the previous year and subsequent elections. The selected period allows for analysing approximately five years of image production and dissemination related to Gezi and for about two years related to Anti-Coup. Despite the unequal time frame, the constant dissemination and presence of images in both cases has provided rich fieldwork data.

The data I collected for this research primarily consist of images disseminated on social media platforms, blogs, and news websites, which led me to follow different strategies of data collection. A majority of images were collected from Facebook and Twitter, two very popular social media platforms, particularly during the peak times of Gezi protests and Anti-Coup demonstrations. Since the conventional media was censored during Gezi (Barbera & Metzger, 2013; Tufekci, 2017), activists used both Facebook and Twitter extensively but afterwards also

maintained existing activist networks online and created new initiatives (Saka, 2017). During the night of the military coup attempt, these platforms were also popular means of communication and image circulation, as conventional media channels and state officials have integrated their public communication with social media as well (Anadolu Ajansı, 2016; Tufekci, 2017).

However, neither Facebook nor Twitter offers a developed tool for image search. Images are tightly connected to script, which is most popularly in the form of hashtags but is also found in titles and comments. Writing simply Gezi Movement or Anti-Coup Resistance, as well as their equivalents in the Turkish language, allowed me to reach only a limited number of images that were disseminated by my own contacts. A search through the names of these cases is not free of problems either, as *gezi* literally means “travel” in Turkish and *coup* is “impact” or “hit”, which further complicates the results returned by the search engine. Therefore, I turned to finding keywords that could help me find images related to my cases. Various studies (Papacharissi, 2015a; Rambukkana, 2015) show that hashtags are central to the organisation of people’s activity on social media platforms. Images disseminated (shared) on social media are often accompanied by hashtags. Hashtags can be a leading symbol, as in the case of the #MeToo Movement, or can be intrinsically attached to images that have a major role in the emergence and trajectory of a movement, such as #ICantBreathe of Black Lives Matter. In such situations, hashtags can charge new images with affective qualities that originate elsewhere (Hoyt, 2016). Although hashtags are attached to not-so-popular images as well, the images that become popular and play an important role in the construction of the symbolic struggle are disseminated by multiple accounts. These images in particular are very likely to include hashtags in the social media post.

From a visual research perspective that intends to raise images out of the dominance of the linguistic tradition in social media studies, searching images through hashtags is not ideal. However, even though few hashtags refer to a particular image that became famous through the course of the movements, I am interested in those that are formulated to promote the overall movement. As hashtags mostly originate on Twitter and then are transferred to Facebook, I first searched for hashtags created in Twitter and then applied them on Facebook. With a retrospective search option available both on Facebook and Twitter, I looked for the most popular hashtags related to Gezi and Anti-Coup and checked them against the existing research on the digital activity of the events (Barbera & Metzger, 2013; Çağlar, Memmi, & Altun, 2017; Miş, 2016; Tufekci, 2017; Yalcintas, 2015). I concluded with the following hashtags attached to the social media posts regarding the Gezi Movement: #gezi, #geziparkı, #direncezi, #direniş,

#direnürkiye and #çapulcu in Turkish, and #gezipark, #occupygezi, #occupyistanbul, #occupyturkey and #resistanbul in English. Similarly, I found these hashtags for the Anti-Coup Resistance: #15Temmuz, #darbeyehayır, #darbeinsanlıksuçudur, #demokrasinöbeti, #hakimiyetmilletindir, #tekmillettekyürek, and #darbegirişimi in Turkish, and #15July, #nocoupturkey, #turkeycoupattempt, and #democracywatch in English. When I received an excess of irrelevant results, I modified the search by using additional parameters in combination with these hashtags, such as specifying the location as Turkey or adding other hashtags to the search, such as #erdogan, #erdođan, #istanbul, #türkiye, and #turkey.

The use of hashtags is not as popular among Facebook users as it is in the case of Twitter. In order to go deeper in my search, I joined several Facebook groups and pages founded by supporters of Gezi and Anti-Coup. Having more than hundreds, and sometimes thousands of subscribers, these groups and pages allowed me to see content which would not have been possible for me otherwise.

In addition to Facebook and Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest have also been very useful in collecting data that extended past the peak times of protests and demonstrations. Although both platforms have grown highly popular in Turkey recently, they did not serve as main image dissemination channels during the heated times of the events but rather as an archival platform for the later stages of both Gezi and Anti-Coup. A number of individual and collective accounts on Instagram post images on the anniversaries of important dates related to the mobilisations or to announce a happening that follows up on their memory. Pinterest, on the other side, functioned as a visual archive for my data collection. Its users collect and publish series of images with the website link to the online source automatically available.

Visual archives and blogs were very helpful in tracing the source of the image, as this became an increasingly difficult task through the course of my data collection. The challenge was the closure of social media accounts for various reasons within the time period of this study. To overcome this, I looked for personal and collective blogs, news portals, and official websites that collected numerous images of the events and made them available to the online public¹. These kinds of websites have also been useful for following a safety measure in terms of research ethics, which may concern mostly the Gezi supporters, at least at the time of writing this dissertation. The government started a series of persecutions after the protests, including of those commenting on and posting any material supporting Gezi, which was extended to academic, journalistic, and nongovernmental organisation circles. For this very concern that

¹ See <https://occupygezipics.tumblr.com> for Gezi and <https://onbestemmuz.wordpress.com> for Anti Coup as two outstanding examples of comprehensive online image archives.

pertains to research ethics (Pauwels, 2006; Tiidenberg, 2018), I will refrain from providing the sources of my data as private social media users or people engaged in producing and disseminating images, except in the cases that they are publicly known in relation to the particular image. Instead, I will refer to various blogs, news portals, and visual archives online that keep images on the grounds of documentation. There are several websites committed to building visual archives and promoting them during the anniversary of the events with new arrangements and additional new images.

I collected 204 different images, both photographs and illustrations, by searching on social media platforms and also on various websites using the reverse image search functions of Google, Yandex, and TinEye. The reverse image search engines also helped me verify the authenticity of the data while allowing me to obtain higher resolutions of the same image. A basic search on these engines also raises a question about the plurality of sources on digital visual media. The same image is available in more than one online source, which might affect the interpretation in different ways, given the affordances of the technological device and the digital media platform. This has a potential to create a bias, as most of the sociological research done online is facing (Marres, 2017). Marres suggests that social scientists consider neutralising the “noise” that the technologies create and reducing the data collected in digital fieldwork. I took three basic measures to address this bias.

First, for neutralising the effects of the technological affordances, I followed a practical approach to my corpus by limiting the focus to the image itself while taking the quality of the image into consideration. Hence, I preferred analysing the images of higher visual quality when more than one copies of the same image appeared in my Internet search. Second, in terms of reducing the data, I set a list of selection criteria. Obviously, 204 images is a very low amount compared to the hundreds of thousands of images produced and disseminated online during and in the aftermath of Gezi and Anti-Coup. For such a selection, my main points of reference were frequency, variety, and relevance.

In terms of frequency, I prioritised those images that gained an iconic status during the course of the events. I preferred to collect images that gained international recognition or that were repeatedly used as a representative element of the corresponding mobilisation by various media outlets for reasons of their iconic power (Alexander, 2012). For variety, I aimed at analysing different types of images instead of multiple images referring to the same or very similar moments or concepts. Therefore, if an image search resulted in several photographs of a crowd at a particular moment, I selected the one that visually conveys the moment the best in

addition to other qualities, such as earning more interaction on social media (e.g. likes and reposts).

Finally, in terms of relevance, I looked for those images that could better help answer the research questions. For example, I did not include portraits of President Erdoğan with simple comments or hashtags unless they were in a relationship with other elements in the image within the context of the events. Similarly, I excluded the images that were highly overwhelmed by the presence of statements and other words embedded in the image, where any sort of visual analysis would be prejudiced by them. Yet I considered important those images with a script that goes beyond the semantic meaning of words and refers to collective memory, cultural value, and social concepts, therefore introducing a symbolic quality that contrasts or conforms with the meaning of the rest of the image.

Preliminary analysis and outlining inventory

Out of 204 images, 106 were related to the Gezi Movement and 98 were related to the Anti-Coup Resistance. At this point, I went through the images and made an inventory list using a spreadsheet software. The inventory included concepts such as the place of shooting the photograph, whether there is information about the photographer, the name of the illustrators and whether they are professionals, the online source, and a simple definition of the images made on the first impression, which could serve as a title.

Coding and memo writing

At this step, I uploaded all images to MAXQDA computer software. Such software allowed me to run an analysis on multiple images and compare them against one another. In order to run a comparative analysis between two cases, I divided them into two separate document groups for Gezi and Anti-Coup. The software is capable of receiving an image as “document” to its filing system, thus treating each image as if it is a single interview text. Therefore, it allowed me tag images partially and entirely by moving the mouse cursor to select an “area” on the image. Thanks to this feature, coding and memo writing became an integrated process.

First, I attached initial codes to various areas of the images, tagging people, animals, objects, gestures, and geographies. These codes established the first step of social semiotic

analysis that is the representational meaning of images (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). Meanwhile, I started writing memos for those images with initial impressions, also taking into account my notes from the preliminary analysis, in what Panofsky (1955) calls pre-iconological description, which can feed into the interpretation of codes as well.

Second, I worked on the codes by comparing them across images in the same and the other document group. The software allowed me to see the portions of images with the same code together. This led me to the level of focus coding. I turned to the images again and started distinguishing ages and genders of people, types of animals, shape and usage of objects, spaces including urban areas and buildings, time of day, movement and intention in the images, and the like. I searched for those that indicate a relationship in between all these elements, which is the second step in the visual semiotic method: interactive meaning analysis. As the codes became more conceptual, along with the growing memos, they led me to run an iconographical analysis and make sense of interactive meanings in the image.

Third, I compared the coded portions of images against the whole image, as well as across the document groups, between Gezi and Anti-Coup. By doing this, I intended to analyse compositional meanings and come up with iconological interpretations that could help me draw conclusions about symbolic values. I also went into the memo writing again and noted the similarities and differences I found within and across both document groups. Having several initial and focused (sub-) codes, I created parent codes that could serve as theoretical codes and lay the basis for theoretical sampling.

Interpretation and integration of other forms of knowledge

Interpretation of images is very subjective, and there can be considerable differences between two people's interpretations (Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019a). Images are relatively more unstable venues of interpretation compared to words in the social sciences canon, which makes the role of visual social semiotics and iconology more crucial in this step. The first one relies on a more structured way of investigating the image and uses the socially-established meanings of distance, size, gender roles, and the like. At the same time, visual social semiotics pays more attention to the context, meaning a social movement's contested environment would play a major role in interpreting the images.

On the other hand, iconology pays comparatively less attention to the context of when and where the image is produced. It has a trans-spatial and trans-temporal understanding of the

image and looks for the repeating moves that store and transmit energies. It does not rely on structures but rather on visual patterns. Both analytical tools therefore need the integration of other forms of knowledge. The contextual information about the social movement environment would be valuable for the visual social semiotic approach, while visual genealogies of figures, gestures, poses, moves, etc., would be essential input for the iconological approach.

Therefore, as an input for visual social semiotic analysis, I investigated the traditional semiotic interpretations in the composition of an image. I studied established meanings in the visual representation of distance, colour, size, and order of elements (Barthes, 1977; Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). I examined how existing biographic (and demographic) structures such as age, sex, and race contribute to the meaning-making process semiotically. This also included a post-structural interpretation in order to make sense of the ways these concepts can be challenged through visual representation.

To comply with an affect-oriented approach, I adopted iconological glasses and interpreted the changes in the meaning of the emergent elements in my data sets while paying attention to the transformations of the visual content and form through the course of the “social life of images” (Awad, 2020) approach, with the intention to make connections between representative forms in the past and present. This ranged from the biographic variety in the images of men, women, children, and elderly to the ingroup-outgroup symbols, such as those of religion, nation, and ideology, which ranged from displaying physical engagements of friendship and rivalry to visualisation of abstract understandings on life and death. I also studied the existing literature on social movements, in which Warburg’s *pathosformel* is used for interpreting visuals with the affective dimension taken into account (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010; Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019a; Schober, 2019c). These works helped me learn from various applications of the approach to be able to interpret multi-layered energies in images.

Apart from these approaches, which helped me analyse the data from various perspectives, reflexivity stands out as a key notion in grounded visual analysis, as it is located within the interpretivist strand of grounded theory. In order to build reflexivity into my model, first and foremost, I followed the constant comparison principle of grounded theory by comparing codes (tagged portions in the images) against each other and across document groups (Gezi and Anti-Coup).

In order to ensure the reflexivity of my analysis, I opened my codes and image comparisons to the opinions of other people. I did this on two different occasions during my research residency at the Center for Art and Urbanistics (ZK/U Berlin) in 2018. First, I

organised an interactive workshop during a publicly announced art event. I printed the images in 10 x 15 cm photograph formats and put them randomly on a wide table. I provided plenty of blank paper and also a few pages with some of the theoretical and focused codes available for visitors. Each code was written in the form of a hashtag and further hashtag generation was encouraged. The visitors were expected to make a collage of images according to the displayed hashtag, which would change regularly. Approximately 100 people participated in this interactive event, and I took note of my observations and compared them against the hashtags I used and the codes I gave to the image portions. The second event took place also within the framework of the same residency but in a different public art event. I developed a modified version of the renowned memory card game that has the main goal of finding matching images by flipping cards. In the modified version, no identical cards were present, and the participants were asked to match images and justify their decision by discussing with the competing team. Approximately 200 people played the game and participated in discussion as I took notes on the interactions for comparison against my interpretations of the images. I repeated this event a second time with university students and artists during a fellows meeting of the Claussen Simon Foundation in 2018. Although they were not included in the early research plan and did not constitute the empirical part of my study, these observations provided a rich source of outsiders' views to my visual analysis and served as another layer for comparison, ensuring reflexivity. Given the diversity of participants attending these events, I was able to check whether my coding and interpretation made sense in a different environment and to people who are not necessarily knowledgeable on my case studies.

Afterwards, I turned to the theoretical codes and compared them against my data and wrote a conceptual paragraph for each parental code. For this task, I also benefited from the social movement and activism literature, including ideas on the aesthetics of the image (Doerr & Milman, 2014), the contextual, historical, and political meanings of symbols and visual markers (Doerr & Teune, 2008; Vergani & Zuev, 2013), emotional charges in the image (Flam & Doerr, 2015), and the digital media factor (Treré & Mattoni, 2015).

Formation of categories and theoretical sampling

Toward the end of my analysis, my codes evolved into five crosscutting categories that included images from both Gezi and Anti-Coup: (1) Occupation of space, (2) diversification, (3) decency and sympathy, (4) staging of achievement, (5) vulnerability as a strength. Each of these categories is condensed with complex meanings in the images and provide insights into

the similarities and differences of visual practices in both mobilisations. However, in terms of material, symbolic, and social dimensions, the categories featured a certain difference between photographs and illustrations that also determined the type of visual activist practice. According to Charmaz (2006), theoretical sampling is a step in which the researcher elaborates variations between categories, turns back to the data sets, defines the gaps, and refines the conclusions.

My analysis shows that the five categories mentioned above are principally established through photography. The illustrations often follow the patterns that emerged from the photographs and not the other way around. It might be good to remember that the illustrations in my analysis carried either no embedded script or a very minimal amount. Accordingly, the illustrations did not make a significant change in the formation of these five categories. Further research could address the humour and satirical messages disseminated through illustrations in the form of embedded script and could inquire as to whether this type of visual production and dissemination introduces additional categories. I leave this as a side note, as this question would go beyond the agenda of this research.

Surprisingly, the illustrations did not contribute to the emergence of a sixth theoretical category established by the photographs in my analysis. Yet I observed that they widen and layer the meanings of the visual repertoire and add a crosscutting dimension to the frames constructed by photographs. This brought about a considerable change in the analytical process and led me to extract two distinct perspectives out of the data analysis that also gave a peculiar structure to the presentation of results in the next chapter. First, I proceeded exclusively with the photographic data in the theoretical sampling step that is based on the abstraction of the five categories mentioned above. Second, I took the grounded visual analysis further to investigate the particular contribution of the illustrations and the ways in which they deepen what the photographs initially constructed.

For the theoretical sampling, I went further to saturate the categories by turning back again to the photographs and checking whether any additional codes appeared and made any difference in the state of analysis. I also realised that a number of photographs fall into more than one category. In these situations, I refrained from forcing the photograph to fall under a certain category and rather marked the stronger and weaker tendencies I found in the interpretation. This helped the analysis to stay image-oriented rather than be driven by script, which is embodied in codes, memos, and categories. At the same time, it helped me see the categories not as conceptual islands isolated from each other or hierarchically following one another, but instead as dynamic clusters. At this first level of theorising, I used primarily the concepts derived from social movement literature and attended to meaning-making processes,

such as framing (Snow et al., 2014), symbolic struggle (Melucci, 1989), and collective identity (Melucci, 1996).

At the second level of theorising, I focused on the most repetitive and emergent features of the illustrations in deepening the categories constructed by the photographs. The illustrations that were produced after certain popular photographs stood out because of the distinctively common elements across images and their traceability. I also observed that the features embedded in this kind of illustration are representative of both ingroup and outgroup political processes. In order to understand the extent of this practice better, I reached beyond the social movements literature and drew from concepts that originate in media and communications disciplines, such as remediation (Bolter & Grusin, 1999), and in the interdisciplinary field of cultural studies, such as everybodies (de Certeau, 1988).

This kind of twofold analytical approach also defined the structure of the next chapter, where I will further reflect upon the results. Before I address this, however, I will explain the last step of the grounded visual analysis.

Integration of image/text categories

After my theoretical samplings reached a level of maturity, I turned again to the field data and image sources. Besides any embedded script in images, I looked for any textual information attached to the image or prevailing discourses that could support or challenge my findings. I turned to my notes from 2013, as I have been in Gezi Park several times and have also published my observations afterwards (Zık, 2015). I also attended meetings in various Istanbul neighbourhood parks that were organised after the seizure of Gezi Park on 16 June 2013. Similarly, I have participated in the democracy vigils that took place in several squares of Istanbul (and other cities) after the military coup attempt in 2016 and took notes on my observations.

Furthermore, I read several memoirs of and interviews with Gezi protesters (Acar & Uluğ, 2015; Akınhay, 2015; Diken, 2014; KONDA, 2014; Türkmen & Küçük, 2016) and Anti-Coup demonstrators (Görgülü, 2016; KONDA, 2016a; 2016b; Miş, Güleler, Coşkun, Duran, & Ayvaz, 2016; Tecim, 2016), as well as journalistic accounts (Bedir, 2018; Doganay, 2017; Iğsız, 2013a; 2013b; Inceoğlu, 2013; Turkey News Cameramen Association, 2016) that narrate individual experiences as activists and/or participants in both processes. I have also investigated the official material prepared by the state institutions of Turkey, including a bulletin by the

parliament (TBMM, 2016), the Ministry of Education's pamphlets to be distributed in schools (MEB, 2016; 2017), and a comprehensive catalogue of the state-run news agency (Anadolu Ajansı, 2016). However, I considered my involvement with all these other sources compared to the images themselves as part of my immersion in the research of context. Digital media remained the primary source for data collection, while other experiences helped me make sense of the data.

Incorporating the textual information, I maintain that the symbolic dimension of political struggle cannot be confined to the ecology of merely visual or linguistic practices. It is also a multimodal universe of music, colour, gestures, and more. This said, it should be clear that this study does not dismiss linguistic modes of activist engagement such as slogans, statements, and social media posts. Language is definitely a crucial part of the symbolic dimension and also offers valuable insights for understanding the context of visual practices. Single or bulk interpretation of images without consideration of linguistic elements would miss the complexity of analytical intertextuality (Marcus & Fischer, 1999; Taussig, 2015). Certainly, both such textual input and my immersion in the research field should be considered within the reflexive approach I have explained in the previous section.

Analysis of the Results

Turkey, 28 May 2013. A few environmental activists gathered in Istanbul's Gezi Park in order to protect trees from being demolished as part of an urban master plan. Accordingly, Gezi Park was to be transformed into a shopping zone with the construction of a mall designed as a replica of an Ottoman-era military barracks. The activist sit-in turned into a massive protest before it quickly growing into a countrywide movement. An estimated 3,6 million people took to the streets, participating in more than 5,500 protest actions within the first three months, according to the official reports (Sardan, 2013). The Gezi Movement (Gezi) became a focus of global attention, not only because it was a contemporary example of connective action shaped by digital media (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; 2013), like the Arab Spring and Occupy movements, but also because of its activist creativity, exemplified by the popular protest performance of the *Standing Man* and a remarkable visual outreach through iconic images such as the *Woman in Red*. Although it has been stigmatised and criminalised in official narratives, the overall experience of the Gezi Movement continues to be a reference point in public discussions. The social and political atmosphere of the country has changed irreversibly since.

Turkey, 15 July 2016. The country was shaken with a coup d'état attempt as photographs and video recordings on TV channels and social media platforms showed military tanks blocking streets of major cities in the middle of the night. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan urged people to take the streets and fight against the putsch. The broadcast of his live smartphone call onto television found an immediate massive response in the public and the coup attempt failed. Through that night and in the following days, images of tanks pulverising cars on the streets flooded digital media, along with others that showed people heroically standing against firepower and celebrating their consequent victory. The Anti-Coup Resistance (Anti-Coup) has produced iconic images too, such as the *Antitank* and the *Woman in Chador*, which have been widely used in media and public outlets ever since. Becoming a rather pro-government mobilisation, Anti-Coup has been glorified and is considered part of an ongoing collective/connective action for democracy making and nation building in Turkey.

The backgrounds of these two mobilisations, their orientations and claims, and the profile of their participants differ significantly. Neither Gezi nor Anti-Coup fits into traditional concepts of political left and right, but identifying them as a total mix of political positions would be too romantic an approach. However, Gezi benefits greatly from the organisational and practical heritage of the left-wing movements, and Anti-Coup sits on the legacy of the Right and enjoys the right-wing government's logistic support. At the same time, Anti-Coup quickly

took an antagonistic stance against Gezi, while Gezi became a main reference point for the ongoing civic initiatives critical of the government and Anti-Coup.

Despite the existence of sharp differences between the two mobilisations, their visual landscapes are considerably similar—albeit with certain variations—which has ultimately motivated this comparative study. Both Gezi and Anti-Coup have produced and disseminated a high volume of visual materials through digital platforms, mostly in the form of still images, including photographs and illustrations. Looking at images, among a myriad of ways to analyse social movements, is important for going beyond the traditional logocentric approach in social movement research. By addressing specific elements of invented traditions and collective memory, the visual genre structures and generates social movements' ideas and messages differently than the words do (Morrison & Isaac, 2012). Although Gezi and Anti-Coup advocate for completely diverse political goals and their claims are considered incompatible (Özyürek, Özpinar, & Altındaş, 2019), I argue that they rely on similar visual motifs and figures for addressing public affects and developing collective/connective identities. Although social movements on different sides of the political divide claim uniqueness in the ways in which they address and mobilise people, they are part of a universal visual repertoire. At the same time, although the appeal of images is transgressive in terms of political trajectories, affective practices that shape symbolic politics are unique to the context of a singular social movement such that they can hinder an image's claim to universality.

The present chapter presents the results of the qualitative analysis of images collected online within the context of Gezi and Anti-Coup. I aim to find out about the activist practices in use around these images in political struggle, the ways in which these images can serve incompatible political agendas, and what the images show about the convergence and divergence in the affective atmosphere between the two cases. As explained in the previous chapter, a grounded visual analysis led by these questions resulted in a twofold interpretation of the data that also shaped the structure of the current chapter. This division is intended to bring more of a transversal understanding out of the data than to constitute two mutually exclusive perspectives. The approaches in this twofold interpretation, which I will present in the following, are used to support and complement one another.

The first part of the chapter is dedicated to presenting five main categories developed through the grounded visual analysis. I will argue that visual data can be treated as the primary source for addressing meaning in research focusing on symbolic struggle rather than simply as evidence of the linguistic data that is often the starting point in social movement studies. To make sense of these five categories in light of my research purposes, I found it very useful to

turn to the application of framing theory in social movement scholarship. It has been more than 30 years since Goffman's (1986) framing model was introduced to social movement research by Snow and his colleagues (Snow et al., 1986; Snow & Benford, 1988; 1992). A reinterpretation of the model for social movement studies not only provides an analytical tool for investigating social movements' symbolic universe, but also gives an overall framework to understand how movements operate within the social and political realm. Frames, as Goffman identifies, are schemata of interpretation that allow people "locate, perceive, identify, and label... occurrences" (Goffman, 1986, p. 21). With such a "metaphor", Goffman refers to a "relational dimension" of meaning making (p. xiii). The framing model offers two different tools to be applied to social movement research. On the one hand, framing is a theory that allows for interpreting collective strategies that social movement actors use to convince and mobilise people. Such a theoretical perspective can be applied to a study at any level of analysis. Furthermore, it provides a methodological tool that is particularly useful for empirical studies focusing on symbolic interaction (Polletta, 1997). Yet, framing as a method to analyse social movements, namely frame analysis, relies on discursive constructions and remains predominantly logocentric as discussed above. This is why I did not use it as a methodological tool but rather as a concept that works well with the grounded visual analysis method.

In the second part of the chapter, I analyse the transition of images from one type to another—that is to say, from photography to illustration—and show how certain emergent and crosscutting figures in image categories are used for purposes of visual activism. The illustrations, which comprised a relatively smaller part of my data corpus compared to the photographs, featured in two crosscutting groups that were in turn related to two incompatible political atmospheres, namely the illustrations that are free of any explicit association to another image and those that follow a particular photograph. Through my analysis, I found that both of these groups of illustrations contribute to the symbolic dimension of the political struggle in different ways, as the processes of visual practice differ significantly.

In the first group of illustrations, there is no representation of one medium in another as defined in Chandler and Munday's 2016 edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of Media and Communication*, affirming Bolter and Grusin's first use of the concept in their 1999 book *Remediation*. Here, the illustrations are authentic works of the producer, although it would not be correct to claim that any visual artefact could be free of former experience of seeing. Following on the above discussion on the connective/collective visual frames, one can argue that illustrations appeal and contribute to their construction, too. However, I will not go deeper in examining this group of illustrations in this sub-chapter for two analytical reasons. First,

while interpreting the data (step 4 of the grounded visual analysis as explained in Chapter 3), I observed that most of the illustrations in this particular group can be seen as part of the visual frames presented in the previous sub-chapter. An attempt to extend such analysis to the illustrations seemed to be repetitive. Second, there is a considerably smaller number of illustrations of this type produced by Anti-Coup visual activists, compared to those of Gezi. Considering the voluntary participation of advertisement agencies in Gezi protests alongside individual graphic designers and illustrators both professional and amateur, the production of illustrations in Gezi was immense in number and variety. In Anti-Coup, the production of illustrations peaked in the immediate aftermath of the July 15th street clashes, but some of these works were later appropriated by the government. This even went so far that the government commissioned some of these artists to design an official logo for the commemoration of the events. The independent visual activists' efforts in illustrating Anti-Coup concentrated more on representing heroic scenes of people standing against tanks and firearms. Leaving the first group of illustrations aside, I focused on the second group and examined further their role in contemporary political struggle.

The illustrations in the second group follow the aesthetic qualities in content and composition of photographs that were produced through the events of Gezi and Anti-Coup. Regardless of the professionalism of the production, it is very clear at first glance that these illustrations are making use of photographs that became famous during the course of street protests and demonstrations as a base. In addition to their contribution to constructing visual frames, these illustrations extend the presence of what is in the initial image in temporal and spatial terms in a participatory fashion (Papailias, 2016). Produced and disseminated online by multiple producers and social media users, these works (illustrations) increase the chances of interaction with the narrative, style, and content of the initial image (the photograph). In this sense, they help increase the ubiquity and social penetration of the photographs at different levels by appealing to people in a visually seductive way. Besides contributing to the construction of a collective/connective action frame that is "a call to arms" (Noakes & Johnston, 2005), remediation of photographs refers to a networked process of creating an icons that increase and extend the "power of the image" (Corrigall-Brown, 2011) in terms of memory across time and spatial borders created by political agendas.

The present chapter is also shaped according to this two-fold analysis. In the first part following this introduction, I will use examples of photographs to examine which visual frames are constructed by Anti-Coup and Gezi and how these frames resonate with diverse audiences. I will maintain that constellations of politically antagonist social actors develop and attend to a

shared framing repertoire that appeals to the public by recalling various elements of invented traditions such as nationalism, religion, cultural heritage, and other norms and identities. In the second part of this chapter, instead of suggesting new visual frames for the shared repertoire of two mobilisations, I will use examples of illustrations that remediate photographs to show how the resonance processes generated by frames I present in the first part receive further political input through different techniques of aestheticisation. By offering outcomes of two diverse but complementary windows of analysis, I will show that the situated resonance created by photographs is transformed into generic resonance by illustrations.

This two-fold analysis draws a parallel line to recent discussions on changing practices of representation and visibility in the field of media and communications, which can be found in Manovich's (2020) work on *aesthetic society*. He suggests that we have been exposed to Instagram-like images through various communication channels including other social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. Whether produced in either casual, professional, or designed fashion, these images shape the aesthetics of our quotidian interactions by developing and using particular patterns to increase their mainstream appeal. As Manovich shows, despite the persistence of casual and professional photography, designed images have constituted a new genre. Unlike casual and professional photographs, designed images lack depth and exclusively focus on a central element. Producers of this type of image use various strategies and techniques to flatten space and make other contextual elements shady or completely invisible, which in turn bring them more followers, likes, and comments on social media platforms. In other words, practices of enhancement and modification in image production create *cultural capital* (Bourdieu, 1984) that can be translated into other areas of the social. The social movement literature, particularly that of new social movements and similar approaches regarding contemporary activist practices in the 21st century, addresses cultural capital with a *subaltern* perspective and places the political struggle in a culture vs. counterculture duality. However, visual activist practices of today that are largely shaped by digital media blur such dual positioning and allow social movements to produce and use similar elements of cultural capital that can gain a perennial character by stretching across time and space. The effectiveness of similar emergent motifs and figures in mobilisation and politicization processes across movements with incompatible political goals raises the question of relativity and modularity of the symbolic dimension.

Informed by Manovich's analysis, therefore, I argue that the production and dissemination of images are central to political mobilisation processes, as well as to the collective/connective identity and embodiment processes in a social movement. Practices that

develop around photography and illustration, such as framing and remediation, aim at creating and reproducing cultural capital to be translated into political resonance and mobilisation. While Manovich does not emphasise any connection between and reproduction across different image genres, I suggest that they are closely related in meaning production processes of contemporary political struggle. Images, particularly in the form of photographs and illustrations, increase the resonance of a movement's appeal and potentially recruit more participants and supporters. Visual activism—the marshalling of images in the service of wider political efforts—therefore, stands at the core of the political struggle in a digital era.

Motifs of Dissent: Constructing and Situating Frames

In this part of the chapter, I argue that a closer and detailed analysis of photographs found online can offer a broader understanding of framing as a visual activist practice, and in digital means in particular. I will show that the visual activist practices in Gezi and Anti-Coup are directed toward similar visual configurations that help build collective/connective action frames. By in part constituting and pertaining to these frames, photographs help shape the constructing of collective/connective identity of both mobilisations with similar yet conflicting qualifications. Movements with politically incompatible orientations can appeal to similar frames, as like as they appeal to similar activist practices and modalities. The ambitions of Gezi and Anti-Coup, like other movements across the world throughout the past decade, go beyond campaigning on a single topic to display a multiplicity of claims that are connectively developed by activists.

The results of this study suggest that a visual analysis can offer a different and multi-layered understanding of frames as shared visual motifs emerging across political divides without being limited to a frame vs. counter frame duality. The grounded visual analysis method developed for conducting this study allows for focusing on images as primary data while supporting the overall research with other forms of data as necessary.

Below, I will provide a detailed analysis of five motifs, which have emerged from my study as five analytical categories, suggesting that each of them can be regarded as a visual frame. To discuss the construction of these frames, I will present a selection of 26 photographs from my data set of 204 images that I believe can best represent the variety contributing to such processes while also allowing me to offer a consistent narrative through this sub-chapter. The metadata of the photographs, including the photographer, date, and location, are provided when

such information was available to me as a researcher. It is worthwhile to emphasise that a photograph can appeal to more than one category/visual frame—a normal process, particularly in visual interpretation. I will refer to this interconnectedness of frames as it arises in the analysis but will still place the photograph in the primary frame that it contributes to.

Occupation of space

The first category/visual frame that emerged from the grounded visual analysis is “occupation of space”. In this frame, photographs display a domain at stake. Depending on the symbolic meaning, history, and political conjuncture, the contested domain can be a building, a public urban asset, or a whole city itself. The individuals’ minds and bodies can also be occupied, as can be online spaces such as the social media platforms. Suggesting “occupation of space” as a visual frame for both 2013 Gezi and 2016 Anti-Coup may seem natural in the first place, as the two mobilisations took place within a period when various Occupy movements around the world were setting the global activist agenda (Ayata & Harders, 2018) and occupation in the form of the sit-in was one of the first tactics used out of the established activist repertoire (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001). However, the practice of occupying urban public spaces for political purposes is hardly established in the traditional activist canon in Turkey. Except for the occupation of universities in the 1960s that briefly followed a global trend (Alper, 2010) and the case of Kazova Knitwear Factory workers’ resistance that started a few months before the 2013 Gezi protests, Turkey has not been familiar with scenes of massive occupation of public spaces over days and weeks (Koç & Aksu, 2015). Occupation, as a transgressive activist practice, is associated with the historical student movements and leftist-leaning protests (McAdam et al., 2001). It implies taking control of a territory and establishing a symbolic “temporary autonomous zone” (Bey, 1985) that is out of the reach of any legal authority.

The occupation of Gezi Park started as a bottom-up initiative, with the flocking of activists to the park after a Twitter message asked for help to stand against the bulldozers of the municipality-commissioned Kalyon Construction Company. On the side of Anti-Coup, President Erdoğan’s call for democracy vigils after the occupation of squares following the defeat of the coup plotters evoked ethno-religious public affects in support of the government. However, it does not mean that the framing of the Anti-Coup was totally top-down. Empirical research suggests that there was a significant number of independent contributions to the process (KONDA, 2016b; Küçük & Türkmen, 2018). Researchers also found out that there was

a continuous effort by government offices to appropriate the bottom-up activist efforts that flourished through the democracy vigils (Küçük & Türkmen, 2018; Türkmen & Küçük, 2016). On-the-spot symbolic productions, including slogans, songs, photography, citizen journalism content such as video footage, and digital-visual labour such as logo design and illustration that frame democracy vigils as spaces of activist occupation, were appropriated and reframed by the government in order to display and promote Anti-Coup.

Speaking of occupation of space, Taksim Square's symbolic value should first of all be acknowledged. Since the 19th-century Ottoman era until today, Taksim Square has gradually grown into a display window for various governments, and is therefore a contested domain (and a domain for contest) for social and political agendas (Baykan & Hatuka, 2010). Apart from being a showcase of the governments throughout the 20th century because of its monumentality and vicinity to social and cultural attractions, Taksim has also been a main spot for expressing collective demands through demonstrations. The unidentified murder of 30 demonstrators in the square during the 1977 Mayday celebrations resulted in the banning of further political activities in the space (Baykan & Hatuka, 2010). The square has been publicly claimed by several civil society organisations and initiatives ever since. A highly contested symbolic territory, Taksim Square and Gezi Park were at the centre of discussions that drew from the Habermasian *public sphere* and David Harvey's *right to city* concepts within the few years preceding Gezi. This contest over the territory is displayed in the political imagery as well.

Professional photographer Deniz Akgündüz shot the photograph seen in Figure 3 on 2 June 2013, at Taksim Square and posted it on her Facebook page before it became one of the viral images of the movement. The photograph shows a half-naked muscular man raising his arms and head to the sky, wearing only a bulky hip-down red garment and a grey gas mask. He is Ziya Azazi, a professional choreographer and Sufi dancer who became one of the important figures of Gezi, known as the *Whirling Dervish with the Gas Mask*. Lying before him is the square, which was closed to car traffic as the protests quickly grew bigger. It seems to be swarming with people as more and more were coming to Gezi Park, which is on the right side of the photograph but narrowly escapes the camera. The sky and the bluish colours show that it is a cloudy day, although colours might have been altered through a filter or the editing of professional photography.

The Turkish flag is a familiar symbol in the square, raised up to the pillar, as in the main squares of any city in the country. The random appearance of Turkish flags in public spaces, and as a result in public photography, should not be immediately interpreted as a statement of nationalism. As Billig (1995) explains well, this can be seen among the acts of "banal

nationalism”, which is part of the quotidian without any additional value. Still, Akgündüz’s shot places the flag centrally in the image, just in between the dervish’s hands up in the air. Here the affirmation of such a national symbol is not different than from other movements of the time, as similar concerns can be observed across the Arab Spring, Occupy, and Anti-austerity movements. Activists who occupied vast public spaces often carried national flags to verify their loyalty and commitment to the country and to use them as a shield against possible pro-government blaming for being foreign-driven political actors.



Figure 3. Akgündüz, D. (2013). *The Whirling Dervish with the Gas Mask* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/DenizAkgunduzPhotography>

The dervish’s gas mask immediately brings to mind the police’s excessive use of gas against the activists. As the protests continued, activists started switching from simple dust masks to more advanced versions, as seen in the photograph. Growing into a symbol of protest, the gas mask became one of the most repetitive objects through the images of the Gezi Movement. It is considered as “an immunitary medium” that enables activists “to access public spaces” as daily life goes under oppression (Soncul, 2015). The gas mask asserts a state of

uncanniness and danger. It is a preventive measure that one would take when expecting a difficulty that would risk the integrity of body and physical health. At the same time, the gas provides anonymity to the protesters against recognition and possible government persecution.

Wearing this gas mask, Azazi performed the Sufi whirling dance multiple times during the protests, and many photographs were taken of him. The image of a whirling dervish with a gas mask is also a haunting one, and it quickly became one of the icons of the Gezi Movement. In Figure 3, the colour of his naked upper body is in full contrast with the background and quickly catches eye. By exposing his body, the dervish not only celebrates the start of the protests and the occupation of the location, but also raises a question about resistance to oppressive body politics. Unlike the usual white skirts of whirling dervishes, Azazi's skirt is red, which is a play with the given gender stereotypes—he had also used black and pink during his performances in Gezi. It was not long ago when several government officials, including Erdoğan, made random comments and suggestions about the number of children a family should have and the presence of pregnant women in public. Internet censorship laws, which led to even the banning of websites that offer sex education, alongside new regulations for the spatial arrangement in gastronomy sector that targeted taverns in Beyoglu district and also the consumption of alcohol, proved that the government intended to tighten its grip on the control of bodily practices—particularly focusing on the female body. Much of these issues were expressed throughout the Gezi Movement, and Azazi's performance and staging in this photograph advertises it.

With his hands up in the air, the dervish can be interpreted as both praising the protesters' occupation of Gezi Park and Taksim Square and pretending to be orchestrating an insurrection. It is a moment of claiming the square from a superior altitude and inviting people to revolt. The shot was staged on the top of Atatürk Cultural Centre, which was occasionally used for taking photographs and video during social, cultural, and political events. The exact spot where Akgündüz photographed Azazi was a popular one among other Gezi protesters, as other images with similar staging (e.g. back shot, with hands hailing over the square) were disseminated on social media platforms. The dervish's upheld arms can also refer to the act of praying according to Islamic tradition. Associated with Islam, Sufism's system of belief and dervishes' worshipping practices are often found transgressive. Being visually very present in such an unorthodox and mystical order of Islam, dervishes are believed to have unconventional powers in the folk culture and are considered as rebel figures. A dervish is generally respected in the society for his mythical abilities, although the public attitude toward dervishes has not always been amicable in the past (Ocak, 1996).

The increasing popularity of spiritual practices such as yoga has created an interest in Sufism and made it a marketable icon of popular culture, which eventually increased its appeal as a representative element. The Gezi activists used this appeal in order to increase the resonance of the frame. The photograph, like many other representations of the dervish figure, is a resonant and transgressive image. It combines the submissive and docile elements of being a dervish as a religious follower together with those of rebellion and disobedience. It strips a religion-related icon of its obedient meaning and adjusts it in a context of dissent. In this way, the photograph contributes to the construction of the visual frame “occupation of space” by sketching a layout of bodily defiant collectivity that takes control of a certain contested territory. It accentuates the rebellious qualities of the figure in public memory and “provides the dervish with an agency” (Bayraktar, 2016).

At the same time, the mask and his naked body function as anonymisers of the body, suggesting that the dervish could be anyone. Although the protests started at Taksim Square were an extension of the initial sit-in at Gezi Park, the “occupation” was not limited to the single neighbourhood or Istanbul itself. Numerous photographs from other places in the town and other cities joined to the construction of such frame by displaying a moment of taking control of an urban space. One of them was set against another landmark of Istanbul, the Bosphorus Bridge, which is today known as 15 July Martyrs Bridge, as seen in Figure 4.

The photograph is from the early morning hours of 1 June 2013 and was posted by various accounts on social media platforms and news portals. Among them was also the official Twitter account of Istanbul’s Yeditepe University. It shows a portion of the bridge in the foreground with the urban silhouette becoming visible in the back. The yellow, green, and light blue colours of the sea and the sky show that the dawn has just broken. A number of people opened their eyes to this photograph, as it became instantly popular on social media platforms, showing thousands of protesters marching over the Bosphorus Bridge from the Asian side of Istanbul to the European after a long-night of street demonstrations. That morning, protesters walked approximately 12 km from the Kadıköy district of Istanbul on the Asian side to join those at Gezi Park on the European. The reinforcement of thousands of people to the sit-in that started at the park made a significant change in the trajectory of the protests. The photograph was a signal that the movement, which was at a very early stage, was to grow bigger. Five years after the protests, this photograph is still shared online on various occasions, including the protest anniversaries.

The bridge has a special place in Istanbul’s cityscape. Istanbul is located on both the Asian and European continents and is divided by the Bosphorus Strait. Inaugurated in 1973, the

bridge quickly became one of the popular symbols of the city, giving it a fresh and modern look alongside the traditional architecture. The construction of bridges over the strait has always been a contested issue in Turkey. The original Bosphorus Bridge was followed by a second one in 1988. A number of urban initiatives expressed their concerns about the possible consequences of these projects, including environmental damage and an increased number of cars in traffic. The topic came up again when plans for a third bridge were to be discussed. The first stone for construction was laid on 29 May 2013 and coincided with the first days of Gezi. Concerns for the hazards of a third bridge was quickly included in the movement agenda (Fisher-Onar, Pearce, & Keyman, 2018), making it a good example of activist labour toward frame alignment (Snow et al., 1986).



Figure 4. Yeditepe_Univ (2013, June 1). *Protesters crossing the Bosphorus* [Photograph]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/Yeditepe_Univ/status/340676666764431360

Besides a semiotic interpretation of the horizontal line setting a relationship between two sides of the city, the photograph captures a moment of crossing from one continent to another by foot over the sea that is a symbolic act unique to Istanbul. Over the years, the Bosphorus Bridge, with its iconic pillars, has become a very present icon in the visual memory of the city, as it is one of the most photographed assets. In a number of movies and photographs, as well as in poetry, novels, and theatre works, it appears as part of the literary tradition of

depicting hope, enjoyment, and rebirth, but also homecoming, nostalgia, and sorrow (Boev, 2012). Except for the Istanbul Marathon that takes place every year, pedestrians are not allowed on the bridge. Pedestrian presence on this bridge is associated with suicides, as countless people have stopped their cars or ran out of taxis in the middle of the road and jumped to their deaths.

Metaphorically, bridges are intermediary spaces between life and death (Boev, 2012). They create anticipation. They mark the edge of space—the end of one and entry to another. They also evoke a sense of threat, escaping from danger with the hope of arriving to safety (Badescu, 2007). The people on the Bosphorus Bridge are part of this transition allegory as well. Gezi Park was considered a place to protect urban life, and the protests as an attempt to breathe—following the gas mask metaphor. The extraordinary crowd passing from one continent to the other in the photograph represents a shift of power. As a vehicle of the government for the domestication of the city, the bridge is reclaimed by the activists on a regular day when it is closed to public access on foot. As Gezi Park was to be transformed into a shopping area, and therefore virtually closed to a certain part of the public who is economically disadvantaged, walking on the bridge as pedestrians becomes a defiant act itself. The photograph is a visual statement that Gezi Park's rebellious occupation is extending, and the control of other public properties can also be taken over. It is an invitation to occupy the whole city.

The contest over the spatial meaning of the bridge becomes more evident when the photograph is compared to the set of photographs and the broader imagery of Anti-Coup. For example, a photograph taken from almost identical standpoint showed a police water cannon launching pressured water onto soldiers on the bridge in the early morning hours of 16 July, the day after the putsch.² Here, I will examine another photograph (Figure 5) that I consider a better example to present the “occupation of space” visual frame. It was shot by Elif Öztürk of the state-run Anadolu [News] Agency and was chosen as one of the agency's best photographs of the month. I found it in a Twitter post of the presidential spokesperson İbrahim Kalın.

The photograph shows a public gathering organised by a joint platform of nongovernmental organisations with the support of the government on 21 July 2016, a few days after the military coup attempt. It was disseminated endlessly on social media accounts and used in various publications and also as frontispiece. The photograph shows the first massive celebration of victory over the coup plotters. The scene repeated on the anniversaries of the event with the participation of senior government officials and President Erdoğan himself, and

² See the photograph in Merve Parlak's visual archive via <https://onbestemmuz.wordpress.com/2016/07/19/177/>

similar photographs displaying massive crowds flooding the streets heading to the bridge were disseminated on print and digital media.



Figure 5. ikalin1 (2016, July 22). *First gathering after the coup d'état attempt* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/ikalin1/status/756397693380034561>

A Turkish flag is visible in the very front, held by a person who raises his arms to share in the excitement of the crowd downhill that celebrates the victory over the coup plotters. The person is unidentifiable and appears only as a silhouette in the dark. With the red-illuminated bridge towers in the background on the left, one can immediately understand that the location is the road leading to the Bosphorus Bridge from the Asian side. The neighbourhood is one of the strongholds of President Erdoğan where he also has a family mansion. Strong projector lights illuminate the bridge's entrance and indicate the possible location for public speeches and other staged events. The AKP government is known with organising rallies of massive size and make sure the images of vast crowds occupying a certain terrain are disseminated well in public. The bridge is a terrain to physically occupy, a material body to fill with bodies, a space to take control of, and remains as an eye-catching element in photographs, especially when illuminated. However, the image's contribution to the construction of the "occupation of space" frame in relation to Anti-Coup is more than that of to the role of the bridge in collective memory.

The Bosphorus Bridge was one of the first spots that the soldiers occupied and sealed from entry on the night of 15 July 2016. When this appeared in the news, hundreds of demonstrators ran there to seize it back from the army. A series of violent clashes and deaths during the night ended with the soldiers surrendering to the demonstrators and more people flocking to celebrate the victory. The previously mentioned photograph showing a water cannon launching on soldiers captures such moment. Shortly after the government order was restored, the Bosphorus Bridge was officially renamed as “15 July Martyrs Bridge” to honour those who lost their lives in the clashes. It has been a favourite icon both as visual reference and location in relation to the success of the Anti-Coup Resistance since then. Combined with the name change and the repetitive activities related to the bridge, holding the event in this specific location and disseminating such photographs take part in a struggle over the symbolic meaning.

Apart from joining the construction of a visual frame, the photograph also sets up a counter frame that works as a response to the rival “occupation of space” imagery. The coup plotters were often identified with Gezi activists in the pro-government accounts, implying that they had identical aims of overthrowing the elected representatives of the people. This particular photograph in Figure 5 and many others of the rally were disseminated along with the phrase “This is how you seal a bridge” (*Köprü öyle değil, böyle kapatılır*), together with the images of soldiers blocking the entry or Gezi activists walking over the bridge.

I argue that this sort of counter framing increases the mobilising potential of the image. It refers to the former action of the rival social actor and uses the power of the existing frame as a basis for building upon it. Counter framing is often understood in an either-or situation, where one side of the conflict advocates for one action and the other side advocates for the contrary. However, Anti-Coup’s counter framing here should be understood differently. It displays the enemy’s action as a benchmark to be surpassed, urging an immediate response. The photograph does not only make a comparison in the size of occupations but also in between the types of occupation as “desired” and “to be avoided”. It praises the crowd covering the wide asphalt and the hills heading up to the bridge while demonising the act of the opponent.

Moreover, different from other counter framing examples in social movements such as those against women’s right to vote (Hewitt & McCammon, 2005) or abortion rights (Staggenborg, 1991), the photograph points to an existing but defeated threat to the established culture and norms. The presence of a Turkish flag in the very front and the filling of the space with people appeal to the nationalist sensations of possessing a particular domain and affirming that it is a property of the true owners of the country. The Bosphorus Bridge (will be referred to as “15 July Martyrs Bridge” hereinafter), as a territory that was at stake during the putsch

night, becomes a signifier of the nation and the motherland. It thus acquires a national identity, as any threat posed to the bridge comes to mean a threat to the nation (Anastasiou, 2019). Within the Anti-Coup imagery, the “occupation of space” frame calls for a reclamation of such public assets, partly from the coup plotters but also from the Gezi activists, who were immediately accused to be like-minded supporters of the putsch, and for the subsequent (re)domestication by the “true” people of Turkey. The themes of threat, nation, and national defence are taken further by other Anti-Coup photographs as the two following examples will demonstrate.



Figure 6. Turkish Radio and TV Agency. (2016) “*Democracy and Martyrs*” Rally [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/demokrasi-ve-sehitler-mitingine-rekor-katilim-264921.html>

An aerial photograph (Figure 6) was taken at the government-organised “Democracy and Martyrs” Rally at the Yenikapı parade ground in Istanbul on 7 August 2016. The ground was constructed specifically to hold such massive parades. A final rally crowned the three-week period of democracy vigils. The event was broadcasted live, and public screenings took place in the squares of democracy vigils across the country. The photograph was shot by the state-run media channel TRT and disseminated on digital and in print media, becoming highly popular and a source of pride for the government. Senior officials, bureaucrats, and various independent government supporters shared it through their social media accounts.

The wide-angle photograph of the rally is familiar from previous events held on the same parade ground. An aerial image with minimal urban background increases the feeling of

the space. The parade attracted an impressive number of people. Five million were reported to have attended and a sea of Turkish flags set the colour of the day. President Erdoğan directed the event personally and gave a speech on a runway that reaches into the crowd, as seen in the bottom of the photograph. The size of the audience and the arrangement of the site can recall and easily be compared to any gigantic parade elsewhere. It was an attempt to consolidate the public will against the putsch and aimed for a show of strength.

According to public polls (KONDA, 2016a; 2016b), not all of the participants were government supporters. A considerable amount of people considered the putsch a national threat superior to party politics. This concern brought together the representatives of other parties in the parliament and attendees of the rally, except for the pro-Kurdish HDP (People's Democratic Party), which was not invited because of alleged involvement in terrorism—a common opinion in Turkish society. The photographs of party leaders having tea with the president supported the messages of unity against the coup plotters.

The photograph shows that some of the rally participants also had a militaristic drive that is nuanced in a historic and current political context. A big banner on the right side of the photograph reads “The youth is in the service of the commander-in-chief” (*Gençlik başkomutanın emrinde*), referring to Erdoğan's constitutional status in the case of war, although the words “commander-in-chief” traditionally reference Atatürk in the collective memory, due to his commanding role in the national campaign that started at the end of the World War I. Presidents following Atatürk's period enjoyed the same constitutional authority, but this was rarely written or voiced in public and instead endured as a formal status for ceremonial occasions. Nevertheless, the term remained strongly attached to Atatürk's cult. Erdoğan, on the other hand, has been the first ever president to be ubiquitously made comment about his power on the military as the commander-in-chief. This is partly to challenge Atatürk's established legacy that represents the secular tradition in Turkey (Zık, 2018b) and partly to emphasise his executive power on the military, which he managed to subdue under a process of democratisation during the AKP rule. In this vein, the frame “occupation of space” in Anti-Coup not only displays a contested physical space and a claim over it but also an extension of this interest toward the space of public memory. An institutional title such as commander-in-chief of the army is seen by Anti-Coup as a domain to capture, which is otherwise occupied by the secular narrative that has dominated through past decades.

Anti-Coup's “occupation of space” visual frame, therefore, bridges with the existing counter framing efforts against secularism that is rooted in Islamism. Comparing the religion-oriented policies of the AKP since it has come to power in 2002 with the precedent of a

relatively secularly-oriented period, a quick conclusion would be that pro-religion (exclusively Islamist) framing is introduced by the government in a top-down fashion. But this would be incomplete. The struggle between the secular and non-secular is an extension of the persisting tensions from the Ottoman Empire, which Turkey claims to be the successor, and is deeply rooted in the society. The AKP has structurally empowered those who constructed this frame and paved the way for it to be expressed in the public sphere more liberally and assertively, before appropriating and amplifying it for further political interests. A brief background history on this topic is provided in the previous chapter.³

Last but not the least, the photograph also marks the start of a period of excessive use of Turkish flags, similar to the Republic Rallies in 2007 when numerous parades were organised by secular groups suggesting that a constitutional threat was ahead. They were alerted by the nomination of the Erdoğan-approved candidate Abdullah Gül for presidential elections, and Gül eventually won and served for seven years, from 2007 to 2014. Turkish flags were ubiquitously present in the streets and media, in addition to the giant ones prepared for massive rallies with participants reaching up to 1,5 million. The flag was then meant to convey a national symbol attached to the secular heritage of Atatürk's Turkey. Little of its meaning would have been associated with religion, and even if so, then very moderately and confined to secular standards. The act of “flagging the nation” (Billig, 1995) in the pre-AKP period could be interpreted as a secular practice rather than a religious one. It functioned almost as an all-in-one framing device for secularism and the Kemalist republic by aligning patriotism/nationalism with secularism, conveying the symbol of a modernist ideology around Atatürk's cult—so-called “Kemalism”—and increasing its resonance in the audience through continuous exposure and educational activities, and finally linking it to the post-WWI national campaign of Turkey. Accordingly, 2007 Republic Rallies made use of the flag symbol to signal that any political change toward Erdoğan's will would pose a constitutional threat and integrity of the country. Turkish flag continued to remain a secular symbol even after the AKP increased its votes in each election. However, it lost a great portion of its secular meaning after the coup attempt while being reframed for different political purposes.

The photograph in Figure 7 was taken at Taksim Square on 22 June 2016, a few days after the military coup attempt. The square is unusually empty on such bright day, except for two white vans of news channels and a few people who are most likely reporters and other channel staff. A massive flag covering the Atatürk Cultural Centre's (*Atatürk Kültür Merkezi*

³ See also: Heper, M., & Sayari, S. (2012). *The Routledge Handbook of Modern Turkey*. Routledge.

and *AKM* in short) façade is in the principal position in the image. It reads in English: “Sovereignty Belongs to the Nation.” The script takes up an important portion of the flag and it has strong symbolic meaning and relevance to the “occupation of space” frame. The phrase, reported to be an Atatürk quote, has spawned an article in the Turkish Constitution in 1921 and it is written on the main wall of the parliament. Although the original phrase was in Ottoman Turkish, it was translated into modern Turkish within years. The selection of wording on the flag is a simplified version of the original, a version frequently used by Erdoğan himself, which can be interpreted as his constant need to remind citizens of his elected status—the parliamentary elections are meant to be proof national sovereignty and legitimate representation—but also as an intention to appropriate the symbolism around the former (secular) idol.



Figure 7. T24 News Portal. (2016). *AKM façade dressed in Turkish flag* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://t24.com.tr/haber/akmyi-hakimiyet-milletindir-bayragiyla-giydirdiler,351351>

The phrase on the flag also accomplishes another important framing task within the context of Anti-Coup. It links the military coup event of 2017 to the years of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the foundation of the modern republic. The coup plotters are condemned as being in the service of foreign powers, which should evoke the public affects to defend the nation against an invader with the reminder of the Allies of WWI sponsoring revolts in the Ottoman Empire and eventually being given the terms to occupy its territory following an armistice. Given the heated agenda after the military coup attempt, the phrase on the flag in the

photograph salutes to the national campaign took place almost a century ago and connects it to the Anti-Coup Resistance as a reassurance of security. This national security, however, can only be ensured if the people are mobilised. As also observed by Küçük and Türkmen (2018), the use of Turkish flag in Anti-Coup became a symbol of a mixture of religiosity and nationalism that penetrated and occupied all sections of social and political life.

The role of the Turkish flag within such a symbolic and operational frame is quite different than Gezi's use of it. Turkish flags were part of the visual landscape of Gezi, but they were only visible together with other symbols that represented a variety of diversity (see the analysis of Figure 8). In addition to its function of connecting Anti-Coup to a master frame of national security (and sovereignty), the flag in the above photograph appears to be placed on the façade with an ambitious and far-reaching aim to occupy a territory—the AKM building itself. The building became a main point of attraction during the Gezi protests due to its central location in Taksim Square and the activists' initiative of using its façade as billboard for the movement's symbols and messages. Instead of the random presence of multiple Gezi actors on the façade, which I will analyse in detail under the title of “diversification” frame below, the gigantic flag here “restores order” in a response to Gezi's use of the location. Pointing out the contrast in between two, Bedir (2018) asserts that this contest is also a partial appropriation of the Gezi culture by Anti-Coup in terms of tactics, repertoires, and symbolism.

Display of occupation of a particular territory is connected to the collective identity process in a social movement, as Daphi (2017) observed in the recent Occupy wave. Movements develop a sense of identity attached to certain urban area. While the Gezi Movement had an intrinsic relationship with the act of occupation of Gezi Park, Anti-Coup lacked such spatial connection in terms of its collective/connective identity process. In Anti-Coup, visual framing efforts concentrated on territorialisation of particular symbols, such as using massive flags covering surfaces and urban assets. Yet, the difference is not only in the presence and need of a territory to affiliate with the movement. Gezi Park and Taksim Square in its proximity were temporary home to Gezi activists, as in an understanding of a temporary autonomous zone (Bey, 1985; Sellars, 2010). In Anti-Coup's visual framing, although the democracy vigils are thought to symbolise the occupation of space (Küçük & Türkmen, 2018), the bridge stands out as the principal territory at risk, symbolising the act of protection of the motherland, and is therefore a spatial anchor for the movement. The repetitive appearance of the bridge in other examples in the chapter will show this further.

Diversification

The second category that emerged in my analysis is “diversification”. The photographs in this category display diversity in the profile of participants and supporters of the mobilisation. Acknowledgement and affirmation of the coexistence of people from different environments to act in solidarity for a political purpose is made explicit. Both Gezi and Anti-Coup images make rigorous efforts to picture an extraordinary occasion where different identities and affiliations, socio-economic and political backgrounds, genders, and ages come together. These images refer to the existing societal tensions and political divides while pointing out the moment of transgressing those borders. They also indicate an encouraging setting for the disadvantaged and marginalised to converge with the society, such as by promoting the participation of people with disabilities in street events and the involvement and acceptance of nonbinary sexual identities. The display of alliance and harmony between people with different religious as well as with nonreligious backgrounds is characteristic of these photographs.



Figure 8. Infestor. (2013). *Posters, banners and flags on AKM building* [Photograph]. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atat%C3%BCCrk_Cultural_Center

The photograph as shown in Figure 8 was taken at Taksim Square in Istanbul on 7 June 2013. It shows the AKM building’s façade covered with various banners and posters. As the protests continued at Gezi Park and spread all over Turkey, a banner was hung on the building’s

façade on 2 June and was quickly followed by others. Until Gezi Park and the building were seized by the police, the AKM's façade served as a physical statement of the diverse participation in the movement and a visual anchor for the “diversification” frame the movement tried to build from the beginning. In addition to the urban and environmental issues that were the main focus of Gezi, the movement welcomed a great diversity in motivations to participate, which varied from women's rights to LGBTQI+ individuals', from worker's rights to Internet bans.

The first banner on the façade, which is top centre in the photograph, reads “BOYUN EĞME” (*Do not bow*). It is the visual brand of the weekly magazine of the Turkish Communist Party, although the script itself and the visual features of the logo (a red brush effect on white background with text in black and white font) do not reveal much about the party's identity to unfamiliar eyes. The Turkish Communist Party put this banner on AKM's façade on 2 June, shortly after the protests started at Gezi Park. Other banners quickly followed this first one and gave the building a colourful look. But it was a the first-comer's privilege to be placed top centre, and obviously it had to share the spot with a Turkish flag and Atatürk's poster portrait. Another flag in the centre of the façade was joined by one on the rooftop's right. These were probably arranged arbitrarily or due to the practicalities of fixing banners. The rest of the composition is a straightforward depiction of the odd collaborations at Gezi. A photo of Didier Drogba, an Ivorian football player, then playing for the Galatasaray football club, soon joined the collection, placed right under the banner of Çarşı, which is the ultra-group of the Beşiktaş club. It read in English: “We have Drogba, they don't!” Both clubs, as well as Fenerbahçe, were well known to be eternal foes. The prominent presence and friendly collaboration of all three in the protest actions and their humorous posts on social media attracted thousands, regardless of team affiliation. Another easily recognisable face is that of Deniz Gezmiş (1947-1972), who was a political activist sentenced to death, after engaging in an armed struggle and found guilty of attempting to overthrow the constitutional order. Images of some other martyrs of the political left and renowned figures such as Marx, Stalin, and Lenin are also on the façade, along with banners of various grassroots initiatives and groups with slogans such as “shut up tayyip!” (addressing Recep Tayyip Erdoğan). One banner added later to this photograph read, “Don't Touch Mor Gabriel!” (aiming to protect the land property of an Assyrian monastery in the city of Mardin from being confiscated by the government) among others that called upon the Government to resign and trade unions to go on strike. Several are written in Kurdish or Turkish/Kurdish bilingual.

When compared to all the other protest actions that have taken place in Turkey, the number and size of images of Atatürk and the Turkish flag must be regarded as modest. These two visual elements were extremely high profile in earlier protests and demonstrations, especially those concerned with secularism, such as the Republic Rallies of 2007. The photograph of the façade shows that besides being ordinary and relatively safe symbols to represent democracy, secularism, and national identity, both the Turkish flag and the Atatürk poster were only a part of the political and social mosaic that constituted Gezi.

Although the lack of an overarching reference poses a weak point in Gezi (Özen, 2015), the large spectrum of participant groups and the multiplicity of identities are regarded as the strength of the movement (Özel, 2014). Displaying of structurally unlinked topics and the symbols of their advocates in one place is a good example to frame amplification and frame extension, two important tasks of frame alignment. Although some of these figures would hardly ever come together in another context and some groups represented on the façade would dislike being present in the same image, the “diversification” frame of Gezi was beneficial for everyone as it increased the mobilisation potential of the movement while giving visibility to the variety of participation that constructed the movement’s identity.

Moreover, the Atatürk Cultural Centre was a main focus of discussion regarding the future of Taksim Square, long before the Gezi Movement emerged. An important example of 1960s’ architecture, the AKM is considered a Republican project, a symbol of the Turkish modernism that aimed to westernise the country’s cultural life. It was no coincidence that the building was named after Atatürk in 1978, having survived a fire that accompanied one of the peak moments of political polarisation and violence. The plans to demolish the building were conceived as early as 2005 and were soon joined by other urban transformation projects. The plan received considerable criticism, which claimed that the political and cultural legacy of AKM was more important than its material value. Art and architecture platforms and grassroots organisations came together to start a legal process, which only succeeded in slowing down the overall project. Shut down and evacuated in 2008, AKM stayed unused for a decade. Following such a history, the difference in the uses of the façade in relation to Gezi and Anti-Coup events cannot be thought separate from the building being a space of contest. The façade’s function as a showcase served to display the diversity of participation in Gezi, while it served to present the cemented unity of Anti-Coup participants that the government very much wanted to put forward as the mobilisation’s identity, merging it with national symbols. Although public polls make it clear that there was a great diversity in Anti-Coup-related events (KONDA, 2016a;

2016b), the use of such national symbols aims to display a monolithic stance against the coup rather than showing that variety in participation.



Figure 9. ecezereycan (2013, June 8). *Veiled women at Gezi protests* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/ecezereycan/status/343305037721767936>

Widely shared during and in the aftermath of Gezi, the photograph seen in Figure 9 was most likely shot at Gezi Park. It shows two smiling women in the front. One of them holds a placard that reads “BOYUN EĞME” as on the façade of the AKM building. Another copy of the sign is also seen in the background, along with other banners and a crowd. The other most notable features in the photograph are the women’s headscarves. Gezi was blamed in pro-government media outlets for not complying with the values of Islam in a Muslim-majority country. The activists were falsely accused for harassing people with headscarves and other religious symbols, often just to provoke negative thoughts and attitudes toward the movement. The photograph of two smiling veiled women exemplifies an effort to disprove those claims. Some alternative and opposition columnists and social media posts have also pointed to this photograph’s playing such a role (Oda TV, 2013). Turkey witnessed furious debates about the headscarf as a political symbol over the past decades, and the wearing of the headscarf was

banned in a number of public institutions during a period shortly before Erdoğan's AKP came to power.

The topic created tension between secularists and non-secularists, and its memory still weighs heavily on the society. As the AKP and its predecessor parties have advocated for the rights of those who did not have equal access to education, employment, and other public services in the past, a quick judgement would associate people with more traditional lifestyles or those carrying religious-affiliated symbols and items to the AKP. The photograph displays a transgressive scene of alliance between two traditionally conflicting social groups and established political identities, considering the fact that a majority of Gezi participants identified themselves as secular (KONDA, 2013a). The proud smile at the camera joins to the overall wittiness of Gezi, as it was hailed as a first movement in Turkish history to mainstream such humoristic language and festival-like political action (Özel, 2014; Yeğenoğlu, 2013).

Similar framing of “diversification” took place elsewhere, particularly in countries that have suffered religion-based conflict. For example, the photographs of non-Muslim activists making a human shield to protect their Muslim fellows praying during the protests in Tahrir Square in 2011 became a symbol of solidarity across social and religious divides. In another example, Sunni and Shia protesters gave messages of unity and solidarity during the 2019 protests in Lebanon.

Another peculiarity of the photograph is that it brings together the symbols of communism and religion. It cannot be easily verified whether these two women actually knew about the political background of the script on the placard before holding it up to the camera. Even so, the photograph captures a moment when Islamic and communist symbols come together. Although there are examples in history when these two systems were brought together, such as by the Iranian sociologist Ali Shariati, who discussed the compatibility of Islam and Communism (Bayat & 1990, تایب), and by the Muslim activist groups in the Soviet Union (Khalid, 2014), two concepts are often believed to be mutually exclusive even today. In addition to the moment captured in the above photograph, Gezi saw other examples of convergence across the topic of religion such as the involvement of Anti-capitalist Muslims, a group led by theologian-writer İhsan Eliaçık, that joined the movement at an early stage and showed outstanding commitment to Gezi (Birelma, 2013).

The photograph of the two veiled women holding a sign, therefore, serves the construction of the “diversification” frame by bridging structurally unconnected symbols in a good example of frame alignment. Alignment of religion-oriented contentious identities is a

significant framing labour in a context where the secular and non-secular divide becomes very decisive. The image helps increase the resonance of the frame with the public by aligning its prominently secular identity with the representation of non-secular identity in Turkey, as well as by bridging Islam- and Communism-related symbols, even if unintentionally. The tension across this divide and the framing of “diversification” is also visible in Anti-Coup, yet in a fashion conflicting with that of Gezi and not only as a counter frame.

Social movements have shown a growing tendency to increase their potential appeal and legitimacy by claiming inclusivity and emphasising the presence of various identities among their participants and supporters since the 1990s (Gillan, 2008). Scholars argue that the proliferation of the Internet has shaped this process and enabled movements to be more accessible, which in turn affected activists’ preference for diversity over traditionally defined terms of unity (Polletta & Gardner, 2015). Although the literature mainly focuses on movements that can be identified as left-wing, such as the Global Justice and Occupy movements, and considers right-wing movements more homogenous, Haltinner (2018) argues that right-wing movements also embrace diversity. The following example can show the very difference between two cases’ framing of “diversification”.



Figure 10. Zakiroğlu, M. (2016). *Women carry man on a truck to democracy vigil* [Photograph]. Retrieved from https://www.aa.com.tr/uploads/TempUserFiles/haber%2F2016%2FOylama%2Ftemmuz%2Ffoto_555_1.jpg

One of the popular photographs from democracy vigils was shot by Münir Zakiroğlu of the state-run Anadolu [News] Agency on the evening of 16 July 2018—the day after the putsch.

Figure 10 shows a truck driven by a woman, with another on her side, carrying multiple men who seem to be enthusiastically waving flags and chanting slogans. The men gesture with signs with different political connotations. The man on top right signs for Rabia with four fingers, a hand gesture much promoted by Erdoğan in support of the military-overthrown government of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and the one next to him signs for Tawhid, the symbol of the oneness of God in Islamic tradition. The one who sits on the front right signs with both hands for a wolf head that is known as for the pro-Turkish Nationalist Movement Party (*MHP*). Although they became close allies at a later stage, the MHP was not in full agreement with the AKP government at the time this photograph was taken and had even partly supported the anti-government protesters at Gezi Park in 2013.

The image captures the woman driver in black chador and the woman next to her in the passenger seat, who bears no headscarf. Besides the unmatched clothing that stereotypically represents two sides of a societal tension, the woman's driving of the huge truck also breaches the traditional gender-biased visual regime, which is very established in Turkey (Akinerdem, 2017). The photograph was among the most disseminated images of the Anti-Coup and eventually became one of its icons. The prime minister of the time, Binali Yıldırım, attested that the photograph made him burst into tears. For him it was a perfect example of the unity of the nation, as it combined representative signs of various political affiliations, men and women, and the religious and secular.⁴ When it comes to political imagery, certainly neither Anti-Coup nor Gezi is the first political mobilisation to play on symbolism over women's bodies. Women were photographed being active in the demonstrations against the military in the night of the putsch, some of who lost their lives, and also while participating actively in the democracy vigils. Speaking of Gezi, numerous images of women are among the icons of the movement. Although the political agendas might differ, visual practices in both Gezi and Anti-Coup accentuated the presence of mobilised women and showed them as part of the activist diversity (Akinerdem, 2017).

The photograph also serves the “diversification” frame effectively by bringing multiple political signs together in one image. This emphasises the variety of contributors to the mobilisation and how these so-called hostile identities can unite under a shared entity. This

⁴ The photograph was first promoted as proof of heroic acts on the night of the coup attempt (15 July) and the diversity of demonstrators, while the woman driver, Şerife Boz, was held as a national heroine. She received veteran status from the state and further remuneration for her service. Only two years later, it was revealed that the photograph was actually taken on the evening of 16 July and Boz was sued for fraud. See BBC Türkçe. (2018, April 30). *Debate on Şerife Boz who is known with her photograph in a truck on 15 July: 'Fraud' or 'hero'?* [15 Temmuz'da kamyonlu fotoğrafıyla bilinen Şerife Boz tartışması: 'Dolandırıcı' mı, 'kahraman' mı?']. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-43949934>

image and many others that capture the moments of unusual convergences between two sides of the long-lasting social and political tensions were put forward as an evidence of a diverse but united society (Tecim, 2016).

In terms of frame alignment, this photograph, similarly to the earlier two examples from Gezi, works toward persuading the audience that Anti-Coup was composed of people with a wide range of background and profiles, from conservative and religious ones to modernist and secular. The *15 July spirit (15 Temmuz ruhu)* catchword, an analogue to *Gezi spirit (Gezi ruhu)*, was popularised to promote such aspects. Both catchwords maintain their popularity and are used to refer to the emotional dynamics of the time in a nostalgic manner, and while promoting commemoration activities that partly aim to praise and revive those feelings of people from every walk of life coming together in solidarity with a common spirit.

However, Anti-Coup's frame alignment primarily relies on structural variety while neglecting the emergent actors that contribute to the diversity. The political and social diversity seen in Figure 10 sits on long-standing ideological discrepancies and existing tension between the secular and non-secular in Turkish society. For example, although there were LGBTQI+ individuals among the participants of Anti-Coup (Tecim, 2016), images that highlight their support never gained popularity in conventional and social media and instead remained at the margins, while in Gezi they were one of the main constituents (Koç & Aksu, 2015). The 2013 Pride parade in Istanbul was one of the largest in Turkish history and aligned its symbolic repertoire with that of Gezi. As the radical change in the appearance of the AKM façade also shows in the examples of both “diversification” and “occupation of space” frames, Anti-Coup does not challenge the visual statement of grassroots initiatives participating in Gezi but instead dominates the façade with one large flag as a symbol of unity (Figure 7). Gezi, on the other hand, enables both structural and emergent constellations of social actors to participate in constructing the “diversification” frame as seen in the analysis of Figure 8 and Figure 9.

Both mobilisations also saw alliances in areas that fall outside party politics and the division between secularism and non-secularism. An unusual dynamic of convergence and harmony was observed both in Gezi and Anti-Coup among the leading football clubs, such as Fenerbahçe, Galatasaray, and Beşiktaş. Figure 11 is from the very first days of Gezi and displays the supporters of three Istanbul football clubs that are sworn enemies of each other, side by side on Istiklal Street of the Beyoğlu district. Fenerbahçe (in yellow and dark blue on the left), Galatasaray (in yellow and red in the middle), and Beşiktaş (in black and white on the right) supporters that would hardly come together while wearing club jerseys. A fourth person

on the very left, who is only half-visible, wears the jersey of Trabzonspor of the city of Trabzon, which is another rival of these three.

The man on the right side wears a scarf to hide his face—also a simple protection against pepper spray—while the other two prefer to keep them around their necks, which gives a sense of threat and anticipation of danger. The bodies of the three men in this photograph display a hyper-masculinity (Eder & Öz, 2017), especially when considered together with the enthusiastic chanting and singing of football fans in Gezi that became some of the beloved melodies of the protesters (Irak, 2015).



Figure 11. Hürriyet. (2013). *Football fans together at Gezi* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/istanbul-united-belgeseli-hazir-25956577>

As part of the popular culture, football appeals to people worldwide regardless of political background, age, sex, and class (Battini & Koşulu, 2018). Multiple photographs of football fans rubbing shoulders within Gezi symbolised that the movement was grass-roots and built on a wide social ground of people who do not necessarily agree. Even the people who were not engaged in football in general found occasions of interaction with the three clubs on through social media platforms and expressed their appreciation of witnessing such solidarity among the rival teams. Fenerbahçe, Galatasaray, and Beşiktaş also proudly came together under a branding of “Istanbul United” that was designed by merging their logos. Consequently, directed by Farid Eslam and Olli Waldhauer, a documentary with the same name was released with a storyline including interviews with fans of these clubs, who underline their love and dedication to their club, their dislike toward other clubs, and the impact of Gezi bringing all of them together.

Football fans' contribution to the political imagery of Gezi makes the "diversification" frame more resonant. By working through the principle of frame extension (Snow et al., 1986), the photograph stretches the concept of solidarity in football culture to political terms. It aims to recruit more participants to the movement by exemplifying a moment of solidarity while stressing diversity in the group. The photograph, and even the logo mentioned above, does not seek to erase the proper symbols and colours of the football teams, which would probably not be welcomed by the fans anyway. Instead, it highlights coexistence and the joining of forces against a mightier rival.

Football fans were active also in Anti-Coup demonstrations and in the aftermath of the coup attempt, displaying similar scenes of alliance. Various photographs captured people wearing jerseys of leading football clubs and acting together against the plotters, which I see as in a very similar to that of Gezi and do not feel it is necessary to repeat the analysis here. Instead, I will conclude the analysis of the "diversification" frame with a different example that represents one of the marginalised groups in Turkish society.

The photograph in Figure 12 was shot in 2016 during the democracy vigils, but it continued to be disseminated through 2018. In the foreground, it shows two people with disabilities attempting to cross the road; one is in a wheelchair and the other has one leg and is using crutches. Both of them wear Turkish flags on their backs. A couple is passing them on the right side and a flag is in the woman's hand, and there are other people in the background of the photograph also carrying Turkish flags. All those seen in the image are possibly going to or coming back from an evening vigil. The shops seem to be still open and the street is busy. Unfortunately, I was not able to identify the location of the photograph. The veiled women seen in the background of image might give the impression of a conservative neighbourhood, but this can easily be misleading as well.

The frame of "diversification" in both Gezi and Anti-Coup not only implied the rubbing of unusual shoulders but also the participation of unusual actors to the collective process. One such case is the political mobilisation of people with disabilities, who constitute an invisible minority in Turkey. Although they represent approximately 10% of the entire population, their needs are poorly addressed in urban design (Demirkan, 2013). As a result, few of them find the chance to go into the street and participate in public life. They often stay indoors and rely on assistance or facilitated transport for attending outdoor activities, as the urban infrastructure pose challenges to their mobility.

Representations of normative embodiment generally prevail in imageries of social conflict. Being a nonnormative one, a body with disability often stays at the margins of the prevailing visual regime (Siebers, 2005), though it has been given great attention in aesthetics (D. T. Mitchell & Snyder, 2000). Stanback (2017) argues that the mechanisms that define disability also define the visibility regimes of difference. Apart from the cases of depicting injustice as part of the diagnostic and motivational tasks of collective frames and frame resonance in mobilisation (Snow & Benford, 1988), unconventional bodies rarely become salient in social movements' visual landscapes. The very exceptions to this are the identity-based movements that have particular demands around the nonnormative body, such as those for LGBTQI+ and war veterans, in addition to disability activism itself. The body with disability has been traditionally seen a disqualified one (Siebers, 2010). Modern approaches to disability are still highly discriminative, even though they are not explicitly exclusive in their 'curing' and 'fixing' attitudes.



Figure 12. AkifPektas (2018, July 14). *Two people with disability with Turkish flags* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/AkifPektas/status/1018230980044304385>

Mitchell and Snyder (2000) suggest that images of people with disabilities do representational work for inclusivity in contemporary societies that is very different from the monstrous depictions of past centuries. Heavily influenced by the neoliberal market norms, the contemporary representations come together with a sense of missing but completable corporal

asset. The negative framing of ableism is reversed by the assistance devices, such as the crutches and the wheelchair in the photograph. However, what elevates the photograph from ordinary to one of the most popular Anti-Coup images is the fact that both people with disabilities wear Turkish flags on their bodies. Although they are *able* to join the public life on their own, albeit partially and with the help of the assistance devices, such a nationalist symbol adds an emotional power that goes beyond any material that can practically increase mobility. As the society is not used to seeing people with disabilities participating in public activities in general, this photograph becomes partly a representation of their bravery and readiness and also a proof that all sectors of the society are mobilised.

In *Frames of Protest*, Johnston and Noakes (2005) compile a series of works that describe how movements make use of various themes around the diversity theme. Movements often include diversity in their framing in order to better resonate with a greater part of the society, as we have seen in the above examples. In my analysis of Gezi and Anti-Coup images, framing of “diversification” appears as a visual activist practice directed toward frame alignment and, therefore, increasing the resonance of the mobilisation. Images that are not immediately associated with a certain political ideology and institution function similarly. Photographs of football fans showing solidarity with each other and people with disabilities joining the demonstrations reveal that traditionally non-political actors can popularise a movement by working through frame extension. However, though frames may function in a similar fashion in both cases, their construction differ in certain ways. In Gezi, the “diversification” is attached to the notion of co-existence and provided a ground from which to voice various political and social concerns concurrently. Both structural and emergent social actors are acknowledged and enabled to contribute to the construction of the frame. In Anti-Coup, on the other hand, it meant the variety of social and political groups that are essentially divided and excluded are unified under a common denominator. This aspect is most evident in its prioritising of visual symbols that represent the parties of existing conflicts and divisions in the society.

Decency and sympathy

Both Gezi and Anti-Coup feature a wide repertoire of images that show non-competitive moments among scenes of opposition and conflict. Some of them can apply well to the “diversification” frame above. A major portion of these photographs that capture nonconflictual moments emphasise the pleasing scenes on these mobilisations. They highlight the *good* in the

participant diversity that has the capacity to appeal to established nodes of social and individual virtues around topics of love, family, friendship, care, playfulness, responsibility, and the like. This third category that emerged from the grounded visual analysis constitutes the frame of “decency and sympathy”. The photographs that construct this frame highlight the empathetic, affectionate, and humanistic part of politicization processes within Gezi and Anti-Coup. In these images, people show their pleasant sides and can bring something from their private lives into the streets. The frame “serves to neutralise the fractious political conditions” (McIntyre, 2016, p. 102), and, by doing this, it increases its potential to resonate better with the society, establish legitimacy, and recruit more participants.



Figure 13. *A dog with a dust mask* [Photograph]. (2013). Retrieved from <https://www.ajanimocom/gezideki-insanlarla-birlikte-direnen-guzel-hayvanlar-sizi-de-unutmadik>

Figure 13 shows a dog during Gezi protests. It wears a dust mask, like as many of the protesters did before it proved to be ineffective against pepper spray. It also carries a small plate on its chest reading “Everywhere Taksim, everywhere resistance”, a popular slogan of the Gezi Movement referring to the starting point of the protests, Gezi Park at Istanbul’s Taksim Square. The location of the photograph is unknown, but it seems to be a public urban area, as the pavement stones suggest.

This particular dog is one of the most playful breeds in the world, a Golden Retriever. It is known to be very friendly to humans and it is quite loveable with its fluffy fur, innocent-looking eyes, and dropped ears, as also seen in the photograph. It represents the friendly atmosphere of the protests and accentuates “cuteness” (Morreall, 1991), meaning an “aww-moment” within the harsh conditions of ongoing clashes in the streets. Associated mostly with contemporary Japanese popular culture in digital media, the salience of “cuddly” animals in the visual landscape of social movements is related to the increasing participation of millennials in street protests (McIntyre, 2016) and the popularisation of memetic protest (Gerbaudo, 2015). The image of the personified fluffy dog becomes a weapon of seduction (May, 2019). The frame of “decency and sympathy” aims to make the protest more attractive and amiable, implying that the protests are safe and that only those with good intentions attend. Moreover, these friendly animals are staged as part of a response to the mainstream media’s depiction of protesters as violent, inhumane people, at least in the case of Gezi.

Animals are often anthropomorphised in protest settings. A first example would be the protests that can be discussed under the topic of animal activism. Animals are depicted as beings who cannot defend themselves but who need to be defended. Through the history of animal activism and the representations of animals, it is also remarkable to see how the status (and the image) of animals has changed from that of creatures of nature that need protection out of moral concerns to that of fellow nonhuman beings on earth that have equivalent rights (Traïni, 2016). Traini discusses how the reduction in alterity of the animals resulted in an anthropomorphic tendency, and social movements started accentuating the tenderness of the animal icon as a powerful mobilization detail.

Animals can be seen in protests that have little connection to animal activism, too. Stray dogs and cats randomly join protests and become members of the human crowd. Their bodies are decorated with items that would visually contextualise their presence in images by further anthropomorphising and/or cutifying them. They are “equipped” with items, as in the example of the dog in Figure 13 wearing a gas mask and carrying a written slogan, just like an ordinary social movement participant.

The “cuteness” of the dog in Figure 13 derives not only from its particular look as a friendly animal but also from the fact that it imitates a protester. An animal that can be considered as a neutral being in a political moment acts as a visual mediator in between the public and the movement. It transcends the individual identities of the movement participants and the collective identity of the movement. Animals can become an icon of the movement, such as the mascot dogs of the 2008 and 2011 Athens riots, Kanellos and Loukanikos, and leave

a lasting impression by creating an affective bond. They collect sympathy of movement participants, often because of their actions and facial expressions, which fall outside the ongoing social conflict environment. In a similar logic, activists wear animal costumes during street protests regardless of the social movement's aim. The embodiment of an animal, whether real or as a costume, is a visual statement and a creative tactic for a "carnavalesque moment" (Bakhtin, 1984) through which affective registers are evoked in terms of in-group and out-group dynamics across political divides. Although an animal can transcend identities in a social movement context, it can still receive a sympathetic response from a certain group and the disapproval of another. Juris (2008) maintains that creative and carnivalesque tactics, although being very effective in generating "a great deal of affective solidarity, can be difficult to interpret for outside observers... and are often trivialized by the media" (p. 77), which brings us to another interesting difference in between Gezi and Anti-Coup.

The analysis of photographs from both events shows that a variety of animals appear in both Gezi and Anti-Coup photographs, but dogs barely had a presence in the latter, which increasingly gained an ethno-religious outlook. In Turkey, where Islam is the dominant religion, dogs are not always considered clean, and an anthropomorphising process may not be welcomed. Other animals that are popularly owned as pets, such as birds and cats, dominate the animal representations in Anti-Coup. Varying types of animal anthropomorphism play a part in the mobilisation strategy, with a variation in activists' consideration of established norms and popular culture. Both play a significant role in framing processes as they affect the selection of the animal species, breed, age, size, and colour, among other features that would increase the mobilisation potential of the image. I will continue by presenting another transcendent visual actor emerged from my analysis that functions similarly in social movement context as animals do through imitation.

Figure 14 was shot in the city of Düzce as the democracy vigils continued after the 2016 military coup attempt. It shows a child walking on the motorway in the dark, pulling a toy truck with a Turkish flag on it. Wearing a red T-shirt and blue three-quarter pants, the boy seems to walk determinately on the asphalt, next to the cars, without fear. As the evenings were the most crowded times of the democracy vigils, the photograph is immediately associated with the boy's participation in the events. As it quickly became viral in social media and made four-year-old Utku Enes Mandıralı famous across the country, the photograph touched perhaps the softest spot of the society—the child.

The boy and the truck appear much smaller than the cars in the background, reminding of being a child in adults' world. He is there to attend the world of the adults, however, not to

be considered a child. The boy is fragile, so is his toy. Children are universally considered to be innocent, naïve, and powerless (May, 2019). They constitute a contrast to adults. Children, although seen as part of the family, are what adults are not in the popular culture. Lefort (1986) argues that children, even at very early ages, are subjected to testing. Adults test children regarding their capacities to think, know, and act like an adult. By attending a democracy vigil with his toy, the boy in Figure 14 shows that he can pass the test and become a grown-up Anti-Coup demonstrator. The four-year-old is praised as having acted “correctly” in a way that an adult would. His photograph received so much sympathy on social media platforms that he was invited to a local ceremony to be given a larger toy truck as a gift. The mayor of Düzce also did not miss this opportunity for public attention and made him the present of a bicycle, congratulating his family for raising a boy with such pro-democratic values (Cebeci, 2016).



Figure 14. *Boy with the toy truck* [Photograph]. (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.gercekhayat.com.tr/aktuel/cocuk-gozuyle-15-temmuz>

Furthermore, children are educated to follow the adults’ words. They are asked to be well-behaved and obedient, which is a sort of disciplining that continues also in adulthood to various extents depending on the cultural, social, and political environment. Four-year-olds need adult supervision and protection. They are not to be left unattended. The image of a child going alone on the asphalt evokes the representation of an orphan that is deeply rooted in

popular culture. The orphan suffering under plenty of difficulties until adulthood is a very established figure in Turkish cinema (Savaş, 2013). This figure is also the prototype of an exemplary adult who can withstand the wrath of fate and has the capacity to survive, contrary to the universal understanding of a powerless child.

A single child engaged in an action of political importance is a compelling image, especially in a country like Turkey where children are rarely given agency to decide for themselves. Children collect sympathy when they transgress the borders that are delineated for them by adults and act like grown-ups, as long as the action is considered not harmful to the child and to any invented tradition. Numerous photographs confirm the participation of children in the democracy vigils. They hold and wear Turkish flags while cheering next to their parents or sleep in their parents' arms as the demonstrations continue, highlighting the fragility of children. However, the flag placed on the truck elevates the boy's status from a vulnerable four-year-old to an Anti-Coup hero, similarly to the enabling function of the Turkish flag discussed earlier, yet with certain limits. A child cannot be considered as having agency in political terms. Their limited agency in an adult world puts children in a similar situation with animals in terms of visual representation in social conflict. Child images can be preferable, as adults can more easily identify with them and compare the representations with their own childhood. Indeed, many Anti-Coup supporters changed their social media avatars to the image of the four-year-old above. Social media avatars and profile pictures work as a memetic signifiers and as tools for constructing collective/connective identity in a social movement (Gerbaudo, 2015).

Indeed, Figure 14 and its remediations, which will be presented in the second part of this chapter, have quickly grown into one of the visual personifications of the demonstrators. A child's image in a social conflict environment is an inclusive symbol that addresses a wider part of the society. In this particular photograph, the boy summons adults to take to the streets even after the primary threat is over. Often considered as part of the family constellation, the child urges people to get together, implying unity and collectivity, which takes my analysis to the next point—family. It is yet another motif salient in the “decency and sympathy” frame that implies we-ness.

The photograph seen in Figure 15 was posted on Twitter by the official account of the Turkish Presidential Office. It was taken at Beştepe Square in Ankara on the evening of 21 July 2016, in the vicinity of the presidential palace. A couple in wedding attire smile at the camera as they hold a Turkish flag in front of themselves. The happy couple seem to have run to the democracy vigil right after their wedding ceremony, as the crowd in front of the Beştepe People's Mosque in the background and the trash on the floor suggest that a gathering took

place shortly beforehand. The banners hanging on the fences of the mosque yard shame FETÖ and praise Erdoğan. The bride wears a red cloak over her dress, probably another Turkish flag.



Figure 15. tcbestepe (2016, July 21). *A couple at democracy vigil* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tcbestepe/status/756272877368909824>

The couple share their happiness with the public and show their endorsement of the Anti-Coup Resistance by participating in the democracy vigil. Unlike the long preparation process for shooting in today's wedding photograph industry (Lenman & Nicholson, 2006), this photograph was taken rather spontaneously, or at least this is the impression the image gives. Attending the event, particularly one in front of the presidential complex, instead of heading home after the wedding ceremony shows the couple's commitment to the Anti-Coup Resistance. Through the democracy vigils, many couples appeared in the squares in their wedding costumes. Having such a crowded audience ready, some of them preferred to get married right there as the vigil continued.

The wedding is one of the most central rituals in many cultures. Marriage is the only official way in Turkey to become a family in name and, either secular or religious, is the only socially accepted mode in which to have a child. Thus, it is seen as a new stage of life and the beginning of a new family. Couples often take multiple photographs during this event, which contributes to a greater photography industry worldwide (Lenman & Nicholson, 2006) . With

such a rising industry, a primary concern of the marrying couples has become having realistic photographs while performing “visual ideals” (Bezner, 2002). In this vein, the couple posing for the camera at Beştepe Square looks straightforwardly candid, as there is no visual perfection in the photograph in terms of background, lighting, and distance. Yet, the result should be satisfying for a family album, as they included a symbolic action in such a special day of their own and joined a popular mobilisation in wedding costumes.

The photograph created thousands of social media reactions. Among those who extended their appreciation and blessing, one stands out for linking the establishment of a family with the integrity of the nation. By referring to the possibility of the couple having a child, and a good one at that for the sake of the nation, sympathy is developed for the couple and their marriage.

57sunal. (2016, July 22). “Would ever God doom this nation with a traitor [child] through such couple [?] May God protect you...” [Twitter post]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/57sunal/status/756356092481929220>

Interestingly, this affection and sympathy toward newly married people seems to be in total contrast with the emotions evoked by the photograph another couple who also posed smiling in wedding dress and suit right after their ceremony, as I have referred to in the beginning of this dissertation. This time, however, the figures stood in front of a tank on the morning of 16 July 2016, after a long night of clashes between demonstrators and soldiers. Most probably, their wedding ceremony had coincided with the first news from the putsch. Their photograph became a trending topic on Twitter and received much criticism, including insults accusing them of not caring about the martyrs among the demonstrators. Similar controversies were also not uncommon over the images of traditional dances during the democracy vigils and other entertaining events, such as concerts. This shows that time plays a role in frame resonance. Images of similar content and composition may evoke different public affects within the same social movement when other factors are at work, such as the trauma, shock, and mourning.

Gezi has featured a number of photographs of couples kissing and hugging in the protest atmosphere, as well as getting engaged and married in public parks while wearing gas masks. Images of couples showing each other affection publicly can be found within the photographic tradition of protests globally. People getting married during street protests and demonstrations is a global phenomenon seen in the movements such as Global Justice and Black Lives Matter. These kinds of photographs break the bitterness of violence, introduce a hearth-warming moment, and bring forward the human side of the event.

Marriage is tightly connected to the concept of family and happiness (Ahmed, 2010) and is not a highly politicised topic in quotidian conversations, although the institution of course has a political and social background in a larger sense. Therefore, as the difference in public response to the dissemination of two separate marriage photographs in different periods of the mobilisation shows, bringing the moment of marriage together with a protest environment works politically in two ways. First, a political moment is made part of a private life event, which can be considered as a personal implication. Second, a private life event is made part of a political moment, which can be considered as a social implication and which exemplifies the image's contribution to the construction and alignment of the “decency and sympathy” frame. Making a marriage a part of an ongoing protest aims at extending and/or transforming the frame by generating a festive moment and evoking thoughts and affects related to family, such as cosiness, togetherness, the building of a safe future, and the like.



Figure 16. *Activists collecting garbage at Gezi Park* [Photograph]. (2013). Retrieved from <http://www.egitimajansi.com/haber/gezi-parkinda-bulunan-eylemciler-temizlik-yapti-copleri-topladi-haberi-20332h.html>

The photograph in Figure 16 was taken during a collective cleaning action at Gezi Park on 3 June 2013, the sixth day of the protests. It shows a chain of young people handing over trash bags to one another. After a weekend of clashes that spread the protests through the entire country, Gezi Park was left with various sorts of garbage. Hundreds of people arrived with trash bags that morning and started cleaning the park together. The photograph shows activists setting up a cleaning chain to pass the trash bags from hand to hand. The action was mostly tagged as #imece, the Turkish word referring to communal work. The image of this choreography of

passing something from hand to hand is associated with the concept, as it is a common figure in the textbooks accompanying the particular section on *imece*. People who grow up in urban areas in Turkey mostly encounter the concept for the first time in textbook chapters that describe village life in remote areas, unless they still live in a neighbourhood where such pre-modern practices are kept. Those accounts are very often accompanied by an image featuring villagers—usually women—preparing food together or passing of buckets of water being passed through a line, usually made of men.

The photograph from Gezi Park shows a mixed chain of men and women, signalling an equal participation of genders in the activity. Gezi activists advocated for gender equality and tried to establish it as a value of the movement (Irak, 2015). In this vein, the photograph proposes to adhere to such a value, and, by triggering the notion of solidarity with a traditionally significant motif, it increases the resonance potential of Gezi's frame.

On the other hand, the amount of waste and litter from such protest events is often used by opponents to discredit the movement. Protesters stay in the same area for longer periods of time in Occupy-like movements and are accused of being filthy. Cleaning the environment and promoting this collective action in photographs through social media platforms is an activist tactic (Liboiron, 2012) that claims ownership of the space (Gambetti, 2014). Similar efforts to mark public spaces as “home” in Gezi included yoga sessions, makeshift libraries, and collective dance workshops. These events were extensively photographed and disseminated on digital media to frame the movement as a decent and sympathetic one. Gezi Park and popular parks in other towns were transformed into spaces where people could feel comfortable.

The Anti-Coup versions of these events materialised in the performance of traditional folk dances, shadow theatre sessions, thematic talks, hymning and praying, and the distribution of food through mobile kitchens and in collective dinner events. Organised either by the local authorities or by the citizens themselves, these events took place in the squares where democracy vigils gathered, making the street part of the quotidian and, for many, a lively alternative to other activities. Even though Gezi's *imece* action, seen in Figure 16, is based on a village custom, the activists make use of it more for the practical purpose of cleaning the space than for accentuating its folkloric value. However, in Anti-Coup such cultural elements are particularly highlighted in photographs to emphasise continuity with traditional practices, suggesting them as a domain of unity where the old and the young, the poor and the rich meet and enjoy the moment together. I will not provide a detailed analysis of these photographs in this chapter due to the limits of this dissertation. Instead, I will analyse one more photograph from Gezi that can refer to two different motifs contributing to the construction of the “decency

and sympathy” frame in both Gezi and Anti-Coup environments: Celebrity support in politicization processes and humour.

Dated to 4 June 2013, the photograph seen in Figure 17 shows a woman posing next to a stencil of Erdoğan, most probably on Istiklal Street of the Beyoğlu district, as the same stencil also appeared on a few other photographs in my analysis. The woman is Nehir Erdoğan, a famous actress who coincidentally shares the same surname as President Erdoğan. She is casually and colourfully dressed and carries a backpack, which was enough to be singled out a protester by the police during the protests. Smiling at the camera, she does a reverse version of the victory sign (V) with both hands, palms facing her face. Although this version is known to have an ulterior meaning of insult, it might also be interpreted as an attempt to avoid any affiliation to pro-Kurdish guerrilla forces, known as Kurdish Workers Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê* in Kurdish or *PKK* in short). The regular version of the gesture is symbolically attached to PKK as many of its sympathisers have used it previously (Söylemez, 2017).



Figure 17. Listelist. (2013). *Actress Nehir Erdoğan at Gezi protests* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://listelist.com/occupygezi-direnisi-en-capulcu-sanatcilar>

Celebrities often participate in protest events that matter to them. With their sense of legitimacy for the public, they can draw media and public attention to a topic and increase the movement's voice (Lahusen, 1996; Meyer & Gamson, 1995). In addition to this, celebrities establish intimate relations with their fans (Duvall & Heckemeyer, 2018). With the help of social media platforms, this relationship today is based on direct contact with the public. Nehir Erdoğan's photograph functions as an invitation to her social media followers to a fun event. Gezi enjoyed the support of many celebrities. Some extended their support by joining the playful language of Gezi in their social media posts. Others joined the street protests or came to Gezi Park and other parks across the country to meet the protesters and spend time with them. In public opinion, celebrities have an (at least) above-the-average standard of living and would not casually risk the financial comfort they enjoy. Coming to Gezi Park, therefore, works as a public advertisement of the safe side of the protests and contributes to the "decency and sympathy" frame.

Some words written on a shop's shutter are partly visible on the right side of the photograph in Figure 17. The word in the middle should be the first three letters of "fascism" (*Faşizm*), and below that there is the well-known "A" of "anarchy". The stencil next to Nehir Erdoğan is a full-body figure of President Erdoğan wearing a suit. Appropriated from a famous past photograph, his smiling face is drawn in a witty fashion. His right arm is extended on the side as if he places it on someone's shoulder. With the script over his head, "Direniş Hatırası" (*Resistance Souvenir*), the stencil is prepared for people who would like to have a mocking souvenir photograph with the president's figure. Nehir Erdoğan shared this photograph on her social media account but later deleted it. Today, she has become a target of pro-government media for supporting Gezi and because of this photograph. She shares this situation with various other celebrities who declared their support to the movement either through their social media accounts or during an event. Some of those who later endorsed the Anti-Coup Resistance succeeded in eliminating these accusations. Many more celebrities supported Anti-Coup in different terms, including being present in street events, appearing in the events hosted by the president and taking photographs with him, and joining social media campaigns.

Humour, on the other hand, worked differently across Gezi and Anti-Coup. It was a crosscutting feature in Gezi that comes out in all clusters of the symbolic dimension, including visuals and language. The humour of Gezi was born hybrid, with complementary parts in online and offline struggle, and has been studied by multiple scholars (Gurel, 2015; Morva, 2016; Özel, 2014). Contributing to the development of such a playful environment, numerous stencils, illustrations, and Internet memes of President Erdoğan were ubiquitous throughout the protests

and in their aftermath. This witty environment increased the appeal of the movement and acted as a magnet for bringing support to Gezi. Unlike the vast majority of social movements in Turkey's history, where articulations of political demands were limited to serious slogans and claims, Gezi's *carnavalesque* atmosphere (Bakhtin, 1984) promised something different, yet cosy, for many young people. Although violent clashes with the police took place throughout the street protests and activists used the images of these moments to frame injustice (Olesen, 2013), Gezi did not, at least not exclusively, mean a violence for its participants, but instead a utopic place for entertainment and friendship where they could enjoy the company of like-minded people. Humour and satire, an essential component of carnivalesque protests of today, was part of the movement from the very beginning and helped recruit participants to Gezi, and among them young people in particular (KONDA, 2013a; Özel, 2014).

In Anti-Coup, however, the humour and satire were mostly developed and promoted in digital media through government-hired trolls and independent pro-government accounts, such as Misvak, a leading Islamist satirical magazine in Turkey. Although this type of humour differs greatly from that of Gezi, particularly with its occasional commitments to hate speech (Karatas & Saka, 2017), it uses subversive language and visuals and has so far been successful in entertaining the Anti-Coup public and contributing to the construction of its “decency and sympathy” frame. This particular difference points to another visual motif that emerged from the grounded visual analysis and will be discussed in the following section.

The photographs in this section showed the variety of elements that construct the “decency and sympathy” frame. These photographs capture moments of individual and collective action that can help promote aspects of the movements that fall outside the harshness of political struggle and the deteriorating effects of the physical environment. They highlight the humane part of the movement and present the good intentions of the participants. Working complementarily with the “diversification” frame, “decency and sympathy” focuses on increasing the appeal of the movement by displaying it as a safe and fun space where people can have good time.

Staging of achievement

The fourth category that emerged from my analysis is designated “staging of achievement”. This frame is constructed by photographs that depict—often spectacularly—a moment of pleasure following the accomplishment of an action that has physical and collective

consequences. The photographs celebrate an achievement, usually the successful completion of a difficult task. This can be either a decisive victory against a physical force or an imaginary one in the form of mockery and staging. In this category, photographs call for a moment of elation, a sense of pride, and pleasure by displaying the domination of one body over another.

The politics of body has been one of the topics that concerned both Gezi and Anti-Coup, as it was discussed under the “occupation of space” frame above. The frame of “staging achievement” does not merely display the domination of a domain (a body); it demonstrates a collective satisfaction and pride arising out of this achievement in the form of bodily performance. Here, the dominating subject is often displayed as a human body representing collectivity, while the representation of the dominated can be a human or nonhuman. The following examples will help illustrate this better.



Figure 18. Reuters. (2016). *Civilians carry the Turkish flag onto a tank* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/turkey-coup-conspiracy-theory-erdogan-military-gift-from-god-soldiers-istanbul-a7140516.html>

The photograph seen in Figure 18 was taken by a Reuters photographer on the morning of 16 July 2016. A massive tank and its main gun catch the eye. A few men smile at the cameras from various angles, celebrating the victory over the putsch. Two of them have climbed on the tank to unfurl a Turkish flag to the photographer. Another three on the right, next to the main gun, pose for another camera while affectionately hugging and touching the gun. They stand on

the steel cords that separate the road lanes on the 15 July Martyrs Bridge, which connects Asian and European sides of Istanbul. The bright sky, the urban constructions seen afar to the left, and the tower in the background that carries bridge's hangers also confirms the location. A police officer is on the tank as well, monitoring the crowd that fills the road while holding his gun up and reminding us of the violent clashes of just a few hours prior.

The streets where demonstrators resisted the soldiers through the night and captured their vehicles also became temporary spots for celebrations the morning after. Tanks and army jeeps were among the popular items for photography. The occasion of being in the vicinity of the tank, or mostly on top of it, was enough to warrant quick appearances on social media and major news outlets. When the clashes were completely over, numerous people took this opportunity. Having been used earlier by the army to threaten and even fire at people, the tank became an object for elevating the status of their capturers. The very features of victory, pride, and enjoyment are salient in the men's posture and facial expressions in the photograph. Grouped in clusters of two and three, and looking in two distinct directions, none of them poses alone. It is a victory that is earned as a group, or, more to say, as a nation, when taking the presence of the flag into account. They seem to enjoy such a victory and obviously seize their chance to eternalise it visually. One might compare this to hunters' photographs with prey, especially those posing next to a "big catch". Based on their research on hunters' poses, Child and Darimont (2015) discuss how the hunters' pleasure increases with the size of the prey, as bigger size is perceived as a bigger achievement. Moreover, the rarity of the animal and other conditions that makes it difficult to catch are grounds of increased satisfaction.

Following such analogy, the tank is one of the biggest vehicles of a military's land forces. Considering the fact that the demonstrators had no matching firepower against a tank, capturing a tank is no simple achievement. It should also be remembered that military service is an obligation in Turkey for eligible men, with there being no civil service alternative. Unless they postpone the military service to a later date due to a particular reason, men are usually recruited after school at the age of 20. Therefore, these men have probably been to the army, gone through military training, and become familiar with weapons, though a proper training in use of arms is not the army standard. Fulfilling such obligatory service does not guarantee seeing or being in the vicinity of a tank either. This could also help explain the eagerness in their interaction with guns and armoured vehicles. Multiple tanks were captured by demonstrators that night. Having no former experience of driving tanks, some of the people learned by themselves in minutes to operate them and took them to a safe location, while a cheering crowd was hailing and waving on top of them. A number of the photographs

documenting those occasions depict similar body constellations. People stay in groups, waving flags or holding their hands up to show strength and celebrate victory. Some of them also take selfies of the moment. The successful control of tanks was followed by attempts to throw stones at military jet planes and helicopters, along with mocking conversations on social media platforms, around the idea that the demonstrators could easily fly these military machines as well. This recalls immediately the moment in Gezi when protesters captured a crane and then joked publicly about capturing one of the police water cannons afterwards.



Figure 19. CNN. (2013). *Protesters capture a crane* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2013/06/15/world/europe/turkey-protests/index.html>

The photograph in Figure 19 was found on the CNN website and shows Gezi protesters on a vehicle back in 2013. It is from the night of 3 June 2013, when the ultras of the Beşiktaş football club, Çarşı, captured a crawler crane. A group of people is seen on the crane holding their hands up and showing a Turkish flag as they greet the crowd around the vehicle. Some of the people in the crowd also wave back to the capturers. The body postures of the people both on and around the crane show that they are excited, happy, and proud. Only a few smiling faces could be identified, as the photograph is blurry. It is a moment of intense interaction between protesters, when emotional energies peak (Collins, 1993). The photograph documents a celebration, a temporary enjoyment of proving the strength of opposition against the police. As the protests advanced, Çarşı announced through their Twitter account that the driver did not know how to operate the crane, but that he intuitively figured it out within minutes. Other

images of the crane showed the protesters chasing a water cannon, which became a standing joke among the activists and Gezi supporters.

As the crane takes its place among the icons of Gezi, two *visual markers* (Vergani & Zuev, 2013) become prominent here in this photograph: the Guy Fawkes mask and the Turkish flag. A historic figure from 1605 England, Fawkes was known to be a Catholic dissident. Having gone through a series of appropriations both online and offline, the mask's initial association with the notion of failure was transformed into one of a victorious and potent protester (Call, 2008). Guy Fawkes mask appears frequently in Gezi images and aligns the movement with others that emerged as part of the Occupy wave around the world.

The Turkish flag, on the other hand, is a symbol that can be seen everywhere in Turkey. The emotional associations with the flag extend the domain of patriotic love and nationalism. As seen earlier in this chapter, the flag can appear in images to symbolise various notions and modes, including as a safe symbol declaring loyalty to the country, as a secular symbol expressing commitment to republican values and distance from religious ones, and as an ethno-religious power symbol displaying the unity of people with diverse backgrounds, among others. The ambivalent use of the flag continues in this particular frame as well. Here, the flag takes the role of symbolising an accomplishment on behalf of the country, similar to the moments when the national team of a country scores a goal or poses upon reaching the peak of a mountain. The “staging of achievement” frame establishes the perspective of a show of strength in a situation of overcoming a real (or imaginary) defeated opponent or challenge. Sustaining an aggressive stance, this frame relies on a body's visual display of absolute superiority over another body.

Embodied acts of domination and oppression can account for the construction of collective identities in both sides of a conflict (McLaren, 2002). However, a Foucauldian understanding of the body as a site of resistance is almost non-existent in this frame. Instead, it focuses on highlighting exclusively the dominating part and gives no room for expression to the dominated body. A good example of this is seen in Figure 20.

The photograph was first shared on 16 July 2016, by the Twitter account of the journalist Fatih Tezcan with the comment, “We said ‘national will’, they took it for slogan. With God's consent, nobody can impose anything to this nation. Otherwise, these are the consequences.”⁵ It shows many naked and half-naked bodies, all handcuffed men, laying on the ground of a

⁵ See the original comment accompanying the photograph here: fatihtezean. (2016, July 16). Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/fatihtezean/status/754415619840307200>

sports hall. Another man in a blue short-sleeved shirt and jeans stands close to the camera, but his face is not visible. The bright light coming through the windows on the left side to distort the shot and the inclined narrow angle of the photograph suggest that it was most probably taken by a mobile phone without much preparation. The people lying on the floor are soldiers who allegedly took part in the military coup attempt. Their military ranks are unknown as they are stripped of their clothes. It is not uncommon to take off the clothes of the arrested for safety reasons but keeping them undressed and handcuffed for several hours extends the limits of the regular security practice. So does allowing them to be photographed in such a situation.



Figure 20. fatihtezcan. (2016). *Soldiers detained in a sports hall* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/fatihtezcan/status/754415619840307200>

The photograph displays the achievement of capturers and consolidates their superiority. Similar images of arrested soldiers being maltreated arrived from different corners of Turkey, and from the 15 Martyrs' Bridge in particular, to be disseminated widely on digital media, including on social media platforms, news portals, and the websites of the conventional

press. Titles and comments accompanying the images had the remark: “So is the fate of the coup plotters”.⁶

As Hall (1997) argues, we think and associate images (and words) based on conceptual maps and make intertextual connections. In terms of meaning-making, we associate an image with our former experiences of seeing or imagining an image. With this photograph, one cannot help but remember the disturbing photographs from the Abu Ghraib prison, which was one of the main detention centres for war prisoners during the US military invasion of Iraq. A scandal broke out in 2004 when several photographs emerged that proved the prison personnel had been committing horrifying acts, including prisoner abuse, torture, and killing. Almost all of the photographs showed the prisoners naked while being abused (Pauly, 2005).

For Turkey’s memory, especially for the younger generation, Abu Ghraib might be a distant point of reference. A more relevant one would be the case of PKK, the pro-Kurdish guerrilla organisation. PKK members who surrendered to the military over the last few decades have been displayed stripped of their clothes, establishing a visual figure of the “captured terrorist”. The undressed bodies of the PKK were exposed to the public on television and in newspapers, making forced nakedness an element of the national threat and security issues. Thus, the photograph above displays the arrested soldiers half-naked and assures the public that the order is restored. In the case of military personnel, there is the impact of uniform as well, which is the respected and admired property of the soldier (Altınay, 2004). Being stripped of the uniform is a deprivation of honour, equivalent of submission to the victorious.

Either knowingly or not, the soldiers who participated in the plot were identified as terrorists in the overall media narrative, and what’s more, were depicted as such visually and so were associated with the established figure of “captured terrorist”. A number of new conscripts had been forced to follow the strict orders of high-ranking officers who led the coup d’état attempt. Their current situation before the law is still a controversial issue. As these soldiers are no longer recognised as the protector of the country, photographs similar to the example above frame them as defeated enemies in a decisive victory of the Anti-Coup participants.

The photograph in Figure 21 was taken during a democracy vigil in the city of Çorum on 18 July 2016. It shows a group of people around a wooden gallows which hangs a model of

⁶ See editorial examples from the Turkish press here: Sabah Daily. (2016, July 16). Retrieved from <https://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2016/07/16/darbeci-hainlerin-sonu>, Takvim Daily (2016, July 17). Retrieved from <https://www.takvim.com.tr/guncel/2016/07/17/darbecilerin-sonu-boyle-oldu>, and Sanal Basın (2016, July 17). Retrieved from <http://www.sanalbasin.com/mobil/darbeci-askerlerin-hazin-sonu-14715700>

Fethullah Gülen, the US-based cleric and the alleged mastermind behind the coup d'état attempt. They look proud with their work as they happily pose for the shot. Most of them are eager to fit in the photograph and try to look at the camera even through the tiny spaces seen in the wooden construction. Carrying Turkish flags and grabbing the gallows, they make a clear statement of their wish for the death penalty for Gülen.

The model features the script in the front: “Traacherous terrorists wearing the uniform of our honourable army.” While expressing much hostility toward Gülen, the arrangement of the model also reveals the meticulous effort to merge various sorts of unwelcomed elements together. The model’s attire is similar to that of the pro-Kurdish guerrilla, PKK. Building on the common narrative that all enemies collaborate against the nation, the scene sets Gülen’s personality and his global network as identical to that of the PKK. A number of similar images appeared on social media and news sites during the democracy vigils, in which a model of Gülen was hanged, smashed, or burned. Such explicit demonstration of anger and hate comes with a commitment and collective desire to prevail over these enemies.



Figure 21. Yeni Şafak. (2016). *Mock execution at a democracy vigil* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://www.yenisafak.com/corumda-fetoye-temsili-idam-h-2496093>

Reintroduction of the death penalty, which was lifted entirely from the constitution only in 2004, is suggested here to be the ultimate remedy to soothe the public conscience. Although its reintroduction has come out as a political demand on various occasions over the past 15

years, the military coup attempt fuelled this debate. The mock executions of Gülen in democracy vigils thus became instrumental in articulating this demand for a wider category of enemies. There is another paper attached on the left side of the photograph on the gallows. The humour in performing the imagined hanging of a much-hated enemy materialises as black comedy: “The power of wood presents” [*Ahşabın gücü sunar*” in Turkish]. The cynical message and the staging of execution act demonstrate that the people in the photograph greatly enjoyed their achievement even though the performance they are engaged in is no easy topic.

By capturing the satisfaction and enjoyment on participants’ faces, the photograph turns this judicial-political demand into a “staging of achievement” in two ways: First, it proudly documents the accomplished work; the construction of a gallows followed by a spectacular execution. Second, it accentuates the people’s strong will and anticipation of the “real” accomplishment of such spectacle. Capital punishment, which can be interpreted as an absolute and ultimate stage of domination of one (collective) body over another (individual), is fulfilled fictionally in these performances, as the photographs of the staging of such achievement are disseminated concurrently.

Therefore, the “staging of achievement” frame constitutes the public imagination of the unwanted other and embodies it through an individual or nonhuman. Similar embodiment of the enemy took place also in Gezi, mostly through the images of Erdoğan and other government officials, but also through certain cults and symbols such as Atatürk, Turkish flag, and historic/imaginary figures. The photographs in this frame both celebrate the defeat of the opponent and depict a fictional victory that has not yet taken place. The following example from Gezi can illustrate this well.

The photograph presented in Figure 22 was disseminated during the Gezi protests and in the aftermath. It was reposted by a Twitter account on the fifth anniversary in commemoration of the movement. The location is İnönü Street, the road between Istanbul’s Taksim Square and toward Beşiktaş that goes through Gümüşsuyu district. The photograph shows a protester looking away while standing on a barricade of pavement stones made to stop the police vehicles’ entry to the square. In the middle of a night, a crowd is walking down the road where pepper spray seems to be thick enough to make the background foggy, as the protester on the barricade stays behind. He wears a black sleeveless shirt and jeans with a simple mask attached to his right arm. In his left hand, he holds a wooden branch topped with a Turkish flag with an Atatürk portrait on it. The version of the portrait is a very common one being used in flags, one that shows Atatürk in winter military wear. The protester’s stance on the barricade and the distancing crowd marks a moment of achievement, as if the battle in Taksim Square is

won and it is time for another one downhill. His body looks strong and proud, and his determined gaze anticipates a struggle ahead. The foggy “future” completes this cinematic scene of anticipation.

The branch with the flag in his left hand has historic and military associations. The standard-bearer of an army is an important figure in Turkish historiography, and there are several semi-mythological stories about it. The standard-bearers are skilful and bold soldiers—and certainly male—who can fight perfectly as protagonists while carrying the flag. Often on the frontline, they make heroic attempts to take the flag to the highest point of the enemy’s stronghold. Taking the flag to that point is a great accomplishment that would motivate the remaining soldiers and lead them to victory. Flag-bearers are seen as heroes that would make the entire army proud. They are symbols of anticipation for achievement. Due to previous accomplishments, they are expected to overcome their difficult task. The photograph, therefore, joins in the construction of the “staging of achievement” frame by celebrating the victory in Taksim Square and giving through the protester’s body the impression of pride in the defeat of the riot police, while at the same time projecting another future victory toward which many protesters are headed.

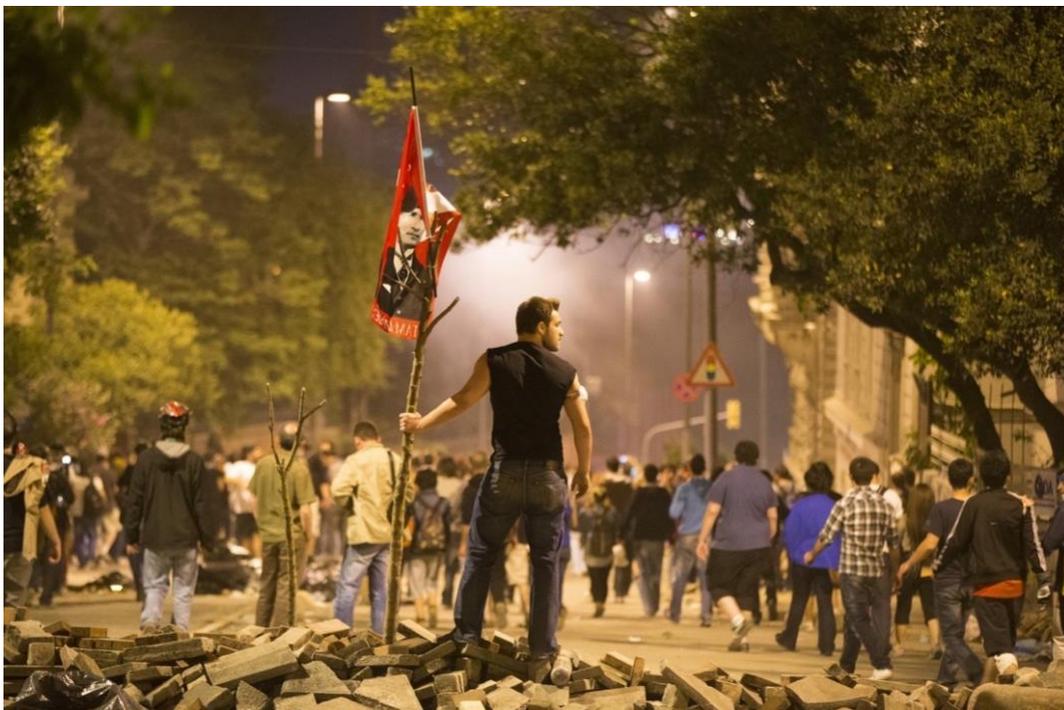


Figure 22. Sukraaaann. (2018). *A protester stands on a street barricade* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/Sukraaaann/status/1000995379788374021>

An important point to emphasise in this frame is the absence of the voice of the dominated and defeated, the inferior ones as seen (or unseen) in the image. Representing visually the vulnerability of the body is one of the preferred ways of activism in social movements (Sutton, 2010). This vulnerability is often displayed in tandem with the movement's claim or goal, as in the case of environmental activists tying their bodies to the fences of nuclear reactors (DeLuca, 1999), and will be discussed further in the next section of this sub-chapter. The photographs in the present frame accentuate instead the dominating party, their bodies. This theatrical display of absolute power in terms of size, quantity, and quality, aims to cross a critical threshold in public perception and generate a sense of rupture and dramatic change. As the social movement researcher Tilly (2004) contends, they display WUNCness (worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment) in their public representations. Writing on the 1789 French Revolution, Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm noted that "the riot first reaches its goal when the Bastille is destroyed, when blood, fire, defenestration, and the destruction of furniture and files illustrate irreversibility" (cited in Günther, 2016, p. 58). The image of an irreversible act proving the power and achievement of the movement invites the audience to take the side of the strong while dismissing and threatening the rival.

By displaying moments of achievement, photographs from street demonstrations in both Gezi and Anti-Coup present the dominated body, whether human or nonhuman, in an absolute passive fashion with no capability standoff against such power. Social movements seek to include superiority and strength into their collective identity. By using visual techniques, they unite various temporospatial dimensions and create an augmented experience of superiority. Framing the "staging of achievement" establishes an eye-catching outlook by demonstrating how social movements are capable of neutralising their rival and therefore of having solid power to protect their own participants. In this vein, "staging of achievement" addresses a similar emotional dynamic that social movements seek to create through the "decency and sympathy" frame. In the middle of such experience of looking, where affective registers are evoked through visual elements of invented traditions, the audience is expected to develop a feeling of comfort away from a call to arms as Ersoy (2020) argues. The photographs present a sense of comfort, enjoyment, and safety in a celebration mode where either one or multiple movement participants are dominating over another person, group, space, or object. This domination is rather absolute, giving no chance of expression to the dominated. Yet vulnerability and scaling of strengths between two parties also comes out in some photographs in my analysis, which brings me to the fifth and final frame.

Vulnerability as a strength

The final category is “vulnerability as a strength”. In this frame, images build on binary oppositions, a very popular way of representing the conflicting sides in a political struggle, as can also be observed in the examples of the previous frame. By creating an imagery of “us” and “them”, the representation of binary oppositions aims at building collective identity around the sense of “we-ness”. Collective identity processes inherently include disputes between the conflicting sides’ frames (Benford & Snow, 2000). The frame “vulnerability as a strength” implies two distinct and irreconcilable sides. At the same time, it asserts a sense of imbalance between various qualities of these parties. The setting is often a physical conflict situation, where one party exercises a greater power to dominate the other, such as the soldiers firing on civilians during the military coup event or the police attacking the activists during Gezi protests. However, the power of the dominating side is not absolute. The dominated side is portrayed rather as being resilient, affected in such physical clash but not yet completely defeated. On a scale of superiority and inferiority, the strength of one that is physically inferior is accentuated in order to highlight the possibility of overwhelming powers being challenged by a force that is supposedly weaker.



Figure 23. poloyaka. (2013). *A protester reads a book facing the police* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/poloyaka/status/340036491839410176>

The photograph seen in Figure 23 was taken at Gezi Park on 30 May 2013, at a very early stage of the protests. Disseminated extensively on digital media, it grew to be one of the icons of the movement. It shows a protester standing in front of the police line at Gezi Park and reading a book in the face of the officers. He is Hasan Hüseyin Şehriban Karabulut, a familiar face among activist circles. Surrounded by a crowd, Karabulut's face is most remarkable with a smile, quite much in contrast to the police officer right in front of him, who has a serious expression that shows indifference and even contempt. The riot police are all well-equipped with helmets and shields. Karabulut is there with no particular protection but rather in a casual red T-shirt and blue shorts. There are other people in the photograph as well. The background seems to be crowded and another man passes his back as the photograph is shot. Two other activists continue their sit-in and are engaged in a talk. Karabulut is alone in his action and seems to have not been paid much attention by the crowd during his reading.

The photograph introduces an activist cliché scene: a single protester teases the police in a humorous and peaceful way. It may remind us of Bernie Boston's famous "Flower Power" photograph, taken during the protests on 21 October 1967 against the Vietnam War, and various others that joined the protest imagery that accumulated in the following decades (see D'Amico, 2004; 2008). However, for Turkey, where political activity is often suppressed through violence, this photograph offers an unusual portrait of the commitment to a peaceful atmosphere in a protest. When it was posted on Twitter, multiple users quoted the tweet and added the comments that translate as "Marginal groups use disproportionate intelligence against the police"⁷. The term "disproportionate" refers to the legal and journalistic term "excessive force", and one would normally read it in a newspaper article referring to police intervention in protests. Yet the photograph became a symbol of subversion of the term and the use of higher intellect against physical power. It emphasises the contrast in the facial expressions and body language of the activist and the police officer, while reversing the antipathy and arrogance of the police at the protesters backwards. It is the protesters who read books, meaning that they are civilised and cultivated, whereas the undereducated are the police.

The popularisation of this photograph marked a starting point for the development of a series of images that underscored actions undermining an established and institutional power. Often accompanied by the term "disproportionate", which consequently spread to a wider political discourse, the images display the overwhelming power of one side, but emphasise

⁷ See two examples of images and comments on Twitter: DirenGeziParki. (2013, May 30). Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/DirenGeziParki/status/340158242476941312> and GeziYenilmez. (2013, June 25). Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/GeziYenilmez/status/349597723869184000>

certain qualities of those ostensibly weaker who can challenge superior powers. The frame “vulnerability as a strength” does not construct an imagery of absolute domination here, as the “staging of achievement” frame does, but instead accentuates the resilient side of the dominated.



Figure 24. Osman Örsal. (2013). *Woman in Red* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/news/picture/turkeys-lady-in-red-idUSRTX10BDX>

Another photograph (Figure 24), which is probably the most well-known image of Gezi, also adds to the construction of this frame. It was taken by Osman Örsal of Reuters at Gezi Park on 28 May 2013. Having gone viral on digital media and become the main global icon of the Gezi Movement, it is known as the *Woman in Red*. In the photograph, the first person to attract attention is the woman at the front. She looks irritated by something. A camera strap over her shoulder suggests she is a journalist or photographer. Slightly to the right the photograph shows what she is escaping from. A woman in a red dress is being pepper-sprayed in her face, with her hair blowing up due to the force of the spray. This is not accidental. The policeman opposite her seems to be deliberately discharging his spray at her. Another woman on the left is also feeling the sting of the gas and is trying to cover her mouth and nose. The policeman is backed up by a line of other officers with helmets and shields. It is not very clear whether he is attacking under orders. A few other policemen who may be his superiors, as they are differently dressed,

are not following the action. The grass and leaves with trees on the ground and trees in the background show that the location is a park. A careful eye familiar with the environment would also catch the InterContinental Istanbul and the Ritz-Carlton hotels in the background and understand that it is Gezi Park.

Firstly, the photograph documents the moment of a man's violent attack on a woman. Although Turkey does not have a good record in terms of women's rights and domestic (and public) violence, the visual representation of a man physically harming a woman can widely raise eyebrows and bring condemnation from many. It documents a clear situation of inequality, with the gender issue added. Moreover, carrying a cloth bag and being dressed casually without any apparent fear of violent confrontation, the woman is neither a celebrity nor an outstanding figure for the protesters. Her name is Ceyda Sungur, and she is a research assistant at the Istanbul Technical University's Faculty of Architecture, as was revealed later during the protests. She is alone and standing right in front of a fully-gearred group of police officers. Unprepared for such an attack, it looks as if she was just a passer-by, with her cloth bag on her shoulder. This gives the impression that anyone could be in her shoes.

The photograph takes part in building the "vulnerability as a strength" frame as it depicts a resilient protester who does not step back from the brutal attack of the police. As other people keep away from the effect of the pepper spray, she barely does anything to avoid it apart from closing eyes and turning her head away. She stays there in front of the attacker, who is backed up by other colleagues, without even using her hands to defend herself. It is a fearless stance against an unequalled force. The photograph places the woman, in an analogy to the rest of the protesters, in a disadvantaged position in terms of physical strength while accentuating the qualities that make her strong. With such an aspect highlighted in other photographs as well, the "vulnerability as a strength" frame links the notion of injustice, which is instrumental in framing in social movement images (Neria & Aspinwall, 2016; Olesen, 2013), to the resilient potential of the victim of such injustice. As the photograph shows, casualness and immobility become qualities of resilience and properties of the movement.

Another photograph, which can be seen in Figure 25, was taken in Taksim Square on 17 June 2013, shortly after the seizure of Gezi Park by the riot police. It shows a man in a white shirt from behind, standing in the square and facing the façade of the Atatürk Cultural Centre. The façade that was full of Gezi participants' banners and flags (see Figure 8) has been "cleaned" and dressed in two big Turkish flags and Atatürk's portrait. Erdem Gündüz, who is a choreographer by profession, stood still as his photographs went viral globally and earned him the epithet *Standing Man*. In order to protest the use of excessive force against the Gezi

participants in the final three weeks, he decided to give a silent performance. Since standing and not doing anything in a public area would hardly provide any justification for police intervention, it quickly evolved into a popular individual but at the same time collective action. People could be seen protesting the government randomly on the streets of any town, simply by standing still (Verstraete, 2013).

A closer look at the photograph opens a discussion on the symbols on the AKM building. Replacing the protest banners and posters with Atatürk and the Turkish flag could be interpreted as a well-established bureaucratic practice, if not a safe attempt by the local government to restore the visual dissent, which was also seen in the eyes of the seculars as the pink-washing of non-secular policies. Before and during Gezi protests, Atatürk's legacy was owned exclusively by the secularists in public discussions. The photograph of the single protester facing Atatürk's portrait and the AKM that is a symbol of modernity could be seen as either a gesture of questioning or of reflecting upon the past, present and future of Turkey's founding principles of secularism (Verstraete, 2013, p. 5).



Figure 25. selcukerdem. (2013). *Standing Man* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/selcukerdem/status/346745492274819073>

Furthermore, this act is a silent complaint about the government's handling of the protests and a reaffirmation of persistence. The image was disseminated at a time when Gezi

Park was evacuated, and the protests seemed to be over. The photograph comes as a statement of strength of the movement, as it highlights that the activists are still there and are creative enough to find resilient tactics against power. It sparked the protesters to create a temporary protest action network that was based on a visually coherent spatial and embodied performance across the country, and the figure of the activist in the image became a symbol of individual power against institutional repression. The photograph, and the standing practice itself that was adopted by thousands of people showed the asymmetrical discrepancy became an embodied demonstration of activists' capabilities.

The image was compared to various others within the global protest imagery, including those of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests in China and the famous *Tank Man* photograph. A global icon showing power asymmetry, *Tank Man* praises the capacity of an ordinary citizen to challenge oppressive structures and technologies. Sutton (2010) discusses the need of movements to display the vulnerability of protester bodies in order to increase their resonance in the society. Public exposure of vulnerability can take the form of self-sacrifice that has the potential of destruction of the activist body, as in the case of *Tank Man*. Zuo and Benford (1995) argue that exhibition of vulnerability and self-sacrifice were resonant frames in Chinese society due to their correspondence to certain traditions and cultural values. A similar motif is valid also for Turkish society. When the military coup threat hit Turkey in 2016 and the tanks were on the streets, finding a similar moment to Tiananmen Square was not difficult for photographers.

The image of *Standing Man* was sharply contrasted with the photograph seen in Figure 26 that was taken by Ihlas News Agency's İsmail Coşkun on the night of 15 July 2016, during the coup d'état attempt. The photograph features a shirtless man, Metin Doğan, standing in front of a tank at the entrance of the former Atatürk Airport of Istanbul, as can be read on top of the airport gate. The tank is close enough to the man for him to have a conversation with the soldier who came out from the vehicle's top door. There is another man on the right side of the photograph and yet another in the right background looking at the incident. Similar to the 1989 *Tank Man* of Tiananmen Square, this photograph earned the man the epithet *Antitank* (*Tanksavar*), which is a word to describe the military weapon used against tanks in armed conflict. He said in an interview that he was ready to become a martyr as he went to the airport that night. By standing before the tank and through the possibility of martyrdom, he wanted to encourage more people to take the streets (Milliyet, 2017). As self-sacrifice is a salient motif in Turkish literature and social narratives, as in Chinese society, the photograph became a powerful contributor to the resonance of the movement. It was immediately disseminated

through news portals and on social media at a very early stage in the events, and later grew into one of the symbols of the Anti-Coup Resistance.



Figure 26. İsmail Coşkun. (2016). *Antitank* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://onbestemmuz.wordpress.com/2016/07/21/492>

Similar to the others within this frame, the photograph shows a tension between a single individual and a greater power. Unlike the display of bodies stripped of clothes in inferior positions (see Figure 20), here the male body appears as a statement of the nation's collective strength. *Antitank* stands against the firepower on behalf of the nation; so the photograph summarises a long and deadly night. Indeed, the photograph was later used in tandem with that of *Standing Man* and was disseminated on digital media with comments subscribing to the official narrative criminalising Gezi and idealising Doğan's heroic action, such as "Don't be the man who stands; be the one who stops [the tank]".⁸ Identifying with the national identity and a pious commitment to martyrdom are prominent in both visual and non-visual materials produced throughout the events and in their aftermath. They serve to build an ideal public figure that stands heroically without guns but with perseverance against the mighty firepower of coup plotters. The image crystallises the man's stance as a representation of the nation's resilient power that is so solid it cannot be run over by a tank.

⁸ See the comment on Twitter that combines two photographs here: AO_Coban. (2016, July 23). Retrieved from https://twitter.com/ao_coban/status/756880550569320448

Besides the strong visibility of the male body in Anti-Coup’s “vulnerability as a strength” frame, the female body also took an equivalent role in its construction. Sutton (2010) argues that the visual performance of the suffering female body can turn into a site of resistance. Although the stereotypical image of women in the society is based on fragility, this image can be a transformative tool when women subvert it publicly. The collective/connective identity of social movements that is mainly based on masculine terms is challenged and possibly becomes more inclusive, albeit to a certain extent.

The state-run Anadolu Agency’s Elif Öztürk took a photograph (Figure 27) on 16 July 2016, the day after the coup d’état attempt. It shows a woman in black chador who was wrapped herself in a Turkish flag while walking to a join a crowd ahead. The location is the entrance part of the 15 July Martyrs Bridge, where fatal clashes took place between the soldiers and civilians, as the broken pieces of glass on the asphalt show. Together with the woman are multiple men walking in the same direction. The background of the photograph is rather blurry, but the hills on the other side of the city and a swarming crowd are visible. Some of the people ahead seem to be climbing over something, most likely the tanks and other military vehicles captured from the soldiers, as seen in the previous sections of this chapter.



Figure 27. Elif Öztürk. (2016). *Woman in Chador* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://www.bik.gov.tr/15-temmuz-gecesinin-simgelesen-fotograflari/#jp-carousel-110428>

The woman’s clothing is a sign of her conservative religious beliefs. In this way it is in full contrast with Gezi’s iconic *Woman in Red*. The photograph glorifies and idealises the

women and their involvement in Anti-Coup, yet the black chador and Turkish flag address a limited part of the entire population, namely those who align themselves with the displayed ethno-religious symbols. With her chador and the flag on the day after such a traumatic night, she cannot help but remind one of the historic figures, Nene Hatun (1857-1955), who is considered a national heroine due to her bravery during Russo-Turkish war of 1877 (Alpargu & Çelik, 2016). Despite losing her husband and leaving her baby back at home, she is known to have fought shoulder to shoulder with men against the ferocious enemies. Hailed as a national figure today, she is a symbol of boldness and courage in the national accounts and also pointed out as an example of what a Turkish woman can and should do. This idealisation comes with the task of defending the nation under risk. Leaving the nationalist aspect aside, as it is a crosscutting and repetitive theme through the five frames, she is also a symbol of unexpected resilience and power of one that is traditionally seen as vulnerable.

Hence, the photograph contributes to the building of the “vulnerability as a strength” frame in two ways: First, it underscores the women’s role in Anti-Coup and attributes to them a saviour role. It places women’s strength at the fore and reminds us that men were not alone in defending the nation. Female figures have been widely used in visual culture as an allegory of the nation (Kandiyoti, 1991). Turkey does not have an exclusive female personification that represents the country, but Nene Hatun is often singled out as an embodiment of Turkish collective identity. Following this reference, the current photograph underscores and valorises women’s devotion to and self-sacrifice for the country and their daring courage in fighting powerful enemies in the name of the nation. As the compulsory military service is exclusive to male citizens of Turkey, women’s presence in the Turkish army is limited in terms of high-ranking officers to only those with military academy training and to back-office positions as public servants. So, even if the army relies physically on stronger male power, the participation of committed women to stop the coup plotters come as an advantage to be highlighted. Second, the photograph exclusively claims ethno-religious values for the Anti-Coup Resistance. Through the chador and the flag, the image becomes a statement for the exclusive possession of those symbols, meaning the coup plotters—although having firepower under the name of the Turkish nation—are deprived of them.

These types of photographs accentuating national narratives that are deeply embedded in Turkish historiography kept coming to surface throughout my analysis. They recall the depiction of war times across centuries of history where the entire population is thought to have mobilised to defend the country against enemies. These narratives are still very present in textbooks and political discourse. Anti-Coup has used these narratives often to equalise the

coup plotters with the enemies in history, while Gezi referred to them rather sporadically within a wider mosaic of historic and contemporary figures. A primary cult figure among them is Atatürk and his saviour role. Zamponi (2019) observes that social movements often develop a *possessive memory* that is strictly linked to the actions of militants. Deceased public figures that were engaged in political action are glorified and displayed as model activists for the movement. These hero figures act as anchors for orientation due to their successful behaviour in the past in spite of being deprived of various privileges. Possessive memory of the movement highlights these figures' weaknesses and strengths, placing them on a scale of strength.

The photograph of the woman in chador and its remediations as illustrations and memes were disseminated endlessly on digital media and were used by both the government and independent organisations in various occasions, from social media awareness campaigns to the advertising of official events on urban billboards in the aftermath of the putsch. I will discuss the “extended social life” of these photographs in the second part of this chapter. Before I close, however, I would like to present one more photograph.



Figure 28. NurSara. (2013). *A Morsi supporter walks toward the riot police* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/NurSara/status/369074350936182784>

The photograph seen in Figure 28 is actually from the 2013 Cairo protests against the coup d'état that eventually overthrew the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohamed Morsi and brought General Abdel Fatah El-Sisi to the presidency of Egypt. Occurred in parallel to the Gezi

protests, the success of the putsch—as well as the recent Arab Spring—was considered a threatening development for the continuity of the AKP government in Turkey. As the photograph was produced and disseminated by neither Gezi activists nor by Anti-Coup—the latter did not exist at the time—it was difficult to locate it in one of these collective actors. It was primarily promoted by pro-government social media accounts during Gezi but was later appropriated as Internet memes and illustrations and also used in relation to Anti-Coup, given the fact that it captures a moment of clashing after the military coup in Egypt.

The image was disseminated by social media users to underscore the bravery of the man against the soldiers. Various pro-government journalists and social media users referred to the military coup, drawing analogies to the ongoing Gezi Movement and expressing their sympathy with Morsi supporters in Egypt. In the photograph, a man in thawb, the traditional Saudi Arabian white tunic, which is slightly different than the local Egyptian jellabiya, encounters a group of riot police. The photograph seems to have been taken only seconds before the security forces brutally attacked the man. He fearlessly walks against them, holding his index fingers up, symbolising Tawhid, the oneness of the God in Islamic tradition. With this gesture combined with the traditional tunic, the man can be identified as a conservative Muslim in popular reading also in Turkey.

The photograph contributes to the construction of the “vulnerability as a strength” frame by presenting the outnumbering force of the riot police while highlighting the faithful power of the man that the police does not possess. The frame acknowledges a greater power of the physically weaker side (the religious faith of the single man in thawb) in the face of a physically stronger power that lacks a certain quality (armed group of soldiers who are not Muslim enough). Here, the vulnerability of the body of the demonstrator can be seen as a connector that creates a sense of “we-ness”. As Fadaee and Schindler (2014) show, social movement participants often share a feeling of vulnerability. Following the work of Laclau and Mouffe (2001), they suggest that this vulnerability can grow into as a *master signifier* as groups of people start to consider themselves disadvantaged within the given socioeconomic and political system and become aware of it as a larger phenomenon. Fadaee and Schinler argue that social movements engage in politics of vulnerability as a major mobilisation strategy and/or tactic. Displaying activists’ vulnerability helps a movement gain coherence and draw solidarity links between local struggles on a global scale. Vulnerability, therefore, can become a useful tool to accentuate other sides of a movement, such as the size, agility, and outreach, among other qualities that can be seen as strengths.

Although the photograph in Figure 28 is not from a Turkish context, pro-government circles made it part of the Gezi Movement's counter-voice, suggesting that only a man of faith can go against the secular (should be read as infidel) forces. The term "disproportionate" also went into use with this photograph, with comments applying it in the phrase "disproportionate faith". Hence, the frame condenses the efforts to mobilise public affects not only through creating bipolar oppositions, but also establishing a relative superiority regarding a quality that is expected to find resonance in public.

Discussion

This sub-chapter presented the first part of the results of the grounded visual analysis conducted comparatively on the Gezi Movement and the Anti-Coup Resistance of Turkey in relation to the application of the framing concept to social movement studies as suggested by Snow and Benford (1992). Having analysed 146 photographs covering a period from the start of Gezi on 28 May 2013 until 16 July 2018, the day after the second anniversary of the success of the Anti-Coup, the study aimed to look beyond the peak times of the street protests and to cover the political variety over time in order to gain a perennial perspective and address the research questions in a more comprehensive way. Photography has long been part of the social movement environment. Initially treated as documentation of protest moments (Harper, 2012; Memou, 2013), photographs grew into a medium through which social movements not only communicate their claims to the public but also position and identify themselves in the political arena. Photographs, whether they capture staged scenes or are spontaneously taken, help social movements frame the ways in which they are engaged in political struggle. Although photography's role in producing evidence, as well as in serving as a useful tool for surveillance, is still there (Sontag, 2005), the content and composition of photographs provide invaluable insights into visual activism performed in a social movement.

Five emergent categories are discussed as visual frames that can be found in the imagery of both Gezi and Anti-Coup as summarised below:

Occupation of space: Photographs constructing this frame refer to a domain at stake that can be physical or abstract. Through examples of squares, urban assets, bodies, as well as whole cities and countries, the photographs suggest that the presented space is at risk and should be claimed.

Diversification: This frame is built on photographs that display extraordinary situations of collaboration between long-time foes that have been on conflicting sides for historic, ethnic, and religious reasons. Mostly capitalising on pre-established collective identities in the society, the photographs also present the unexpected participation of certain groups which otherwise would not have mobilised.

Decency and sympathy: Photographs contributing to the construction of this frame introduce the good elements behind the violent conflict atmosphere. They accentuate figures and institutions such as family, marriage, children, celebrities, pets, collaboration that recall socially accepted pleasant notions. In some cases, they can target particular strands in the society by taking part in the development of humour.

Staging of achievement: Here, the photographs display the enjoyment that comes after a particular success. They display proud and spectacular moments of accomplishment and the reassurance and consolidation of collective identity. Display of such moment comes with a depiction of domination of one side over another. The frame is built on representations of bilateral oppositions and highlights the enjoyment of possessing absolute power.

Vulnerability as a strength: This frame is also built on bilateral oppositions but has a different structure than the previous one. It recognises the power that both sides possess and emphasises selectively the prominent and worthwhile sides of this power held by each. Most frequently, this is displayed as a contentious moment between a single person that stands against either a group with overwhelming strength or a greater machine or structure.

By proposing these five titles, however, this study does not attempt to suggest strictly distinct categories in social movement framing. On the contrary, these frames should be seen as fluid constructions that can work in an affective environment of politicization. While the same image can contribute to the development of more than one frame, the perception and interpretation of the image remain highly dependent on several factors, such as the socio-political background of the viewer, the cultural and political context of the time, and digital affordances, among others. Studies on framing in social movements are interested in a broad range of topics (Benford & Snow, 2000; Snow et al., 2014). While this dissertation makes use of the framing approach as a conceptual framework to interpret the results of the grounded visual analysis, it does not claim to give a complete overview of framing efforts taking place in the Gezi Movement and Anti-Coup Resistance that reveal the core functions of a frame—the *diagnostic*, *prognostic*, and *motivational* steps of framing. Although the results presented above offer some useful information for undertaking such an analysis, this study theorises framing as

a wider lens in order to understand the collective/connective visual activism and investigate the visual practices that mobilise people and contribute to the politicization processes. In this vein, this sub-chapter offers some answers to the research questions of this study.

First, it became clear through the analysis that the visual framing in both Gezi and Anti-Coup is primarily led by photography among the other contemporary visual practices. Although the framing activity also takes place through illustrations (as well as memes, editorial cartoons, and videos that were excluded from the data set), they remain a genre of auxiliary frames within the visual practices, where the constructed realities subscribe to and support what is first displayed in photographs. This should not mean, however, that any other visual genre is unimportant in the presence of photographs. On the contrary, in order to have a deeper understanding of visual activism, and the framing efforts to a certain extent, other genres should be examined and compared to the results of the photographic analysis. At the same time, the visual activism of Gezi and Anti-Coup is not completely distinct from other forms of activism performed within these mobilisations. As the multiple comments added to the photograph posts on social media show, visual and textual genres can mutually influence each other's production and dissemination and should not be considered separately or imposed over each other.

Second, the receivers of a frame are defined through ideological, demographic, attitudinal, and moral orientations (Noakes & Johnston, 2005, p. 13). Studies on social movements that emerged after 2009 show that the profile of participants should be discussed in fluid terms rather than in terms of established social groups (Castells, 2015; Wiedemann, 2014), although such non-institutional actors are traditionally understood as swarms without much political experience and agency (Flesher Fominaya, 2014). The motivations of participation increasingly become affect-based rather than ideological or moral, and so do the resonance processes of frames. For example, despite the fact that a populist schism was at work both in Gezi (Özen, 2015) and Anti-Coup (Carney, 2018a), public polls show that the number of people who took to the streets and demonstrated for both movements cannot easily be disregarded (KONDA, 2016a; 2016b). Such phenomena can help explain how the political imagery may develop so exclusively but claim inclusivity at the same time.

Frame qualities, the last variable in Noakes and Johnston's (2005) categorisation, have been the very focus of this study. The quality of a frame in relation to resonance is composed of cultural compatibility, frame consistency, and relevance. The photographs presented in the five frames in this sub-chapter offer a multi-perspective analysis for understanding both cases in a comparative fashion. They seek to resonate with the audience culturally, for instance, by referring to present customs and traditions, highlighting the presence of family, and making use

of symbols of socio-cultural value. Photographs also feature high consistency both in their own content and across various frames. They constitute the social reality relevant to movement participants. Most generally speaking, they display moments of utopic solidarity in Gezi for an audience that feels segregated and repressed, such as in the photograph of the AKM building façade covered in various banners; and a united resistance for the perpetuity of the nation in Anti-Coup for an audience who feels the nation is at risk, such as in the photograph of a vast crowd flocking to 15 July Martyrs' Bridge.

Makers, receivers, and qualities of frames have a direct impact on the resonance of a frame. Throughout this sub-chapter, I have discussed mostly the affective qualities of frames by using various examples of photographs and have supported this by using various but limited non-visual data regarding makers and receivers of those frames. This is largely due to the personalised nature of framing in a digital age. Following Bennet and Segerberg's (2012; 2013) work on the connective logic of social movement frames, I argue that we should go beyond analysing profiles and ideologies of makers and receivers of visual frames and examine *affective practices* related to images in order to understand how those images resonate with the public and mobilise people across political divides. Building on Bourdieu's theory of practice, Wetherell (2012) proposes that an affective practice refers to embodied configurations of actions that people take following their participation in an emotional moment at a given time and space. Figurations of affective practices can take a repetitive form that lasts through several centuries, even if in a latent state. To analyse these affective practices, Wetherell suggests examining how they are situated and connected within a habitual dynamic.

In this sub-chapter, I have analysed the ways in which photographs construct visual frames in Gezi and Anti-Coup. Visual activism through photography is directed toward two major affective practices. First, through the production of the photograph, the moment of activist engagement at a certain place and time is captured. Second, through the dissemination of the photograph, the moment of activism is situated within a certain social movement. As a photograph becomes viral in digital media, it is still part of the particular collective/connective action until it becomes an icon and gains a wider, if not universal, situatedness. In this sense, the five frames presented in this sub-chapter create situated resonance. Some photographs go beyond this threshold by gaining generic resonance. They are called icons. As discussed in Chapter 2, iconic photographs apply to universal situations and often need no caption to explain their content and context (Hariman & Lucaites, 2007). They become the embodiment of an affective practice that creates generic resonance going beyond time and space. Visual activists

in contemporary social movements seek to increase this “genericness” further by using certain techniques and avenues such as remediation and commonality, which I will discuss next.

As I explained in detail at the beginning of this chapter, my analysis of images is divided into two parts. In the following sub-chapter, I will present the second part of the results of this study. By using examples of illustrations that are based on some of the photographs presented above, I will show the ways in which affective practices of visual activism are directed toward creating generic resonance in Gezi and Anti-Coup.

Icons of Dissent: Layering and Widening Frames

In the previous sub-chapter, I presented the first part of the results of my study and limited the discussion to the analysis of photographs collected online in the context of the 2013 Gezi Movement and the 2016 Anti-Coup Resistance. Studying photography across these two mobilisations, I showed the emergence of a series of visual frames and discussed how political events with irreconcilable political agendas may be subject to similar framing activity. I underlined that the framing work through photography aims at creating situated resonance, which is an affective practice used to mobilise people within the context of social movements.

In this sub-chapter, I will present the second part of the results of this qualitative study, which is composed of an analysis of online illustrations that remediate photographs within the context of Gezi and Anti-Coup. Pursuing further answers to the research questions introduced in Chapter 1, I will address the visual activist efforts directed toward mobilising public affects by extending the social life of images in the contemporary social movement environment. I will show that visual activism in both left-wing and right-wing movements seeks to increase the resonance of frames by turning photographs into icons through remediation, which is a novel technique frequently used in contemporary political struggle to open new outlets for mobilisation. Although varieties of remediation techniques have existed prior and been given importance, particularly in media and communication studies (Bolter & Grusin, 1999), today’s social movements soaked in digital media intensively use remediation for transforming the situated resonance of visual frames into generic resonance. As Bennet and Segerberg (2012) also point out, highly personalised action frames do not spread on their own. Social movement participants actively engage in frame alignment by appropriating, shaping, and sharing them online in order to increase their resonance.

This sub-chapter will offer an analysis of the very differences and similarities between photographs and illustrations within and across these two cases from a memory perspective, attending to metaphors and patterns that stretch across time and political divides. I will particularly focus on remediation as an affective practice that is directed toward creating an illustration based on photography. This visual practice accentuates certain qualities in the photograph while masking others. The illustrations in this category offer a secondary look—or better, multiple secondary looks—at the photographs and thus to the construction of visual frames, helping to understand better the symbolic dimension of collective political struggle. Going beyond the peak times of the events, they can tell us more about the similarities and differences between affective dynamics across political divides. I will argue that the remediation of photographs in the social movement context is part of a collective/connective effort (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013) to create everybody figures that mediate between the individual and the universal. I will trace the extended social life of photographs that stand out in my data corpus. Some of these photographs, such as *Woman in Red* and *Standing Man* of Gezi and *Woman in Chador* and *Antitank* of Anti-Coup, have already been analysed earlier in this chapter. Instead of repeating what has been said in the previous sub-chapter, I will focus my analysis on the transition from photograph to illustration in order to understand the remediation and iconisation process that aims at generic resonance.

From the perspective of connective action frames, it would be valid to interpret these efforts as framing work as well. Networked social actors who engage in remediation practice construct schemata for the emergence of certain meanings through images. However, rather than generating new frames and adding to the ones constructed by photographs, remediation processes layer and widen the meanings of these photographs, which eventually leads to the opening of crosscutting avenues for mobilisation and may intersect with the movement frames. Thus, I prefer locating the particular technique of remediation and its outcomes differently due to its very specific orientation toward iconisation and the creation of everybody figures that acquire a new agency in reconfiguring the situated resonance of frames.

Numerous photographs displaying ordinary people engaged in protest/demonstration acts were disseminated extensively during the events and in their aftermath, along with countless remediated versions as illustrations. For purposes of permission, I contacted some of the graphic designers, both professional and amateur, who I could identify as producers of these illustrations. Several of them happily granted me the permission to include their work in my study and give credit. Others were concerned about the content and political orientation of my research and hesitated to allow me to credit their names, even though their illustrations could

be accessed publicly. Some of the illustrators have already waved copyright publicly on their Internet accounts and declared that the images can be used by anyone, anywhere. Indeed, particularly the remediations of photographs from Anti-Coup are used randomly, even by official entities in both online and offline media outlets. On the other hand, the abundance of media agents also created a negative side effect for illustrators' work. A few of them mentioned that their works were appropriated for commercial purposes without credit being given, which was unexpected for those illustrators who did not foresee their activist contribution as having such a result.

In the following sections, I will present the results of my analysis under four titles. The first focuses on the representations of people who generally remain at the margins of social movements and how these representations become visible through remediation practice. The second offers a window into how solidarity is displayed across the two cases. The third builds on scenes of clashing and antagonism and highlights the tension between rivals. The fourth analyses how worlds of death and life are negotiated through everybody figures.

I used 17 illustrations in this sub-chapter. When possible and necessary, I also provided the original photographs that these illustrations remediate. The presentation of results does not follow a chronological order but rather a relational narrative that can offer insights into the traveling of forms, motifs, and metaphors from one genre to another—but also from one movement to another. In this way, I intend to describe how remediation can transcend political divides as well. A discussion section will follow at the end of the sub-chapter.

Challenging politics of (in)visibility

Politics of (in)visibility is a much-discussed topic in social movements. Several researchers have contributed to the literature in terms of theory and empirical studies (Doerr, Mattoni, & Teune, 2013a; della Porta & Diani, 2006; Routledge, 2000). Doerr et al.(2015) mention that the struggle of social movements is a struggle over visibility as well. There is a variety of scholarly work that demonstrates how activists make the invisible visible and challenge the establishment's visibility policies toward certain minority groups, domestic and foreign affairs, governance, and the like. Following upon this literature, I argue that the remediations of everybody figures and their process of iconisation, besides voicing the ambitions of the particular mobilisation, also mark the presence of the marginalised figures and their political activity potential. They break the male and young adult dominance in social

movement imagery and introduce a variety of actors who take part in the collective/connective action. As Whittier (2009) also maintains, social movements provide occasions for “coming out” where people with diverse identities practice collective disclosure. Not only does such collective appearing function as a call to challenge politics of (in)visibility and disclose socially and politically marginalised actors, but also acts as a moment of affirmation and consolidation of these identities and as an attempt to create a visuality of we-ness.

Furthermore, the marginalised identity that emerges as a public statement can serve as a meeting point as well for people who do not belong to that identity. The famous “Don’t touch my friend” badge of 1960s France that was revived during the 2017 election campaign and the “We are all Armenians” slogan and banners used during the funeral of the murdered journalist Hrant Dink in Istanbul provide a few examples of such a domain where people of visible and invisible identities meet and interact in a feeling of solidarity. Adopting the name of the vulnerable challenges the supremacy of the visible and creates a momentary solidarity with the invisible, opening the possibility of “becoming minoritarian” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

Contemporary digital technologies enable this visual connectedness to occur at a larger scale than ever. An analysis of social media avatars during the 2011 wave of protests from Egypt to Spain and the United States shows that social movement participants tend to use common images of oppressed personalities to create their visual identity online and recognise each other through those images (Gerbaudo, 2015). Across the remediations of photographs in Gezi and Anti-Coup, this was particularly evident in the images of women, children, elderly, and people with disabilities.

On 1 June 2013, a couple of days after Gezi’s famous *Woman in Red* photograph was taken, the media hailed *Woman in Black* as the new female phenomenon (En Son Haber, 2013). Captured by several cameras at the time, Kate Cullen, an Australian citizen staying in Turkey on a university exchange programme, became one of the important figures of the movement. Wearing a black summer dress and red shoes, she carries a shoulder bag that gives her a casual look rather than that of a fully equipped protester ready to get into a violent clash. Multiple photographs showing the incident from different angles appeared in print and online media. I will present two of these below that have been merged into one image (Figure 29). The photograph on the left captures the moment when Cullen stood still with her arms wide open in front of a water cannon at the beginning of Beyoğlu’s Istiklal Street as the water cannon is sprayed directly onto her chest. The other one was taken right after the water cannon stopped discharging water. It shows the woman smiling in her black but now wet dress as she is hugged by a man behind her, with a surprised and concerned-looking crowd in the background.

In addition to capturing two separate moments of the same incident, two photographs also show the woman's body and her dress from different angles. Interestingly, although both images were used ubiquitously by Gezi activists and pro-Gezi media, I observed that the Islamist pro-government media mostly used the second photograph when reporting the incident. Besides referring to her Australian citizenship and alleging that she was a provocateur and possible spy, the photograph that showed her being hugged by a man in public while her thigh was exposed in her summery dress was preferred over the other. Unfortunately, due to lack of data, I cannot take my observation to the point of deducing a statistical result comparing the use of this particular photograph between pro- and anti-government media. As several anti-government print and online media outlets and social media accounts were shut down, collecting sufficient data that could cover the entire reporting span is also difficult. However, it is still possible to draw some conclusions that can help explain the open-ended contention over these visuals.



Figure 29. DemokratHaber. (2013). *Woman in Black* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://www.demokrathaber.org/guncel/siyahli-kadin-neden-tomanin-onune-gectigini-anlatti-h19856.html>

From a comparative perspective, the photograph lies at the heart of an ongoing debate over the government's increasing oppression of lifestyle and body politics. Although Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party has declared no official plan to introduce any lifestyle regulations based on Islamic law, the intention to ban abortion, the absence of commitment to preventing child marriages and reducing domestic violence, and the comments from senior government officials on how women should dress and behave in public, among other practices

and policies, have left the secular members of society unconvinced. Secularists widely believe that the government has a secret agenda to decrease the visibility of women in the public sphere. This suspicion has been further strengthened through journalism and media practices, as in the case of the selection of such a photograph, but also through pixelisation and the censoring of female body parts that would otherwise be considered appropriate by secularists.

On the same grounds, the quick rise in the number of women in the early images of Gezi was appreciated by the movement participants and supporters (Kaya, 2015), even though at times the movement itself was also criticised for being gender-biased (Potuoğlu-Cook, 2015). Associated with the results of the established feminist movement in Turkey and gender activism (Bora & Günal, 2002; Diner & Toktaş, 2010), and sometimes with the Kemalist revolution and secular aesthetics in popular accounts (Türkmen, 2018), the outstanding presence of women in Gezi images affected the visual display of the movement's collective identity and its response to the government's politics of visibility. Starting with the *Woman in Red* and *Woman in Black* photographs that quickly evolved into everybody figures, the persistent visibility of the "emancipated" female body in Gezi drew public attention (NTV, 2013). The red and black dresses position these women as incarnating the social tension between secularism and non-secularism that the country has suffered with since its very foundation. The rapid secularisation of politics and public life was associated with an embodiment of modernist ambitions in the female body. The ideal woman of the new republic should have been like her Western peers: unveiled, taking part in social events, interacting with men, and, if possible, at work. The summery dresses leave the women's neck, arms and legs uncovered, not to mention the fact that these women do not wear the veil. Hence, the outfit represents a tangible figure of the ordinary woman with exclusively secular beliefs, overlapping with a contest between the allegories of the nation. Both of the *Woman in Black* photographs were remediated into various illustrations. Here I will use only one example that I consider as standing out among others in relation to this discussion.

The illustration in Figure 30 carries the signature of Dört İstanbul, a formerly active, independent visual agency. It remediates the scene on the right of the merged image of Figure 29. Created on a light-brown parchment-looking background, the illustration uses the negative space technique of basic drawing to depict the silhouette of the woman embedded in a green tree-like form. Her stance, her wide-open arms, and the shape of her dress are easily recognisable. Her legs are coloured in dark brown in an analogy to the trunk of a tree, which partly refers to the environmental concerns of the movement but also, at the same time, highlights the slit of the dress and her exposed thigh. Moreover, the hashtags added right below

the woman-tree figure show that the remediation targets mostly a digital media audience. #direngeziparki [#resistgezipark], #gezipark, and #occupygezi were some of the most popular hashtags used throughout the movement. The latter two are written for an English-speaking audience, which can be interpreted as the movement’s orientation toward transcending national and linguistic borders and aiming for a global public.



Figure 30. Dört Istanbul. (2013). *Remediation of the “Woman in Black”* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/102386591501578352>

By displaying the woman as part of a tree figure, the illustration joins the representations of the “mother nature” character in visual culture. The iconisation process requires memory work and makes connections between the present image and formerly seen images or experienced situations (Hariman & Lucaites, 2007). The remediation of the *Woman in Black* brings several of these together. It is based on a popular photograph of the time, but it also accentuates the woman’s physical features and connects it to a popular mythological character. It doesn’t exclusively make the Gezi Movement more visible; it is also a visual labour underscoring women’s presence and leading role in collective political struggle. The woman was not a famous person in Turkey at the time. Although her identity was uncovered after the incident, she is still referred to as “the woman in black” instead of by her name. She grew into one of the everybody figures of Gezi that represent all activists and anyone from the public. By

becoming an everybody icon, the *Woman in Black* not only speaks for the visibility of women in Gezi but also for those others that are marginalised and without voice. In an interview with BBC Turkish, Cullen tells (Hamsici, 2013):

“This photograph is not about me anymore. Generally speaking, my action is absolutely nothing. It is not braver than thousands of protesters who do the same and even more. ‘Woman in Black’ is not me anymore. It is the man who dragged me home and offered lemon (to soothe the effects of pepper spray), the proud-walking anti-capitalist Muslim woman, the veiled old woman who gave me a pot to make noise, and each and every person who stood up and took to the streets because they believed (in Gezi).”

Cullen’s enthusiastic account underscores the diversity of participation in Gezi. She mentions particularly the people who carry Islamic symbols or openly declare their religious beliefs, those who are supposed not to be part of the movement in the traditional Manichean thought of Turkish politics. Accordingly, a woman wearing a veil is considered neither an “emancipated” woman nor is expected to have a secular mind, and would therefore be seen as a potential supporter of Erdoğan’s policies. Scholars have already drawn attention to such division and to women’s being forced to choose one part of this conflict due to their appearance or affiliation (Gole, 1996; Göçek, 1999; Ibrahimhakkioğlu, 2013; Navaro-Yashin, 2002). On the contrary, everybody figures can call for transcending such borders and give voice to those remain in the middle, making them visible. Another example of this would be the “aunties” of Gezi, as shown in the following.

The image in Figure 31 is a photograph that was disseminated on social media platforms as the Gezi protests continued. First posted on Twitter by actor Sarp Apak on 2 June 2013, the exact location of the photograph was suggested to be Gaziantep, a town in the southeast. Among many men in the background who look concerned about the ongoing events, the foreground of the photograph shows a woman in a black topcoat and colourful patterned headscarf wearing a Guy Fawkes mask. She carries a shoulder bag in a casual manner. It is difficult to judge the age of the woman from this photograph, as her face and body is hidden.

The photograph was made an element of humour based on the common thought that a woman of such a traditional and conservative profile would be apolitical and not join the protests. The Gezi activists, who were reported to be younger in general (KONDA, 2013a; Tufekci, 2017), were excited to see a veiled (and presumably older) woman adopting their creative and witty methods of protest. She quickly became an “auntie” of Gezi. In reference to James McTeigue’s 2005 movie, *V for Vendetta*, in which the Guy Fawkes mask is used by the

main character, the image was named “V for Auntietta” (*V for Teyzetta*) and “V for Auntie Vildan” (*V for Vildan Teyze*), using the name “Vildan” as a generic pseudonym for a woman. Working still as a determinative everybody figure, the woman in the photograph signalled that the Gezi Movement was not only recruiting the secularists of Turkey but also developing an inclusive profile. Such photographs of elderly people joining the protests, aunties and uncles of Gezi, were remediated into illustrations.



Figure 31. Occupy Gezi Pics. (2013). *Auntie with Guy Fawkes mask* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <http://occupygezipics.tumblr.com/post/51962211362/an-anonymous-woman-in-gaziantep>



Figure 32. Başka Haber. (2013). *Remediation of the “Auntie with Guy Fawkes mask”* [Illustration, cropped]. Retrieved from <http://www.baskahaber.org/2013/06/gezi-park-direnisinin-sivriilen.html>

The image seen in Figure 32 is a cropped illustration from a popular visual collage. The illustration remediated the woman in the photograph by taking her out of the street context. Her posture stays the same and she still keeps her bag on her shoulder. The Guy Fawkes mask is also very visible but is also accompanied by the symbol from the *V for Vendetta* movie, with “Vildan Teyze” replacing the word “Vendetta”. The mask is a powerful tool used toward iconisation. Within the last decade of movements around the world, the Guy Fawkes mask has become a symbol for expressing both anger at the existing order and hope for change (Schober, 2019b). Schober observes that the mask and the anonymity it brings signifies a longing for the universal “we” in this wave of movements, particularly in contemporary societies where individualism and personal gratification prevail. Hiding the face of the person wearing it, the

mask allows for a public appearance by those for whom it otherwise would not be possible. The mask becomes a vehicle for public presence. “We are Anonymous, we are legion...” is the motto of the Anonymous activist/hacker group that has contributed significantly to the global popularisation of the Guy Fawkes mask. As their motto also speaks for itself, a mask that grows into a political symbol is worn individually but embodied collectively. Following the Occupy movements in the US and other countries, the Guy Fawkes mask became a popular element of Gezi as well. In this sense, the remediation of the auntie figure with the mask symbolically transgresses the borders between the secular and non-secular and appeals to the individual to join a collective where several profiles, identities, and affiliations can concurrently be visible.

Wearing a mask may provide anonymity but does not always give full cover for hiding or disclosing a particular identity. As Figure 31 and Figure 32 show, the woman who wears the mask become an “auntie” due to her clothing, which is very casual and can apply to a great number of people in the society, and her assumed age. Her fully covered body signals her religious beliefs, which are interpreted as conservative, and helps break the stereotype of secular participation in Gezi, as discussed under the “diversification” frame earlier in this chapter. The mask, therefore, carries the potential to create a universal symbol, which has been the focus of the remediation process in this image. Despite the micro size of the illustration, the mask is clearly visible, and the logo of the *V for Vendetta* movie has been added, while the entire background of the photograph has been erased. By cropping the woman out of the photograph, the remediation decontextualizes her and increases her compatibility with other situations.

The Anti-Coup Resistance has also been engaged in challenging the politics of (in)visibility through everybody images in diverse ways. The illustration seen in Figure 33 is a remediation of the photograph of the woman in chador that was presented in the previous sub-chapter under the “vulnerability as a strength” visual frame (Figure 27). After going viral on social media platforms, the woman was quickly hailed as a nameless *Nene Hatun*, referring to a heroine renowned in Turkish historiography for her bravery in the 1877 Russo-Turkish War. She is a prominent female figure appearing in text books and other official accounts and a symbol of patriotism, thus the ideal Turkish woman who does not hesitate to fight and protect the nation (Alpargu & Çelik, 2016; C. Şahin & Şahin, 2013). The photograph was used widely in social media and by news portals along with titles and statements endorsing the nameless heroines of the 15 July night.

Similar to the image of the Gezi auntie, this remediation singles out the woman in the original photograph and simplifies the composition and arrangement of colours. The other participants shown in the original photograph, who seem to be all men, are not included in the

remediation. On the way to becoming an everybody figure, the *Woman in Chador* loses the initial context displayed in the photograph but accrues other layers. Two visual elements, the chador and the Turkish flag, are highlighted. Originally a tradition of the ancient Persian nobles, chador is today considered a symbol of average clothing in Islamic culture around the world, despite not being a mandate in the Quran (Esposito, 2003). Chador and its variants, including the veil, are among the most controversial symbols regarding the (in)visibility of women in the public sphere. Khatib (2013) shows that chador can be considered as allowing women to be visible in the society, and thus as an enabling tool, though it is banned elsewhere on the grounds that it makes them invisible. As controversial as it is, the bio-politics targeting the regulation of the female body induces the presence of controversial everybody figures at work. The photograph and its remediation consolidate the understanding of a collective ideal, where the average woman, meaning an average heroine, is a patriot and devout Muslim.



Figure 33. Çirişoğlu, M. (2016). *Remediation of the “Woman in Chador”* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/mervecirisoglu>

Billig (1995) described the quotidian representations of national identity as ways of confirming the sense of belonging to a group as banal nationalism. In this vein, “flagging the nation”, as Billig calls it, becomes an ordinary part of the daily production of the relationship of oneself to the society in which one lives. Any visitor to Turkey immediately notices the overwhelming number of flags in public areas and offices, as well as in private buildings, compared to even decades ago. A 2000 study reports on the symbols of national identity—including the flag—flooding social life in Turkey (Yumul & Özkırmılı, 2000), while a 2011

study underlines a recent extension of banal nationalism in the digital sphere through the use of Internet memes, designs, comments, avatars, and the like (Çırakman, 2011). Çırakman observes that the symbolic forms of expressing national belonging, however, turned aggressive through the 2000s. She shows that although an increase in the number of acts performing nationalism can be understood with the popularisation of the Internet and digital media, the flag, for instance, became a divisive element rather than a unifying one. Unlike the secular nationalism of earlier decades, an ethnocentric nationalism in Turkey has recently advanced in a bottom-up fashion, adopting Sunni Islam and Turkish ethnicity as core values but dismissing anything else (Çırakman, 2011). Once used as a symbolic weapon of modernism against the threat of Islamic factions, the Turkish flag has grown into a unity symbol of this new ethno-religious nationalism and a call to arms against inner and outer enemies, meaning minority groups and collaborators inside the country and the foreign powers supporting them from outside. The flag, together with the black chador, becomes a reminder of the times of war and the threat of invasion when even the brave women fought alongside the men. Hence, the female body as an allegory of the nation represents the national defence against the threat that solidified in the body of a coup d'état attempt. Combined with the legacy of Nene Hatun, the remediation crops the woman from the photograph and reincarnates the memory of the national heroine in the body of a woman in black chador, strengthening its implication of everybody.

The Turkish flag can be found in a variety of everybody images of Anti-Coup, as also shown in the presentation of visual frames above. Mobilisations like Gezi and Anti-Coup recognise the power of national symbols in evoking public affects. Country flags are also present in the images of other social movements. The comparison between Gezi and Anti-Coup images, however, shows a stark difference in the use of national symbols between the two cases. As the above examples of the AKM façade also show, such symbols can contribute to the notions of inclusivity and plurality in one social movement setting while being exclusive in another. Although the difference in the use of the Turkish flag's function across Gezi and Anti-Coup has been pointed out by researchers (Bedir, 2018; Türkmen & Küçük, 2016), its power to give visibility to the underrepresented groups was neglected. Among these, children and people with disabilities are two other prominent profiles that appear as everybody figures of protest.

Child imagery has been extensively used in politics. In the images of social conflict and war, children and youngsters are often portrayed as the victims of cruelty. Propaganda images depict children as an allegory of the nation to be defended and national ideas to be pursued. Peacock's (2008) study on Cold War images that include children shows that the American

children are portrayed as fragile national property to be defended in the American propaganda, while Soviet propaganda shows children as brilliant agents of the system who will promote it further in the world. In Gezi, numerous photographs of children were produced and disseminated, though I was unable to find any remediations in relation to these images. The remediations seemed to focus on the young martyrs, especially the photographs of Berkin Elvan, a fifteen-year-old who was shot in the head with a gas cannister by a police officer. I will return to one of these remediations later in this sub-chapter when discussing the imagery of death and the dead. On the other hand, even though having lost at least eight martyrs who were under 18 and producing no remediation related to their ubiquitous photographs, the Anti-Coup Resistance focused on the photograph of the four-year-old child pulling a toy truck to a democracy vigil in the city of Düzce.



Figure 34. Sevinç, M. (2016). *Remediation of the “Boy with the Toy Truck”* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://www.pinterest.de/pin/382524562100684349>

Drawn by Murat Sevinç, the illustration in Figure 34 remediates the photograph that captured the boy with the toy truck going to a democracy vigil (see discussion of Figure 14 above). The illustration focuses on a portion of the photograph that includes the boy, the toy truck, and a car in the background. The car does not seem to have a particular role in the image composition except as a bridge to the spatial context of the incident. Walking on the asphalt, the boy and his toy truck are highlighted and much more visible compared to the low brightness of the original shot. The growth in the size of the Turkish flag can be understood as a stress on national values and the risk the nation faces. In the upper left of the image, a logo merges the

crescent and star of the Turkish flag together with the date 15 July (*15 Temmuz*). Various logos have been produced by a number of graphic designers since 2016, and Sevinç completed this work in early 2017. Although the official use of logos has varied within the past few years, the Directorate of Communications of the Presidential Office adopted Sevinç's logo in 2019 and developed guidelines for its use.⁹

The illustration brings to the fore the child/adult duality in Western public imagery. Children represent what an adult does not. They trigger connotations of innocence and stretch our thoughts between the past (childhood memories of adults) and the future. Children are depicted as harmless, powerless, and in necessity of the protection of adults. Such a dichotomy of power “parallels other dichotomies which have characterised Western discourse: nature/culture, primitive/civilised, emotion/reason” (Holland, 2004, p. 15). Children, who are to be educated and will become adults one day, are seen as having the full right to joy, leisure, play, being care-free and taken care of, being able to laugh, cry, run, jump, get dirty, and enjoy all other pleasures of mind and body that adults cannot fully enjoy due to their civilised lives and duties. The adult/child duality characterised by having full agency vs. being powerless and in need of protection also defines the social movement imagery. A child is either portrayed as “a little adult” engaged in some sort of conscious political activity, or as an innocent being in the middle of a political activity sometimes supervised by their parents (D'Amico, 2004; 2008). The child is also shown as a victim in visual political communication. From the images of children's organisations that arouse pity to horrifying images of child soldiers, children also represent a call to arms while being victims of violence and conflict.

In the remediation of the photograph of the boy with the toy truck, the child is not a victim but a symbol of confidence. He grew into an everybody figure that announces a call to arms. A magnified national symbol from the photograph, the flag is portrayed as a tool that enables the boy to be engaged in an adult-like action. Similar to the mask that allows the vulnerable to be publicly present and act in Gezi, the flag allows the child to become part of the Anti-Coup imagery.

Contrary to the usual depiction of children in need of protection and as actors without political agency, the remediation transgresses the border between the capable adult and the incapable child (Holland, 2004) and depicts a powerfully attractive figure for mobilising people—if a boy is on the street committed to protecting the country, why not the adults? The toy truck's reference to a child's mundane activities of play creates, though its naïveté, a

⁹ See the official logo guidelines (in Turkish only), posters, and other audio-visual material in various languages by the Directorate of Communications of the Presidential Office via <http://kurumsal.15temmuz.gov.tr>

dimension of political action with an affective charge. The toy that carries a flag becomes part of the everybody figure, a symbol of innocence and yet a summoning agent, a call to arms. With increased visibility, the boy evolves into an Anti-Coup icon symbolically challenging the traditional absence of children’s political agency in a social movement setting.

People with disabilities represent another absent profile in the imagery of social movements. Although some of the photographs of war veterans protesting in the US during the Vietnam War and of the protests following the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 remain in public memory, people with disabilities are barely present in the overall social movement imagery. Also, the imagery around disability within the context of social movements is mostly limited to visually evident physical disability. Other forms of disability, such as those concerning hearing and speaking as well as psychological and emotional aspects, do not always find their way to becoming part of iconic imagery. The study of visual frames and the analysis of the photograph of two people with disabilities attending a democracy vigil (Figure 12) show that the dissemination of such images can be used to frame the diversity of participation. A remediation of this photograph provides an opportunity to analyse how people with disabilities can turn into everybody figures.



Figure 35. Çirişoğlu, M. (2016). *Remediation of the “Two people with disability with Turkish flags”* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/mervecirisoglu>

De Certeau’s argument for the impact of marginalisation does not picture a case far from the reality of people with disabilities in Turkey. The inaccessible urban landscape in Turkey

makes it difficult for them to move in cities autonomously, which leads to limited possibilities of interaction with the broader public (Demirkan, 2013). Participating in city life becomes a challenge to be overcome, let alone participating in demonstrations. Nevertheless, the images of people with disabilities increasingly perform a function of inclusivity in contemporary societies (D. T. Mitchell & Snyder, 2000). Their images are used to portray success, stability, and achievement, much like the commercial use of images of the elderly (Holland, 2004).

The Anti-Coup visual activism turns disability into a step toward ability, and actually a much more spectacular ability at that. Behind the material aspect of the production and dissemination of the remediated image, and the social aspect that it acts as a mobilising agent in the aftermath of the coup attempt, the image performs an inherent but symbolic function of transforming disability into ability whose effects are twofold. At the first level, the Turkish flag as the very obvious visual marker engages the illustration with the tide of images where affects around nationalism are aroused. In this sense, the flag becomes an empowering symbol, one that enables an average person to become a hero, and the disabled to become abled. Several other photographs that capture demonstrators wearing flags on their chest and illustrations where the flag is drawn to be bulletproof exemplify the treatment of the national symbol as a mythical shield and an empowering object.

A second-level reading would link the image to the change in the representations of veterans that parallels the change in how representing disability became part of inclusivity practices. As Casey (2015) also observes, serving in the military grew from being an experience into being an identity. The military is obligatorily included in the ordinary life of the (male) citizen in Turkey under the title of “patriotic duty”. The ongoing low-intensity war with the pro-Kurdish PKK guerrilla forces makes it a real possibility for an average person to become a veteran and to have a physical disability as a result of armed battle, given the religious symbolism around martyrdom and veteran status. While the militaristic point of view that considers the citizen-soldier as the foundation of a nation remains strong, veterans are increasingly seen as wounded warriors rather than victims of war. With the inclusive shift in the representation of people with disabilities, veterans and even those that are disabled have started to be seen as role models in the society.

As shown through these examples, the remediation practices in mobilisations with incompatible political agendas can converge when challenging the politics of (in)visibility. While each side can pursue distinct political agendas, everybody figures are at work for appealing to people through universal claims and calling for them to take public positions in a crosscutting fashion beyond the movements’ explicit goals.

However, not all marginalised and/or representatives of invisible identities grow into icons of universal appeal. Social movements have been careful about introducing everybody figures. For example, even though very scenic and breath-taking images were disseminated on social media platforms after the Pride Walk on 30 June 2013 as Gezi continued, no photographs of LGBTQI+ individuals were remediated. Similarly, when a pro-government TV channel reported the awe and sympathy of an LGBTQI+ individual for President Erdoğan after the failed coup by disseminating several photographs and videos on social media, no visuals were picked for remediation by any visual activist. Although Whittier (2009) suggests that social movements are places for “coming out”, referring to LGBTQI+ individuals in particular, these examples show that the efforts to generate universal appeal are still bound up with politics of (in)visibility, as well as with the cultural and social norms of the given society and moment. A frame’s generic resonance relies heavily on the possibility of its alignment with a wider population, meaning that the everybody figures that help construct and expand a frame need to be approved by the society. Hence, social movements are after those images in particular, where the figure symbolises a person who is compatible with the most salient social roles and performances, even if they represent marginalised identities.

Diverging solidarity patterns

As shown above, social movements develop a sense of “we-ness” and bonding around a collective identity, and a substantial part of this is done through production and dissemination of images that contribute to the development of powerful affective ties (Juris, 2008). In Routledge’s (1997) words, “imagineering of resistance” includes building trust among the social movement participants through images while discrediting the other party, again through images. Everybody figures do not only call people to arms individually but also to join a collectivity. A remediation of the photograph of the standing man protest in Gezi is a good example of this.

From the time he started standing in front of the Atatürk Cultural Centre building on 17 June 2013, Erdem Gündüz, who is known as the *Standing Man*, was photographed by a number of journalists and passers-by, which was analysed earlier as an example of construction of the “vulnerability as a strength” visual frame. No single photograph became exclusively popular, which in turn resulted in a number of remediations. Figure 36 shows one of the numerous anonymous photographs disseminated on digital media. As I have already analysed a

photograph of this particular protest in the first part of this chapter, I will forego commenting on Figure 36. Instead, I will focus on Figure 37, an illustration by Dilem Serbest. Due to the dissemination of multiple photographs taken from diverse angles in digital media, it is difficult to understand which particular photograph the illustrator remediated. But as this is not crucial information in this case, we can continue the analysis with these two images.



Figure 36. Actipedia. (2013). *Standing Man 2* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://actipedia.org/project/standing-man-duran-adam>

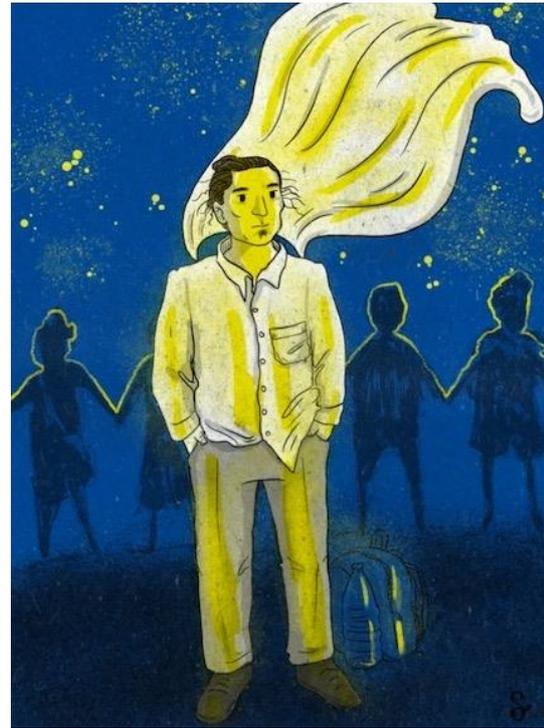


Figure 37. Serbest, D. (2018). *Remediation of the "Standing Man 2"* [Illustration]. Courtesy of the artist.

The illustration shows *Standing Man* in casual clothes with one tail of the shirt tucked-in, which seems to be a popular detail in many other remediations. His backpack and water bottles are next to him on the ground. A cloak flying in the air is added to his shoulders, making him look like a superhero. Indeed, in a 2013 version of this digital drawing, Serbest puts this intention of hers into words.¹⁰ On the left side of the earlier version of the illustration it reads in English: “Standing Man. Another nameless hero!” Schober (2019a) suggests that everybody is “heroes like you and me” who act as bridging figures connecting people to each other.

¹⁰ The earlier version of the illustration was published on illustrator’s webpage on 18 June 2013. See <https://www.behance.net/gallery/9360451/Duran-Adam-Standing-Man>

In Figure 37, he is portrayed as a calm and serene figure that inspires others gathering around him under the dark blue sky. Differently than in the photograph, where the other people stand still in behind him, the remediation shows the background figures hand in hand standing around the man. The everybody figure embodied in *Standing Man* becomes a point of connection and reference in a solidarity network. Following the closure of the park to further political activity, it was thought that the movement would soon come to an end. His silent protest was a motivating act that brought activists together after the park was evacuated. The common man in this illustration represents a silent power that can move a great number of people even without moving himself. Despite the fact that he stands still and is portrayed as a passive figure, almost an immobile statue, the symbolic call of the image is actually very mobilising. It promotes a networked-like strength that is composed of people in solidarity where each individual contribution is valued.

Standing Man's protest followed the emergence of a series of other heroes and heroines and their contribution to this idea of a people's movement without any significant names and affiliations. *Woman in Red*, *Woman in Black*, *Whirling Dervish with the Mask*, among others, were engaged in spectacular actions of protest in Gezi but remained inconspicuous. The symbolic power of these figures and the XYZ-woman/man naming that implies anonymity and the display of actions of ordinary people triggered the pro-government circles to pay attention to and try similar tactics. On 19 June 2013, a group of eight anti-Gezi activists stood still in Taksim Square facing the Gezi activists performing the standing man protest (Hürriyet Daily News, 2013). The group wore T-shirts reading, "Man standing against the standing man" (*Duran adama karşı duran adam*). The pro-government action against the standing man includes the appropriation of the performance and the replication of Gezi's everybody figure. As the standing man protest spread around the country and was performed by a variety of protesters in diverse fashions (Verstraete, 2013), the response by the anti-Gezi activist group—performed by wearing the same T-shirts almost as a uniform—implies a monolithic stance against the movement. The plurality of everybody figures can be embodied in a unified representation of multiple people in appearance.

These two versions of the same performative protest, "the standing man" and "the man standing against the standing man", also verify a contrast in the representation of the collectivity across the two mobilisations. In Gezi, the collectivity is embodied not particularly in a unified identity of the movement but rather in a way that stresses the solidarity of multiple identities, as can also be observed in linguistic formulations, such as the movement's catchword, "Gezi Spirit" (McGarry, Erhart, Eslen-Ziya, Jenzen, & Korkut, 2019a). Anti-Coup, on the other hand,

although it uses the aesthetic and linguistic representations in a similar fashion, such as with its catchword, “15 July Spirit”, the meaning of the collectivity tends to imply a unified identity, which is considered to be a melting pot, as the repetitive assertions of ethno-religious symbols would confirm (Bedir, 2018; Küçük & Türkmen, 2018).

So, although two mobilisations develop and benefit from a shared aesthetic framing repertoire, there are considerable differences in between. This difference is certainly related to these mobilisations’ diverse approach to the invented traditions of Turkey, but it also has to do with temporality. It would not be fair to say that Anti-Coup copied Gezi’s aesthetics just because it emerged later. Instead, a balanced approach would be to consider the persistence of images and other symbolic elements that extend past the actual times of the street protests when media attention is directed to the movement processes. The Left might have a strong aesthetic repertoire of solidarity and collective resistance; however, right-wing movements have also been practicing various methods to gain visibility and universal appeal. Furthermore, we should consider the aesthetic techniques and forms of representations that were developed by the Left as a generic heritage open to the entire political field, particularly in a digital age when such material is highly accessible (Bogerts & Fielitz, 2018; Govrin, 2018).

I will continue this section by presenting two examples of plural everybodies, which I consider another important way to illustrate solidarity in Gezi and Anti-Coup. The illustration seen in Figure 39 is an excerpt from Sönmez Karakurt’s work. Published in Sabah Daily, Karakurt’s illustration remediates Agence France-Press photojournalist Adem Altan’s photograph, seen in Figure 38, which was shot in Ankara on 17 June 2013, during the peak time of the Gezi protests. The photograph was publicly named *Gezi’s Marginal Five*, with a reference to Hatay city major Lütfü Savaş’s comment on the protests as performed by a few marginal groups. Similar to the case of Erdoğan calling protesters looters (Yalcintas, 2015), the Gezi activists wore such belittling as a badge of honour. The photograph quickly went viral on social media platforms. It was often commented on as a “summary” of the Gezi crowd and the solidarity within the movement, due to the ordinariness of the people’s appearance in the image. It was also the cover of the July 2013 issue of the popular monthly periodical *Tempo* that was dedicated to the Gezi Movement. The photograph gives a sense of accidental gathering rather than of a proper group acting together, even though they stick to each other closely. Later in an interview, Adem Altan explained that the five people seen in the image dispersed immediately and went their separate ways after he took it.

Multiple remediations followed the photograph. I find the remediation in Figure 39 particularly important, as it was first printed in a daily newspaper before being disseminated

online. Five people, all men, are standing in a row and taking cover from a police intervention, as we know from the photographer's interview. This can also be guessed if the viewer is involved in the ongoing protest context. The first and the fourth people from the right look the most "equipped" with their simple masks. The first one also has a water bottle—probably a liquid solution to ease the effects of pepper spray—and a stone, while the other one wears a pair of underwater goggles to protect against the gas. The remediation highlights the determined face of the man on the right and shows the others as rather concerned about being noticed and attacked. The old man on the far left seems to be there accidentally. Together with his worried face, the barely seen bag in the back gives the impression that he was on his way home from shopping and was caught up as the clashes broke out. The man in the middle who also has a bottle in hand holds a Turkish flag naïvely, as if it could protect him from a sudden strike. The five men together appear as a collective body, and their horizontal alignment one after the other with all of their faces looking forward implies a direction and confrontation at the same time.



Figure 38. Altan, A. (2013). *Marginal Five of Gezi* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://t24.com.tr/haber/iste-gezinin-simge-fotografi-marjinal-beslinin-hikayesi,299397>

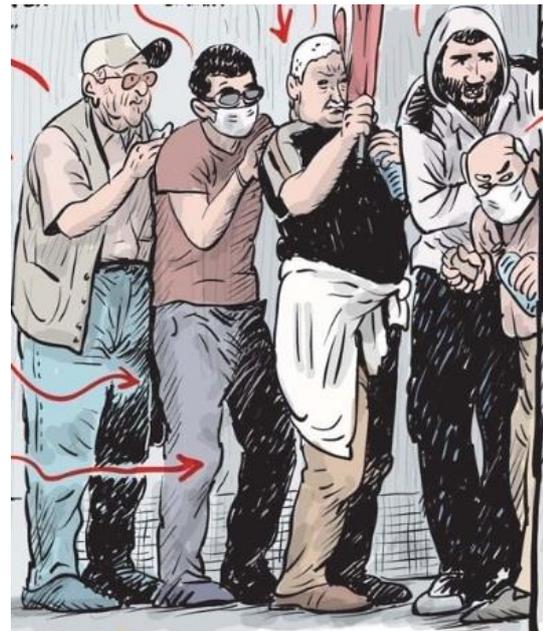


Figure 39. Karakurt, S. (2013). *Remediation of the "Marginal Five of Gezi"* [Illustration, cropped]. Retrieved from <https://i.imgur.com/xwUmoH6.jpg>

While minimising the colours and items in the background and the composition of the original photograph, the remediation underscores the people's clothing and facial expressions. They are illustrated in a way intended to show the randomness of the scene, with some people

seemingly more engaged in the protests and some being more reserved. The illustration brings to the fore the emotions related to vulnerability, such as fear and worry, and power, such as determination and persistence, of the ordinary people who participate in the movement. It marks the bended knees of the people in the image as a sign of agility and being alert.

The dampness on the ground was not transferred to the illustration, which indicates decontextualization work. Instead of the particular situation of taking shelter from a water cannon attack in the city of Ankara, the illustration enables the image to fit anywhere, anytime. In this vein, *Marginal Five of Gezi* acquires additional qualities that can survive time and space. It becomes part of a generic framing toward solidarity.

Different from a series of other everybody images, the plurality of everybodies is remarkable here. The illustration displays the variety in age and appearance of a group of everybodies. The casual gathering moment of such diverse people becomes particularly seducing and acts as an invitation to join the movement. The original photograph and both its soft and hard remediations were often commented on as being representative of the “Gezi Spirit”. The plurality of Gezi’s everybodies also reveals the “solidary individual” (Türkmen, 2018) profile of the participants. Rather than displaying a monolithic representation of the participants, this image of everybodies calls for a movement where various types of activists are welcome, namely separate individuals who could be anyone from the street with no prior common affiliation or acquaintance between them. Just as in the AKM façade analysed under the frame of “diversification”, plural representations of everybodies emphasise the multiplicity of voices present in Gezi and the possibility of individual action beyond the collective (McGarry, Erhart, Eslen-Ziya, Jenzen, & Korkut, 2019a).

In Anti-Coup, on the other hand, the remediations of plural everybody images, where iconic photographs feature groups of people, display otherwise. Even though variety in the participant profile can be observed, the remediations highlight existing forms of ethno-religious symbols, such as the flag and veil, or add connecting figures, such as Erdoğan, to the illustration. To show the contrast between the representations of plural everybodies across the two cases, I will use a remediation of a photograph that displayed several people capturing a tank during the Anti-Coup demonstrations.

Taking to the streets in larger numbers upon President Erdoğan’s call during a live broadcasting session, the demonstrators started to capture military tanks in the later hours of the 15 July night. Numerous photographs of such incidents went viral online and subsequently appeared in several print media, including newspapers and magazines, but also as book covers

and on event announcements and related publications repeatedly. I will present an anonymous photograph in Figure 40 from the night together with an anonymous remediation (Figure 41).



Figure 40. Politics Today. (2016). *Group of people on the tank* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://politicstoday.org/turkeys-july-15-revolution>



Figure 41. *Remediation of the “Group of people on the tank”* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://www.pinterest.de/pin/589901251167689256>

The photograph in Figure 40 shows a group of people, all men, who seized a tank from the coup plotters in Ankara, the capital of Turkey. The tank seems to be still, and the men are rather concerned about keeping their position on the tank. Some of them pose for the bystanders on the road. The illustration in Figure 41 keeps the position of the tank and the people above it

while changing a number of details from the original photograph. The tank is more visible in this image, as the fabric covering its front in the photographs is removed. It is also coloured in strong green to emphasise the military. The barrel points away from us, just as in the photograph, implying the vehicle's direction more than a threat to the viewer. The colour of people's clothes is more distinct in the illustration, including the vibrant red T-shirts, which can be interpreted as a reference to the Turkish flag. Indeed, the number of Turkish flags also quadrupled in the remediation process. Appearing repetitively throughout the visual frames and making of everybody figures, the Turkish flag should be seen both as an element of banal nationalism but also as a selectively inclusive symbol. The change from being a secular-republican to an ethno-religious signifier over the last decade mirrors the rearrangement in the understanding of how an ordinary citizen—an everybody—should think, feel, and act (Çırakman, 2011). However, the flag's function as a symbol of the melting pot that either ignores or subjugates various ethnic and religious identities has remained.

Although the people's clothing and corporal and facial expressions relatively distinguish individuals in the original photograph, the remediation disregards such differences. A good example is the clothing of the man in the green T-shirt who stands on top of the tank. His black T-shirt in the photograph can be seen as a minor aesthetic difference; however, dressing him in trousers instead of shorts points to a concern around religion and tradition. Wearing shorts is a controversial issue in Islam, and some of the countries that follow Islamic laws regulate men's use of shorts in public in addition to women's clothing.

The intention to align with Islam becomes more apparent when we look at the background of the image, where we see an urban skyline with multiple minarets that is most commonly affiliated with the urban landscape of Istanbul. The bridge, which is another urban landmark of Istanbul, is also there, even though the original photograph was taken in Ankara. This can be interpreted according to the above analysis of the "occupation of space" visual frame, as the 15 July Martyrs Bridge is the spatial anchor of the Anti-Coup Resistance. In between the urban skyline and the tank stands a cheering crowd that celebrates the victory of the Anti-Coup demonstrations and the salvation of the country's future. Not present in the original photograph, such a crowd can be found in a variety of photographs that were taken following the 15 July night. However, those that went viral the most were the photographs of people celebrating the victory on the bridge. As such an effort to merge the visual legacy of a city with the memory of an incident from another one exemplifies, social movements aim to gain universal appeal by the use of everybody figures that can apply to multiple situations. They

go beyond the notions of space and time and “actively contract the past into the cut of the present” (Massumi, 2015, p. 62), while aiming for a futurity.

Moreover, the representations of everybody in Anti-Coup seek to unite people around a symbol that is deemed publicly important. This type of symbol, such as the flag, disregards the individual and focuses on the collective. It functions differently than a common symbol for solidarity, and, therefore, cannot be regarded in the same way as the green banners of the 2009 Iranian Green Revolution or the blue bra of the 2011 Egyptian Tahrir Movement. A national flag cannot be considered without its symbolic baggage, which has a strong historic, social, and political claim. The representation of solidarity in Anti-Coup takes a form of exclusive and continuous unity that dismisses anyone who may not affiliate themselves with the flag. The flag’s function is different in Gezi, as we have seen in the examples above. It is rather a part of a larger representational plurality and points to a solidarity of individuals and a “convergence of struggles” (Türkmen, 2018) within a larger mobilisation, instead of being instrumentalised for the making of excessive claims for the entire movement.

Binary oppositions

Creating binary oppositions is an essential step in collective identity processes and constructing injustice frames in a social movement setting (Au, 2017; Olesen, 2013). Visual representations of binary oppositions help display the qualities of the contentious parties and the power positions between them. Schober (2019b) shows how varieties of everybody in visual culture and the history of art can appeal to people in a confrontational setting. Drawing upon the sociological concept of the “third person” (Simmel, 2009), she suggests that everybody figures draw a line between “good” and “evil” and address people to take sides. As seen in the analysis of photographs in the first part of this chapter, images representing binary oppositions take part in the construction of a number of visual frames in Gezi and Anti-Coup. Following these photographs, the remediated versions can be summarised in three main categories.

In the first category of remediations, the contention is depicted as a scene of encounter between contentious parties located in the left and right sides of the image. Located in either part, the everybody figure that represents the mobilised party is engaged in a struggle with the other side. The photograph *Woman in Red* is just one example that provides the basis for such an aesthetic setting. It was analysed under the “vulnerability as a strength” frame from a point

of inequality of forces between the police officer and the protester. It is one of the most remediated images of Gezi and is still considered a prominent icon of the movement. The illustration in Figure 42 singles out two main characters from the incident, the policeman and the woman in the red dress. Illustrator Murat Başol kept the casual passer-by look of the woman with her cloth bag over her shoulder and plain red clothing while drawing the policeman in black and white. Both of them stand on a green floor that recalls the park. The policeman on the left is drawn quite small compared to the woman, who becomes a superwoman—almost a monstrous creature. The policeman is pepper-spraying her, which makes her grow bigger. Becoming threatening and assuming intimidating dimensions, her face looks more masculine. The flying hair is reminiscent of the mythical Medusa. Unlike the popular depictions of the domestic woman, the Medusa poses a fatal danger to men with her venomous snakes in place of hair.

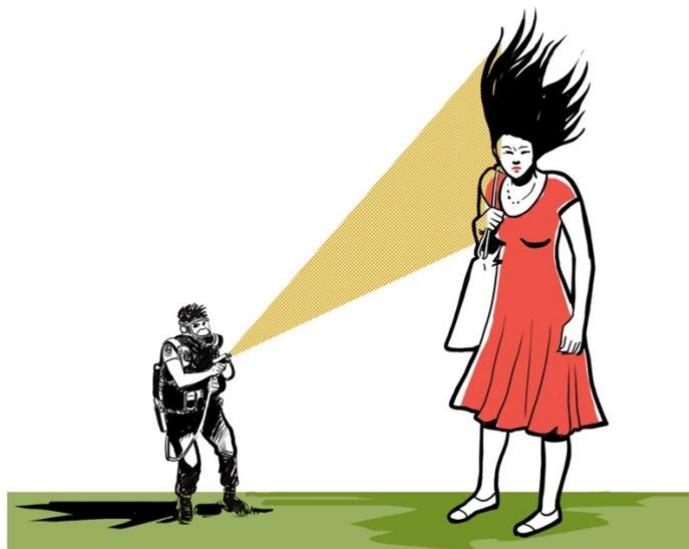


Figure 42. Başol, M. (2013). *Grows as he sprays: Remediation of the “Woman in Red”* [Illustration].

Courtesy of the artist.

Besides depicting a brutal attack, the remediation implies an empowered and enabled people opposing the government. It highlights the fact that despite all the violence, the police cannot suppress the protesters as they grow to unmanageable numbers and influence. Although the social engagement with images can go beyond the understanding of the binary exhibition of power and sensory experiences (Sonnevend, 2012), such a representation of the victim-

perpetrator relationship helps increase the pervasive use of the image. It highlights the resilient power of one individual against repression. In this regard, Başol's illustration can be identified as a straightforward representation of the activist desire to overcome the overwhelming government oppression.

Luhtakallio (2013) notes that the depiction of women in social movements follows established gender stereotypes in modern societies. Oftentimes, especially when they are central to the image, women are displayed in a child-like, playful fashion. Placing “Herculean” women characters in the social movement imagery creates a gendered agency in the representation of everybody. In line with the analysis of the remediations that challenge the politics of (in)visibility, Luhtakallio also suggests that switching the power position through the images of women blurs the boundaries of “dangerous” and “sweet” femininity while increasing the resonance potential of the image.

Another important affective register that is evoked during this process of creating generic resonance is hope, which becomes very salient among the illustrations in the “binary oppositions” group. Imagination of a triumph over government forces at any level is almost axiomatic in any kind of social movement that demands social and political change. No social movement would start knowing that it would fail. Social movement participants often share a collective anger and dissatisfaction about an ongoing or sudden issue of political nature and cultivate a collective hope for making a difference (Castells, 2015). By decontextualizing everybody figures in the photographs and turning them into timeless icons, the remediation process conceives a futurity that everyone would like to be part of. This is also valid for the second category of remediations.

In the second category of “binary opposition” remediations, the everybody figure moves away from us toward the background of the image. It acts on behalf of the audience—the viewer—upon the threat posed to that audience.

The illustration seen in Figure 43 remediates the photograph “Man stops a tank” that was analysed under the visual frame of “vulnerability as a strength” (Figure 26). Unfortunately, I was not able to read the signature of the artist in the lower right corner of the illustration. Drawing in an editorial cartoon style, the illustrator again crops out the two clashing actors in the photograph. In an obvious addition to the original image, *Antitank* wears a Turkish flag as a cloak and waves another one in his left hand. Illustrated simply and almost in a fun way, this remediation brings forward the depiction of a national mobilisation against the aggressor. With his right hand on the side like a soldier, the everybody figure marches firmly toward the tank.

Over the white tank a soldier's head wearing a helmet is visible. Small dots around the soldier's head symbolise his surprise and fear, as is often seen in editorial cartoons and animated characters, placing the enemy in an inferior position, which is a common tactic in social movement imagery and political communication (Johansson & Holtz-Bacha, 2019).



Figure 43. *Remediation of the “Antitank”* [Illustration]. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www.yenisafak.com/15-temmuz-karikaturleri-15-temmuz-darbe-girisimi-icin-cizilmis-en-guzel-karikaturler-h-2756397>

Schober (2019a) reminds us of the importance of the visual relationship between the everybody figure and the audience. She uses the example of two distinct versions of the frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes' (1588-1679) famous *Leviathan*, where the faces of plural everybodies embedded in the ruler's body are depicted differently. According to her, rotating the everybody figures' faces from the ruler to the audience means a change in the way the ruler and the audience are addressed; the first is a confrontation with the ruler, and the second is an invitation to the audience.

Different than the first category, in the second category of “binary oppositions”, the remediations do not reproduce a sense of victimhood in everybody figures. Although at times they help construct injustice frames (Olesen, 2013) or at least show an inequality between two sides, they display the everybody figure as capable of overcoming the opponent, provided that the audience joins the mobilisation. Holding a flag in his hand and extending his arm while moving toward the tank adds dynamism to the still photograph of the original incident. The

remediation in Figure 43 turns the mighty power of the tank into an instrument to praise the nation in the name of the everybody figure.

Certainly, such depictions of contentious situations are not new in political imagery. Both the first and second category of “binary oppositions” remediations are part of a long tradition of the allegories of good and evil and the contention between them. The frontispiece of the 16th-century morality play *Everyman* illustrates good and evil in anthropomorphic allegories, while trying to confront and alienate the viewer with the evil and involve them with the good in religious terms (Schober, 2015).

Everybody figures, however, do not always constitute crystal-clear public positions of good and bad. This ambivalence becomes stronger when everybody figures are depicted as directly addressing the audience; these cases constitute the third category of remediations in “binary oppositions”.



Figure 44. *Marching over the bridge* [Mural/Illustration]. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/beykozda-duvarlara-15-temmuz-resimleri-cizildi/1204002>

The anonymous image seen in Figure 44 was initially drawn on a public wall in the Beykoz district of Istanbul on the second anniversary of the coup d'état attempt and was then disseminated through digital media. It shows a crowd of people marching over the 15 July Martyrs' Bridge a few days after the putsch. It is difficult to find out which photograph it remediates, as quite a number of photographs capturing the event from a similar angle went

viral.¹¹ The collective body of the people occupies the entire foreground of the image and expands toward the background over the bridge. The bridge pillars are coloured red as in the original photograph(s). Although there are plenty of Turkish flags seen in the photograph(s) as well, they are drawn much bigger in the remediation.

As I have previously discussed the role of the flag in relation to both Anti-Coup and Gezi images, I will not repeat it here and will instead focus on other details. A significant addition in the remediation is the explosion in the right side of the image, a major reference to the tragedy and violence of the night of 15 July. Some people close to the explosion are drawn with their mouths open, as if screaming, which makes the image even more dramatic. Apart from these, the facial expressions of the people in the crowd are barely recognisable, although some body features indicate that there is a mix of men and women of all ages.

Occupying a vast space in the image, everybody figures in this category connect with the audience with their direct gaze. However, the other side of the binary opposition seems to be absent at first sight. Following the iconological track of 19th-century paintings, Schober (2019b) suggests that this type of everybody figuration confront the viewer as a “stratum”. She observes that this type of figuration is similar to everybody variants in earlier paintings, such as in *Liberty Leading People* by Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863), where an embodied plurality directly addresses the audience and invites them to take action. The ambivalence of the binary opposition lies in the confrontation of this collective agent with the audience. It is an invitation to the audience and a promise for change but is also at the same time a threatening move toward the audience, particularly if the viewer is not to be seduced by the call, such as in the case of a Gezi activist.

Some researchers (Bedir, 2018; Küçük & Türkmen, 2018; Türkmen & Küçük, 2016) have mentioned the incompatibility of the symbolic cosmos of Anti-Coup to that of Gezi and the possibility of alienation, even though public polls show that some people participated in both events (KONDA, 2016b). Thus, not only are the third category of remediations constructed by a confrontation with pre-arranged sides of the binary opposition, but they also urge the audience to take a position in relation to the social and political happening, which in turn, can place the viewers as the opponents themselves. This feature of everybodies must be highlighted. Even if they aim for universality, everybody figures of social movements can also cultivate confrontation with the audience. The ambivalence of these images might be a great asset for

¹¹ See an online archive of photographs capturing the event published by the Sputnik News Agency: <https://tr.sputniknews.com/foto/201607221024020530-darbe-protesto-bogazici>

generic resonance; however, they are not entirely free of situated framing. Either by condemning or gratifying it, they invite the viewer to take a position.

Although many remediation works from both Gezi and Anti-Coup can be analysed from the perspective of the first two categories of “binary oppositions”, I found considerably fewer remediations from Gezi that can be analysed under the third category. Photographs of Gezi everybody figures are remediated in every way, but the illustrations that show them looking directly at the audience or moving toward them are considerably low in number, even in the case of the standing man protest, which was shot from the frontal angle several times. Illustrations that remediate *Standing Man* preferred mostly the back-shot photographs or displayed the protester’s body tilted away from the audience. Despite the use of phrases such as, “Don’t be scared. We are the people.” (*Korkma. Biz halkız*), in Gezi’s graffiti and slogans, the absence of such claims in some of the most powerful iconic images of the movement can be interpreted as Gezi’s wary approach to displaying the everybody figures and a concern about the possibility of being perceived as a threat by the public. An exception to this is the remediation of martyr photographs. Both Gezi and Anti-Coup produced and disseminated a number of remediated and stylised martyr images, turning these people into icons of the mobilisation that create an interplay between the dead and the living. I will elaborate this more in the following section of this sub-chapter.

These three categories of remediations are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive for building binary oppositions in and through social movement imagery. As binary oppositions operate on a basic dual system of friend and foe, many of the iconic images from social movements rely on it (Alexander et al., 2012). The existing secular/non-secular and modern/traditional binaries have been highly instrumentalised in Turkish politics over the past decade (Türk, 2018; Yilmaz, 2018). Everybody figures also make use of these structural motifs in the society but additionally create ambivalent situations where these structural divisions can be transgressed.

Representational necropolitics

Necropolitics, or *necropower*, is a term based on the Foucauldian concept of biopolitics. Coined by Mbembe (2019), it refers to “contemporary forms of subjugating life to the power of death... [by] reconfiguring the relations between resistance, sacrifice, and terror” (p. 92). Mbembe argues that bio-politics aim not only to regulate how people should think, feel,

and act, but also how they should die. Although power has always intrinsically been part of the technologies of death in a political context, contemporary necropower constitutes a regime of the living dead, blurring the division between the dead and those still alive. Everybody figures join in this process by obscuring and blending the representations of “resistance and suicide, sacrifice and redemption, martyrdom and freedom” (p. 92).

Death has been a strong theme in the social movement imagery. Martyrdom, in particular, constitutes a global motif in the symbolic cosmos of the collective political struggle. People who lose their lives within a political context are held as heroes and remembered throughout generations. Their words and images are used repetitively for various political purposes. The images of the dead often take part in framing tasks due to their representative qualities that point to movement’s values and target structural inequalities in the society, such as in the case of George Floyd’s murder and the revival of the Black Lives Matter Movement in 2020. Researchers have emphasised the power of martyr images in social movements, including their role in the framing of injustice (Lim, 2013; Olesen, 2013) and in mobilising public affects on a global level through remediation (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010), among other topics.

Both Gezi and Anti-Coup suffered deaths during the peak time of the street clashes. Twelve people lost their lives during the Gezi protests, while more than 300 people were killed during the coup attempt, including the military personnel who either voluntarily or involuntarily took part in the plot. A comparison between the two cases reveals several convergence points and differences between the remediation practices engaging in representational necropolitics.

The illustration seen in Figure 45 was posted on Twitter by Ali Rıza Çümen on 8 May 2018 and received more than 1.000 likes. It depicts a group of Anti-Coup Resistance martyrs. Drawn in a charcoal pencil style on a light-yellow background, 13 people are lined up horizontally and are walking toward the right side of the image. The names under each figure are also helpful to identify them. By showing children and adults walking shoulder to shoulder, the illustration points to the variety in age among the demonstrators, but it fails to recognise the participation of women in Anti-Coup. Although a number of women were among the demonstrators and those killed during the clashes (Paksoy, 2017), the image includes only men and boys, a stereotypical contribution to the traditional invisibility of women.

Figure 45 shows an outstanding similarity to an illustration of Gezi by Faruk Tarıncı that was produced four years earlier and that is shown in Figure 46. Tarıncı remediated only some of Gezi’s martyrs and posted his work online on 18 March 2014. This illustration has been

disseminated endlessly on digital media ever since. It was also among the responses in the comment section of the first Twitter post that included the illustration of the Anti-Coup martyrs, which attests to a continuing tension between the two images (and movements) even four years after the peak period of Gezi.



Figure 45. cumenoglu. (2018). *Martyrs of Anti-Coup* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/cumenoglu/status/993971485025894400/photo/1>



Figure 46. Tarınc, F. (2014). *Martyrs of Gezi* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/gezi-kurbanlarini-aglayarak-cizdim-26051771>

Drawn on a yellow background in a charcoal pencil style, the image of the Gezi martyrs displays seven people aligned horizontally and walking toward the right, just like in the illustration of the Anti-Coup martyrs. In both illustrations a child martyr sits on the shoulders of one of the adults, an appealing move that makes the image friendly to the audience. Both

illustrations depict martyrs in casual clothing in general. Some of the Anti-Coup martyrs are drawn in military or police uniforms, as they were on duty at the time of their death. Depicted in a much more dynamic way than the Anti-Coup martyrs, the Gezi martyrs wave their hands and applaud enthusiastically, reflecting the joyful atmosphere of Gezi (Yeğenoğlu, 2013), which is quite different than the usual dramatic depiction of martyrs in social movement imagery (Olesen, 2013; Schielke, 2014). They are together and happy, and, what's more, they seem to be celebrating their meeting. Their attention is directed inwards, inside the group, as they look at each other. The Anti-Coup martyrs on the other hand seem calm and smiling, which can be interpreted as being aware of the possibility of dying during the clashes and the acceptance of the risk. Their gaze is directed outwards, toward a target point outside the image.

Khatib (2013) reports that the representations of martyrs, particularly those whose actions are associated with the good of the nation, are often displayed in an upright position, conveying a sense of confidence and serenity. Martyrs are displayed as belonging to another world that is apart from the rush and hassle of ours. In this sense, the image of the Anti-Coup martyrs reflects the intense atmosphere of the resistance against the coup attempt through the night of 15 July only indirectly. It refers rather to the peaceful togetherness of martyrs in the afterlife, while the image of the Gezi martyrs acts as a reminder of the movement's festive and worldly moments.

Moreover, martyrdom is used as a political term in this dissertation in reference to the fact that these people have lost their lives in a social conflict. Although this is the general use of the word in social movement and political communication research, martyrdom is also very much a religious term, which is especially revealed in the context of Anti-Coup, and as the stark difference in the bodily expression of the martyrs between two images shows. Given that the resistance to the coup attempt is considered as a defence of the nation against the enemy, the notion of martyrdom overlaps with the interpretation of Quranic verses related to dying while spreading or protecting Islam and therefore protecting the country where Islam prevails. So, martyrdom in the context of Anti-Coup should be understood also as an official and legal category beyond the symbolic and political notion, due to its consequences regulated by the law, such as the state assistance and benefits provided to martyrs' families.

Martyrdom in Gezi and Anti-Coup may overlap as a generic category of political symbolism; however, martyr images work as everybody figures in diverse capacities across the two mobilisations. Besides developing injustice frames by claiming victimhood, they negotiate death in distinctive if not contrasting ways. Gezi's visual labour is directed toward the present world and expresses resentment upon death, while Anti-Coup images fetishize death and

represent the afterlife in an almost charming fashion. In both situations, dead bodies grow into icons that speak to the living. We do not stop our lives to mourn the dead and express our grief when we see these images. Everybody figures embedded in dead bodies do not ask us to stop and remember. They invite us to take action.

Photographs of the dead are used for mourning practices as a point of reference, a situational image. In these cases, the photographs provide the framework for individual or collective mourning. When these photographs are remediated into illustrations for political purposes, they are no longer situational but are instead generic and transgressive. Dead everybody figures create and configure public affects of the living world. They influence and regulate our interactions within and across social movements. I will elaborate more on this by focusing on two people from the above images and the other remediations of their personal photographs.

Berkin Elvan, the 15-year old boy who sits on the shoulders of Ethem Sarısülük in the image of the Gezi martyrs, was shot in the head by a police officer with a gas canister during the protests in Istanbul. The boy died in the hospital in 2014 following a 269-day coma. His funeral was attended by thousands of people who had not heard of his name prior to the incident. His family testified that he was on his way to the bakery to buy bread, while the police insisted that he was engaged in clashes with the officers and that small firecrackers were found in his pockets. Gezi activists sided with the family, included Elvan in the martyrs of the movement, and installed a symbolic thumb stone at Gezi Park in his memory alongside others. At least three local authorities in the cities of Istanbul, Izmir, and Muğla commissioned artists to build sculptures commemorating Elvan. In the illustration above, Sarısülük holds a market bag with loaves of bread in it, an agonising detail stressing that Elvan's wish is fulfilled only after his death. Bread is an important symbol in Turkish culture, connected partly to nutrition, household, and income, but also to well-being and satisfaction. It is a market product that everyone consumes. Elvan's intention to get bread is something performed by everyone at his age, as sending the child to go buy bread from the bakery is a very ordinary practice in the Turkey. Until bread was made available in massive supermarkets or ordered online (as it can be nowadays), the youngest child with a certain level of autonomy being sent to buy was (and often still is) a banal practice in family life. Therefore, the bread in the image acts as an agent of ordinariness besides the depiction of family testimony. Other details in the image, such as Elvan's shorts, joyful laugh, and his sitting on an adult's shoulders also contribute to building an image of everybody, of a common child who could be anyone's son.

A number of Elvan's photographs were remediated into illustrations.¹² One in particular was used extensively both in online and offline environments. Remediating a smiling portrait of the boy, the illustration by Gazi Çağdas was used in Elvan's funeral by his family and the attendees. The illustration was disseminated widely on social media platforms as well, becoming one of the popular images used interchangeably with his photograph. The same illustration appeared together with another image as well: a stencil that was prepared in relation to the riots started in Athens shortly after the 15-year old Alexandros (Alexis) Grigoropoulos was shot dead by a police officer in December 2008. As the protests spread to other Greek cities, stencil prints of the remediated photograph of Grigoropoulos were on the walls of Istanbul (Karakatsanis, 2016). Calling him by the short form of his first name, the script below the wall stencils read: "You are my brother Alexis" (*Kardeşimsin Alexis*). This symbolic act of solidarity was much appreciated by the activists in Greece. When they converted the corner where the boy was shot in the neighbourhood of Exarcheia in Athens into a small memorial space, this stencil with the Turkish script underneath was also on the wall along with a collection of graffiti, murals, and banners. After Elvan passed away in the hospital in 2014, his images were added to the memorial, and the illustrations that remediate two boys' photographs started to be used in tandem.



Figure 47. Enginish. (2014). Remediations of portraits of Berkin Elvan and Alexandros Grigoropoulos [Stencil/Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/Enginish/status/443314884642881536?s=20>

The image in Figure 47 brings together Gazi Çağdas's illustration of Berkin Elvan (on the left) with the anonymous stencil remediation of Alexandros Grigoropoulos's photograph

¹² An online archive of Elvan's illustrations can be found at <http://everywheretaksim.net/berkin-elvan-in-illustrations>

(on the right). The historical controversies and hostile official narratives between the states of Greece and Turkey made such symbolic action remarkable (Karakatsanis, 2016). The adoption of Grigoropoulos by the Turkish activists and their declaration of him as a brother mean more than just solidarity when the national historiographies of Turkey and Greece come into play. This act of solidarity in the form of visual activism through a martyr image does not only transgress boundaries of nationalism, antagonism, and antipathy, but it also contributes to the visual repertoire of memory-building practice in another context—attachment to a specific person. Naming the dead as a family member is an expression of deep sadness and sympathy with the victim but also an act of identification of the self. As Elvan also could not survive a police shooting, even if it was with a gas cannister, and his death was publicly announced, the reciprocating gesture came from the other side of the Aegean and consolidated the act of compassion and unity.

First, his remediated image was attached to that of Grigoropoulos to be both distributed online and printed on banners for solidarity marches in Greece. The representations of the death of the two children become a merged and affirmative icon that claims life for the living and, even more, seeks to have a contemporary political impact on collective life transnationally. The public resentment over the decomposing of local bodies is directed toward transnational affectivity.

Second, the script under Berkin Elvan's image reads, "You are my brother Alexis", while the one under Alexandros Grigoropoulos reads, "You are my brother Berkin". The interchangeable use of both martyrs' names and illustrations signifies an important step in the construction of the everybody icon and shows the universality of the common child image. Various photographs and remediated images of Elvan can be found today at the memorial corner of Grigoropoulos in Athens.

On the other side, Ömer Halisdemir is recognisable at first sight among the 13 people seen in the illustration of the Anti-Coup martyrs (Figure 45) due to extensive dissemination of his photographs in print and online media. Seen as holding a boy on his shoulders in the image, he was a senior sergeant major at the time of the coup attempt and is known as the person who changed the course of the entire night by killing a senior ranking key person among the plotters. Halisdemir was reported to have accepted the order given by his superior, understanding clearly that he would be killed in turn on the spot. As a result, he is hailed as the main hero of the resistance and his photographs were endlessly remediated. He is also remembered through other forms of representation, including the erection of sculptures in various towns, the placement of

a wax sculpture of his body during the memorial events, the naming of the university of his town, Niğde, and several other schools after him, and the like.

Halisdemir, like many of the other political martyrs, is often displayed alone in remediations in which his face is beautified in a way as to stand out when seen alongside thousands of other images (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010). Styling of such images during the remediation process includes increasing their public appeal by placing them in a specific image tradition and connecting them to existing aesthetics of martyrdom.

The portrait photograph in Figure 48 is taken from military records and shows Halisdemir with several honours and signs of distinction on his chest. The anonymous illustration in Figure 49 remediates his portrait photograph, but only his head and shoulders, while a green badge on his collar is still visible, marking his military affiliation despite the black jacket, tie, and white shirt. Emphasising his military identity is an important detail in the remediation, as he stood against a military coup attempt.



Figure 48. Derinkuvvet. (2016). *Ömer Halisdemir's portrait* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/Derinkuvvet/status/7546296068>

80190465



Figure 49. *Remediation of the "Ömer Halisdemir's portrait"* [Illustration]. (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.gercekhayat.com.tr/yazarlar/sehit-omer-halisdemire-sukran-mektubu>

Although the public is much used to the intensity of martyr images, due to the bloody conflict between the Turkish army and the PKK guerrillas that has been going on since the early 1980s, these images are rarely stylised, if at all. Smiling portraits or family photographs of dead soldiers accompany the media broadcasting of their funerals, which have been used as

collective moments of praising martyrdom and fuelling nationalism. Such scenes have been repeated countless times over the past decades and have served to establish a culture of martyrdom and to associate the concept with the quotidian of ordinary people, as military service remains an obligation for all healthy male citizens over 20 years old.

Therefore, the images of Halisdemir cannot be considered outside the existing scene of martyrdom. They join an established image economy of death, where feelings around national and religious values are mobilised. Considering such an aspect, Anti-Coup's images engaging in "representational necropolitics" (Carney, 2018b) are directed toward mobilising affects of a domestic public rather than an international one, as in the case of Berkin. Anti-Coup's visual activism targets the iconisation of martyrs, extending the usability of images beyond the tragic news of clashes and increasing their routinised appeal for a compatible audience, at least in terms of culture and geography. Starting from the particular illustration of Halisdemir above, remediated versions of martyr photographs were used in public relations documents prepared for government-run events, official publications, local initiatives, street gatherings, and even computer games. Combining with the religious motives, the remediations glorify martyrs and attach to them a higher status in the hierarchy of death. The dead are situated as iconic role models to be followed and imitated by the living in a future occasion of mobilisation. Reproduced as a fetish, death becomes a constitutive part of the collective/connective identity of Anti-Coup, a social glue connecting the participants. Martyrs, who appear in stylised images as everybody figures, are no longer dead bodies to commemorate but agents of interpellation that demand that the audience mobilise.

Up until now, I have presented the images of martyrs in relation to their engagement in representational necropolitics; however, images of the living also take part in negotiating death in both Gezi and Anti-Coup. I have previously discussed Gezi's particular ambition to challenge bio-politics at work, particularly those aiming to regulate the female body and impose a culture of normative understanding of corporal interactions. At the same time, I have also showed some of the symbolic efforts on the side of Anti-Coup to restore the dissident body enacted by Gezi. I used illustrations that remediate the photograph of Anti-Coup's *Woman in Chador* and Gezi's *Woman in Red* to show this contention across the political imagery of the two mobilisations. In the following, I will present two further remediations of these two photographs and will suggest that everybody figures, also the living ones, participate in representational necropolitics in a contentious way.

A remediation of *Woman in Chador* can be seen in Figure 50. The woman has a slightly different posture than in the original photograph (Figure 27), but the shape of the flag behind

her is nearly identical. Besides her chador being almost blue, the background of the image toward which the woman is headed is striking. Coloured-in grey silhouettes of several people are drawn behind a rising wall of thick air—fog, smoke, or dust. Unlike the people seen in the original photograph, who are engaged in actions such as walking or possibly celebrating in the background, the illustration depicts them as motionless and almost floating vertically. A few Turkish flags are also randomly present in the crowd, creating a contrast with their red colour to the illustration’s overall apocalyptic grey.

Another element that catches eye is the presence in the background of the pillars of the 15 July Martyrs’ Bridge. Besides being a recurring figure in the political imagery of the post-failed-coup period and functioning as an visual-geographical anchor to territorialise the mobilisation, here the bridge can also be linked to the symbolism of life and afterlife in religious scripts (Badescu, 2007). Given the fact that the bridge was a location of brutal clashes between the soldiers and demonstrators, an interpretation for the background of this illustration would be that the silhouettes represent the martyrs who await the Judgement Day to enter Paradise, passing over As-Sirat, the sacred bridge to be established over the fires of Hell, as stated in the Quran. Martyrdom is part of important narratives in major monotheistic religions and even in ancient cultures (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010), and martyrs in Islam are believed to cross the As-Sirat Bridge swiftly. Reincarnating the national heroine, the woman in black chador acts as an everybody figure and connects the dead and the living. She is neither dead nor alive in this mediation, but rather one of the “living dead” (Mbembe, 2019) who invites us to sacrifice ourselves for the nation (Carney, 2018b).



Figure 50. stargazete. (2018). *Second remediation of the “Woman in Chador”* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/stargazete/status/1018234956202627072>

An additional theme encapsulated in this remediation is the concept of motherhood. The imagery of female heroines of Anti-Coup were often accompanied by comments and titles on digital and press media that served the national narrative: fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with men against the enemy of the nation, brave Turkish/Anatolian women are also ideal mothers that bring up loyal and brave children (Diriliş Postası, 2017; TGRT Haber, 2016). Considering that Nene Hatun was also selected as the first “Mother of the Year” in 1955, when Turkey joined the international community in marking the second Sunday in May as Mother’s Day, the visual reincarnation of historical memories of the war-time heroine stands as a depiction of the ideal woman, short-circuiting the connection between nation, religion, and the “female task” of raising future generations who are also ready to sacrifice themselves for the nation. Death and self-sacrifice, while being fetishized through the iconisation of social movement images, are situated as values to be nurtured through generations. Such idealising of women and their given role in the society is in stark contrast with what emerged in Gezi, as the following example shows.



Figure 51. Kunt, G. (2013). *Venus: Second remediation of the “Woman in Red”* [Illustration].
Courtesy of the artist.

The illustration *Venus* seen in Figure 51 was inspired by one of the most famous paintings of the Renaissance era, Sandro Botticelli’s *Birth of Venus*, dated c. 1483–1485, and

commissioned by the Medici family of Florence, Italy. In her illustration, Gaye Kunt merges Gezi's protest context with Botticelli's painting. Here, unlike in the original photograph (Figure 24) and Botticelli's painting¹³, Kunt's version shows only one person. The figure's casual, passer-by look is maintained with a net shopping bag holding food and drink, although the cloth bag has been removed. Unlike Botticelli's Venus, whose hair is blown by the breath of Zephyrus, the god of the west wind, the woman in the red dress is blown by pepper spray, through in the same direction. The police characters are not visible in the illustration, but the flying hair and the slight leaning of the figure recalls them. A more realistic contrapposto stance replaces Botticelli's almost impossible one. All these signs ground the illustration in current reality. They create an interplay between the memory of the fragile Venus and the reality of a resilient activist in Gezi. The people and other elements that we see in the original photograph have been cleared from the illustration, and the woman in the red dress appears as the sole figure. She is exposed to direct attention, minimising any distraction by other characters.

The upper half of the background recalls the environmental concern of the Gezi Movement, through the trees that were threatened in the park. The green in the original version resembles the silhouette of a tree growing from the woman's body. At the same time, it is possible to see the Venus as part of nature, also similar to Botticelli. Botticelli's combination of nature and sensuality here helps to accentuate the erotic aspect of the red dress. In Western bourgeois tradition, women have widely been depicted alone and as erotic objects vulnerable to the male gaze. Often nude, women are portrayed as submissive to male dominance (Schober, 2013, pp. 169-70). The original nudity here is covered with the red dress, although the stance and position of the arms are kept.

Yet here it is not only the fact of being clothed that reverses the fragility of Venus. The divinely beautiful face in Botticelli's painting is also replaced with a black gas mask, linking the illustration to the protest atmosphere. Widely used in Gezi against pepper spray and appearing in a number of images, the mask, per se, became not only a symbol of resistance and protest but also a symbol of life and the ability to breathe (Soncul, 2015). Together with the blood type written on her arm—a regular practice of the Gezi activists—it recalls other moments of brutal clashes over the course of the protests and implies the potential of sacrifice. This sacrifice, although it can be interpreted as for a common good, is different than what is promoted as a fetish in Anti-Coup imagery. It refers to the individual risk of death or severe injury, a risk that is posed and governed by the state apparatus, but also to an intention to survive

¹³ See a digitalised version on Google Arts & Culture: <https://g.co/arts/DReFYBZJAEDX2SnU8>

and live. Such a difference between the two examples also points to a tension between the creative and appealing role of everybody figures in the society (de Certeau, 1988) and the normative force of death (Emerson, 2019).

These examples show that representational necropolitics is a contested field across the social movement imagery. It opens up to an operational sphere of influence that is wider than a mere trigger effect created by the images of victims of violence (A. Assmann & Assmann, 2010) or by a historic hero/heroine that anchors the mobilization to a certain master frame (Snow & Benford, 1992). Everybody images in Gezi invite the audience to a celebration of tactical resistance in the presence of the risk of death, whereas in Anti-Coup they call for a decisive end of life for a greater entity to survive. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Gezi's imagery should simply be associated with life and Anti-Coup's with death. The analysis of the remediations shows that the iconisation process of everybody figures develops contrasting perspectives on death, developing primarily around the notion of sacrifice and the extent of the audience. One alerts the audience to such fatal risk, while the other promises to unite certain participants with a respected community of martyrs.

Discussion

In this sub-chapter I presented the second part of the results of my study on visual activism and political imagery through the cases of the Gezi Movement and the Anti-Coup Resistance of Turkey. Selected out of a corpus of 204 items, the 17 images presented in the sub-chapter are representative of the construction of a political imagery that expands over an approximately five-year period, from 28 May 2013 to 16 July 2018. The images, both photographs and their remediations, are analysed comparatively between Gezi and Anti-Coup in order to uncover the similarities and differences in the visual production and dissemination of public positions across political divides. The sub-chapter aims to offer insights on this comparison by instrumentalising two major concepts that emerged in the disciplines of media and communication studies and cultural studies: *remediation* and *everybodies*.

Remediation as a concept is meant to be a more complex form of the repurposing act, using existing content, form, and expression in a new context (Bolter & Grusin, 1999; Lievrouw, 2011). To apply the concept to this study, I borrowed Mattoni's (2017b) dual model that allows for differentiating across the digitality factor in the process. Although the chapter includes a few descriptive examples of hard remediation, meaning the travel of an image from

online or digital environment to offline, I mainly focused on soft remediation in order to study the practices of repurposing images that are originally photographs into (digital) illustration. The other concept, everybodies, is borrowed from de Certeau's *The Practices of Everyday Life*, in which he critically describes the potential of an ordinary person in modern societies to make a change and reconfigure the individual and the social. He suggests that a common person has an abundance of opportunities to resist and subvert the structurally imposed practices of the establishment (de Certeau, 1988). Everybodies and their variants can be found across a variety of literature, from 16th-century theatre to "third person" figures in sociology (Schober, 2019a).

This study considers the construction of everybody figures in political struggle and the soft remediation of images as intertwined processes in the age of digitality. The current state of technologies allows visual activism to grow rapidly, styling and galvanising photographs in an instant. Although neither remediation as a technique and nor the notion of everybody is new, the contemporary activism scene shows a greater tendency to bring these together. This is evident particularly in the illustrations based on photographs of ordinary people taking critical actions in a political setting. Reminding us of the 26 December 2009 *London Times* article following the death of Iranian Green Revolution's Neda Agha-Soltan, Assmann and Assmann (2010) suggest that iconic images of a political nature that portray ordinary people who represent and summon greater masses are the modern versions of the religious icons. They urge people to action by evoking affective registers that pertain to various historical, social, and political references. The creation and use of powerful images to mobilise public affects is much acknowledged across the literature on social movements.

Visual construction of everybody figures that function as a gateway between the particular and the universal lies at the core of such collective/connective efforts. Soft remediation, which is to be understood within the framework of this study as the production of illustrations based on photographs, is part of visual activist practices that aim to mobilise people around certain political ideas and positions. It should be clear that this chapter does not claim a causal relationship between the everybody figures and remediation but rather an interrelated one. Not all everybody figures emerge as photographs and are remediated into illustrations, and no remediated photograph of a social movement character should be categorically assumed to be an everybody image. Increasingly dependent on digital media, the visual construction of everybody figures includes soft (and hard) remediation practices in the contemporary social movement scene. In other words, soft remediation of photographs is more and more a popular technique for creating everybody figures today.

The remediated images are discussed in four interconnected sections in this sub-chapter. Analysis of forms, motifs, and body positions and gestures that are accentuated and masked in the remediation process provides insights that go further than a superficial description of the images in a political context. It reveals the social norms and public positions that social movements and mobilisations align themselves with. The results of the analysis of everybody image remediations are summarised in the following:

Politics of (in)visibility: Both in Gezi and Anti-Coup, construction of everybody figures aims at having the variety of participation recognised and challenging the established norms of social difference. Although the words “protest” and “resistance” are often visually associated with the defiance of fully-potent individuals who are white, adult, male, and physically able who are engaged in the making of counter-culture, a careful look at the remediations of popular photographs and their iconisation process proves that the visual activist practices across political divides are directed toward promoting the invisible profiles in political struggle. Women, the elderly, children, and disabled people were chosen to develop everybody figures that could mobilise wider sectors of the society while still emphasising and claiming diversity in participation. Moreover, everybody figures made of relatively invisible figures in political struggle challenge notions of normativity and urge us to question our position on what the social movement stands for. They open up the possibility of becoming—a moment of unity between the particular and the universal. Becoming, according to Deleuze (1995) is a process in which one element is drawn to the territory of another to generate a new coexistence. In an effort to challenge the politics of (in)visibility, the visible is pushed out of its homeland and affectively drawn into the territory of the invisible.

Diverging solidarity patterns: Solidarity and the sense of “we-ness” are considered to be intrinsic parts of a social movement’s collective identity. Operating as mediators between the individual and the collective, everybody figures aim to create powerful ties among social movement participants. They not only reflect the solidarity profile of the movement but also take part in building it. The examples show how the images of everybodies claim solidarity from different, if not contrasting, perspectives. In Gezi, solidarity is “imagineered” as a coordinated action of disconnected individuals who come together temporarily. People who have little in common gather on the spot for a specific action rather than forming a long-lasting community that shares more than an “energy rush” (Collins, 1993). Gezi’s everybody figures symbolically challenge the ongoing social polarisation in the country by depicting utopic scenes of solidarity (Voser, 2016). This symbolic challenge follows a post-1960 understanding of new social movements, where collective action aims at creating representations of “vernacular

utopias” through “mimetic performances” (Balaban, 2015). In such representations, everybody figures call for a spontaneous solidarity of individuals to experiment in the making of collective resistance against authority. The iconisation process relies on various symbols to depict the singularity of ordinary citizens’ associations, from their clothing to their age and the variety of national symbols. Whereas Anti-Coup’s everybody figures, on the other side, emphasise an existing solidarity. They rely on existing ethno-religious identities and present them as a long-lasting reference point for the collective identity of the mobilisation. The iconisation process also includes depictions of superiority and vastness as a result of this collective action.

Binary oppositions: Communicating images, or linguistic representations of “us” vs. “them”, comprise a basic model in antagonistic politics. Across the remediations of everybody figures in Gezi and Anti-Coup, binary oppositions are represented in three visual forms: a horizontal depiction of a contentious moment; the display of a saviour between the audience and the approaching threat; and a plural depiction of everybodies facing the audience. While the first two display a clear distinction between “good” and “evil” (Noakes, 2005) and invite the audience to side with the former, the remediations in the third category remain rather ambiguous. They urge the audience to take a side either with or against the everybody figures. Featuring a mobilised collective body moving toward the audience, they can evoke either feelings of pride and comfort or of threat and conflict.

Representational necropolitics: Representations of dead people have long been used in social movements, both as victims of the violence of “evil” and as heroes and heroines of the movement. The everybody figures’ engagement in the world of the dead shows similarities across Gezi and Anti-Coup, yet with important differences. In both cases, the remediation process includes beautifying and stylizing the photographs of the dead. The faces and bodies of the dead are presented in their best form—healthy, fit, and smiling. People who appear in photographs in other contexts than those related to death were also remediated in order to challenge or comply with the necropolitics of the state. Living people are illustrated both to fetishize death as a desire for sacrifice and to show a potential but unwanted sacrifice. Although these remediations can be extremely similar in colour and composition, they still reflect the distinct atmospheres of the two cases in various ways. Two aspects stand out marking such differences between Gezi and Anti-Coup: First, everybody figures engaged in representational necropolitics in both cases mediate between the world of the dead and the world of the living, yet the visual practices in Gezi are directed toward promoting life and condemning death (murder), while those in Anti-Coup present death (martyrdom) as a desired end. Second, Gezi’s engagement in representational necropolitics includes a transnational component, as everybody

figures are aligned with other (potential) dead bodies elsewhere in other political contexts. Anti-Coup, in contrast, speaks largely to a domestic audience, given its symbolic repertoire and affective cosmos in relation to sacrifice for the country.

In political imagery, everybody constitutes idealisations of public positions, an affective spot in the spatiality of social relations, for which they appeal to and involve people. The visual representations of everybody have often been based on fictitious characters in the past. The bare-breasted woman in Delacroix's 1830 painting *Liberty Leading People* is commonly addressed as *Marianne*, the national personification of France. In the painting, she is seen as a common woman, an average person from among the public, but also as brave and emancipated, the ideal type of woman the revolution intended to create. As the leading figure in the image, with her (mostly male) following comrades of various lower-class cliché representations, she is headed forward determinedly for a progressive goal (Schober, 2019b). In this way, Marianne works as a seductive mechanism that attracts people to become everybody/everything. In another example, Naji al-Ali's 1969 illustration *Handala*, a barefoot Palestinian child with ragged clothes turns his back to the viewer in 1973, only to show his face when the Israeli-Palestinian conflict comes to an end. *Handala* has been used very frequently among pro-Palestine images related to the conflict both in Palestinian territories and elsewhere (Marar, 2007; Rauh, 2013), remediated in various forms to appear in print media, online, and as murals and graffiti. The Palestinian child with arms crossed on his back reminds one of the long-lasting Middle Eastern conflict, but he has also become a symbol of steadfast resistance against violence and oppression around the world. A fictitious character who could be anyone from among the society, *Handala* invites us to join his struggle while growing into a global gateway of becoming everybody/everything. The main website dedicated to *Handala* (www.handala.org) quotes Al-Ali on its landing page: "At first he was a Palestinian child, but his consciousness developed to have a national then a global and human horizon. He is a simple yet tough child, and this is why people adopted him and felt that he represents their consciousness." Both *Marianne* and *Handala* are fictitious and popular everybody figures that have travelled extensively across social movement environments through the history of collective political struggle. A simple search on the Internet in images reveals thousands of remediations and appropriations of both images, as well as in tandem with photographs from street clashes or further visual productions where the initial works appear as a point of reference for comparison. Through this trajectory of everybody figures in political imagery, further outcomes can be deduced in relation to the visual analysis of Gezi and Anti-Coup.

First and foremost, everybody figures are representations of humans. Although a number of photographs depicting central nonhuman figures, such as animals, have become viral images on digital media throughout the duration of social movements, none of these were remediated into illustrations. Similarly, no physical space, urban public item, and/or building was remediated as a sole figure in an illustration. To be clear, I do not mean that none of these could be found as illustrations. Quite the contrary—multiple illustrations include squares, trees, tents, animals, the AKM building, the 15 July Martyrs’ Bridge, and many other elements that have been part of the protest iconography of Gezi and Anti-Coup. However, these elements appear in illustrations either as fictive drawings, therefore without a prior photographic basis, or together with humans who occupy a central position in the image. With their exclusively human embodiment, everybody figures act as a mediator for the transmission of affects between humans. As photographs provide evidence as well, remediations’ featuring of a human body allows for a direct identification with the everybody figure, bringing me to the second point.

My second deduction is that the everybody figures of contemporary social movements are real people who physically take part in the collective political struggle. They are neither built on mythical or imaginary figures, such as the national personifications, nor on creative productions, such as Handala. Although the propaganda illustrations of the 20th century can be traced back to real people, as in the example of the famous *Uncle Sam* images in the US, the illustrations of today’s movements evidently remediate photographs taken within the social movement that have often gone viral on digital media. Making of everybody figures out of martyrs, those who lose their lives as a consequence of their either passive or active involvement in the movement, is not completely excluded from the social movement scene, whereas a predominant majority of these everybody figures are people who actively participate in the social movement and stay alive even if they fall victims to violence. Unlike the case of martyrs, whose names are deliberately written and uttered, these people are known by their public pseudonyms: e.g. woman in red, standing man, anti-tank, woman in chador etc. Representations of everybody figures in a digitally-saturated contemporary social movement environment emerge from collective/connective visual activist efforts that remediate popular photographs of ordinary people displaying a spontaneous resistance practice. These people, despite the fact that their names are revealed later, remain inconspicuous in public and do not claim an outstanding role within the movement, as both the continuous remediation examples and their interviews confirm. The analysis of remediations show that the mobilisations of the digital era prefer nameless heroes and heroines for the iconic images of everybodies, which is a novel practice compared to leader-dominant political imagery of the past. Neither fictive nor celebrity, and

predominantly still living, everybody figures of social movements exemplify an ordinary person in a modern society.

Third, this ordinary profile of everybody figures also marks a change in the emotional dynamics of social movements. Accordingly, contemporary everybody figures of political struggle contribute heavily to the affective environment of social movements. Acting as a reflection of the common person in the society, their universal claim is immediately recognised and can be adopted by everyone, not to mention the fact that it can also be countered by everyone. Social movements create a powerful atmosphere for public affects. Researchers have showed that both words and images can be effective in producing and circulating affect in the social movement environment, particularly in peak times (Gerbaudo, 2015; 2016; Papacharissi, 2015a). Facebook posts, Twitter comments, instant circulation of images, and the like contribute to mobilising public affects as social movement participants stay alert and actively attend to the process. Digital media, and as so, the images circulated on digital platforms, can create emotional intensities and trigger collective action by developing an affective mechanism for “becoming everybody/everything” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Everybody figures of social movements grow into epicentres of affect as they mediate between the particular and the universal and allow for social interactions where several terrains intersect and open up for each other. The appeal of “figures like you and me” urges people to join the movement (Schober, 2015), drawing them from their singular territories to a collective cosmos in order to generate a new unity (Deleuze, 1995).

Fourth, an imagination of futurity is inherent to the affective practice of remediation. While the photographs locate people and other elements in the image to a specific “image event” within the context of a social movement (DeLuca, 1999), illustrations widen the meaning of the photograph and add more layers that can speak to “future image events”. Everybody figures’ participatory process of iconisation extends the social life of political images (Awad, 2020) and, through remediation practices, earns them additional qualities, such as capacities for “storing” and “transmitting” affect (Brennan, 2014)—going beyond its generations and circulation during the peak times of street and online activism. By accentuating and masking certain features of the initial photograph, as well as by making use of other symbols and visual markers of historical, cultural, and political meaning, remediated images of everybodies store affect for longer periods of time and transmit it repeatedly and continuously. By the word “storing”, I do not mean an ability to “freeze” affects, which would contradict the general affect terminology and framework I follow, which is based on “a dynamic-relational and situated understanding of affective phenomena, a perspective on embodied yet mobile repertoires of

emotion, practices of mediation, and performativity” (Slaby & von Scheve, 2019b, p. 2). Affect is an ever-dynamic intensity, while an image itself can be considered a static entity even if it is a remediation of a photograph. Here, I refer to the enhancement of images, and more specifically of the everybody figures, through a process of activist intervention that aims to provide them with affective qualities that survive over time and space. Looking at an image is an affective experience; and looking at it in another context after a certain period of time has impact on this experience as much as does its content and form. This might explain the preference for using remediations instead of photographs in a variety of occasions happening during a latent stage of social movements.

Fifth, by remediating photographs, social movements combine their imagination of futurity with the symbolism of past and present. This memory work helps social movements not to act out of their own habitus and become marginalised initiatives, but to instead establish links with the symbolism of the actual political and visual culture. Through additional visual elements, such as a gas mask or a Turkish flag, the everybody figure is anchored to the experienced intensity, mostly in the form of moral shock or indignation, but also in pride, joy, and hope (Jasper, 2014a). The ways in which these feelings and emotions can survive over time and space is also strictly connected to the processes of collective identity, in which social movements make use of nostalgia and other common elements to build a common past (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). National narratives make up a considerable share of the construction of the memory of a movement and include symbolic representations of everybody figure variants (Zamponi, 2019). As the results show, the mnemonic practices that are part of visual activism develop in contentious forms where multiple agents are involved in memory work, leading to various and ambivalent memories yet to be solidly claimed and possessed. Scholars who study memory of collective political struggle seem to agree that construction of memory extends individual experiences (A. Assmann, 2010; A. Assmann & Conrad, 2010; Doerr, 2014; Zamponi, 2019). Accordingly, visual memory is not only what we see as individuals but is also affected by what we read, conversed about, and experienced. Memory, a contested social construct itself, has roots in the collective past that emerges in the remediation of everybody figures in mobilisations. This contested memory work brings me to the next point.

Sixth, this analysis reveals a discrepancy between the claim of everybody figures on universality and their connectedness to the locality of established frames. Aiming for a generic resonance, the remediation practice transforms photographs by layering and widening their meanings. However, as the memory work inherent to the remediation practice within the context of social movements, everybody figures are not set free of their roots in the photograph

that originates in a particular time and space. As remediation is also a process of decontextualization of the image, prior knowledge and/or exposure to the habitus of that movement is somewhat necessary for the audience to be “moved” by everybody figures. Should the viewers have no background information, they might interpret the remediated image in a completely different way. For example, *Venus*, the illustration based on the *Woman in Red* photograph in Figure 51, can easily fit in a context related to air pollution. Everybody figures that emerge within social movements are tasked to create a “politically situated” universal appeal. Therefore, everybodies do not always represent stand-alone figures that can recruit everyone to the movement but may have an inherent deficit in their claim of universality and so fail the political purpose they are oriented to. This lack in the illustration’s promise of generic resonance is addressed by two diverse principles in contemporary societies. The first is a tertiary input, and it contextualises the illustration that is situated framing knowledge for those who have limited visual exposure to the movement. The second is the economic surplus principle that will mark my seventh and the final point.

Finally, the overall process of iconisation leads to the emergence of a visual economy of everybodies. The analysis shows that everybody figures can be reproduced, traded, amplified, countered, exchanged, and appropriated. The image content and form are altered according to the needs of the movement, and, what’s more, in order to create a surplus value around the image that makes an economic difference in the culture of capitalism (Debord, 1970). In Anti-Coup, remediations were used interchangeably with photographs in official publications, while the most popular ones decorated urban spaces and were disseminated by public offices on digital media. Some of the independent illustrators who remediated everybody images were later commissioned by the government for other works. In Gezi, the remediations of everybody figures adorned the pages of several popular periodicals and satirical magazines. Special issues following the protests were quickly sold out. The illustrators added their works to their portfolios, while some of these remediations were printed on various items for sale, such as T-shirts, badges, and wine bottles. One photograph circulated on Twitter showed that remediations of everybody figures were used to differentiate genders for restrooms in a café, which can be interpreted as a signal of a friendly atmosphere to Gezi-supporter clients. Both Gezi and Anti-Coup developed computer and board games using the context of proper mobilisations. These are just a few examples of hard and soft remediation of activist material (Mattoni, 2017b). In such cases, remediations of everybody figures grow into indicators of public positioning and help create a surplus value through the affective ties between the image and the audience (Hillman, 2018). They become potent tools that can increase and decrease the

market value of the item they are printed on, of the shop or café in which they are placed, as well as of the employability of the illustrators themselves.

The analysis of illustrations shows that they make a particular contribution to the social movement imagery and that this contribution should be considered in relation to photography. The remediation of photographs that capture ordinary people engaged in political action is part of a collective/connective framing effort that aims for universal outreach and layering of meaning-making. Iconised everybody figures open an aesthetic territory that crosscuts visual frames constructed by photographs and highlight further contested areas of political struggle. Everybody figures are key to understanding visual activism in contemporary social movements that are extremely digital and visual at the same time.

Conclusion

This thesis has drawn from social movement studies, media and communication research, cultural studies, and visual culture in order to investigate the ways in which online visuals mobilise people in contemporary social movement contexts with a comparative perspective across political contrasts. The intention of this study has been to redraw the contours of an ongoing debate on political imagery. Discussions of visuals in contemporary social movement studies, particularly in digital contexts, barely go beyond logocentric data dominated by discourse analysis and/or content analysis through keywords, hashtags, and other phrases that are textually traceable online. Photographs and illustrations, among other visual materials, have been considered as secondary material to the written texts that are either embedded in the images or harvested online through social media posts. I aimed to reverse this equilibrium by giving visual material the priority and using written-text data for contextualisation. Studying political imagery in a comparative perspective can tell us about the details of contemporary practices of visual activism and how images serve conflicting political agendas, as well as reveal the similarities and differences of affective dynamics between movements.

In the first chapter, I provided various examples of iconic images from today's social movement scene and emphasised the need to study visual activism in relation to digital media. I summarised the main strands of visual research in social movement studies and possible points for further contribution. I argued that we should take into account several dimensions for a more accurate visual analysis: the networked activism following the advent of the Internet and social media, the temporality dimension of online images, the interaction between politically incompatible circles, affectivity of images besides their representational qualities, and the need for methodological novelty. Developing a critical stance toward the canonical practice of treating images as evidence to logocentric analysis in social movement research, I identified several key concepts that could help make sense of the findings, namely framing, remediation, and everybodies. Finally, I also presented two cases from Turkey's social movement environment, the 2013 Gezi Movement and the 2016 Anti-Coup Resistance, to be studied through this dissertation.

In Chapter 2, I offered a historical development of social movement literature in relation to political imagery and visual activism ranging from the mass society and collective behaviour theories that formed the classical paradigm to more recent approaches that developed after the 1960s, including resource mobilisation theory, political process theory and new social

movements theory. I have also included contemporary thought on visual activism and the role of images in social movements. While reviewing this literature, I pointed out the change in treating visuality in social movement research. I showed that images moved from being an abstract and negative means of identifying sources of dissatisfaction in the classical paradigm, to being aesthetic tools for realising movement aims in rational action theories, and to countercultural elements in new social movement theories. From this place informed by the contemporary approaches that treat images as part of a collective production process related to collective identity and meaning-making, I suggested studying the genres of photography and illustration to better understand today's visual sphere of political struggle, considering the technical infrastructure provided. I argued that a framework to investigate these images should include the symbolic dimension of collective political struggle, the networked processes of image production and dissemination, and a practice-based approach to visual activism.

Chapter 3 explained the methodology of this dissertation. A qualitative approach was employed, as it was necessary to analyse the two cases in-depth. Based on the qualitative strand of grounded theory and its applications to visual research, I developed a *grounded visual analysis* model that follows the basic grounded theory steps but also draws from visual social semiotics and iconological methods. I identified my research site exclusively as digital platforms—including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, news portals, activist blogs, and visual archives—and a time-span of approximately five years, starting from 28 May 2013, the starting day of Gezi, until 16 June 2018, the day after the second anniversary of the coup d'état attempt, for retrospective data collection. I used primarily the popular hashtags of both mobilisations to find data but disregarded the hashtags themselves in order to minimise the impact of text over image. I prioritised mainly the popular and iconic images, but also those with minimal embedded textual information. Finally, I selected 204 images that had been disseminated online to run the analysis.

In Chapter 4, I presented the results of the grounded visual analysis, which uncover multiple ways that photographs and illustrations shape the visual sphere of social movements. In the first sub-chapter, I discussed five visual frames constructed by photographs. These frames show how movements display moments of taking control of a territorial space, varying profiles of participation, nonconflicting and friendly scenes, movement achievements, and the showing of strengths while recognising weaknesses. During the analysis process, I also found that some of the illustrations simply contributed to the construction of the same frames, while others “deepened” or “layered” them, which was a more promising role to discover in terms of understanding the similarities and differences between the two cases and their processes of

visual activism. This function was prominently fulfilled by a number of illustrations that remediated photographs shot in the context of street protests and demonstrations. In the second sub-chapter, I analysed this type of illustration, which allowed me to recognise four visual patterns that are present across the two mobilisations, with certain important differences. Accordingly, these illustrations serve, first, to challenge the existing inequalities in the visibility of participating actors in collective political struggle; second, to identify diverging imaginations of solidarity; third, to establish binary oppositions, whether determined or ambivalent; and fourth, to negotiate representations of life and death. These results speak to a number of ongoing debates in social movement research and the wider field of social sciences.

The first is a much-discussed issue in the literature: the debate on structure vs. agency in social movement studies and beyond. Rational action theories, the political process theory most of all, have prioritised structural factors for understanding the emergence and trajectory of social movements (Jasper, 2004). Their critics, the cultural strand of social movement scholarship, have highlighted the social constructedness of structures (Goodwin & Jasper, 2004). Framing theory's popularity among rational action theorists can be considered a result of this criticism (Buechler, 2011). The results of this dissertation show that a study of images in social movements should strive for a balanced interpretation of the data that draws from both structure and agency perspectives. Social movements might emerge from conflicts that have a structural basis but are also triggered and maintained by cognitive and affective actions taken by their participants. On the representational level, the impact of popular and iconic images of political struggle relies both on existing structures that shape our perception and interpretation and on the role of social performance the images play (Bartmanski & Alexander, 2012).

Images produce meaning each time they are looked at, and the meaning of an image should not be considered as constant. Some of the images might evoke a similar understanding globally, such as those of an individual standing in front of a larger power embodied as a group, vehicle, building, and so on. A number of images from both Gezi and Anti-Coup feature one or a few people marching or standing against a bigger force that signifies the rival. Such examples of antagonistic scenes depict a simple universal representation of the small vs. the big, but, at the same time, they refer to the immediacy of the moment of a significant occurrence within the duration of the social movement.

In other words, the content and form of social movement photographs and their remediations may address existing social and political conflicts and/or dynamic factors such as emotions. Reactive emotions, such as indignation and moral shock, are pointed out as key determinants for the emergence of social movements (Jasper, 2008; 2014a), while proactive

ones, such as hope, enthusiasm, and joy, are effective in the trajectory and maintenance of these movements (Goodwin, Jasper, & Polletta, 2001). Images may crystallise the existing injustices and inequalities in the society in order to provoke present grievances, but they may also create new visual constellations that construct new contentious dynamics.

The results of this dissertation show that images offer multiple layers for analysis in terms of both structure and agency-oriented approaches. Photographs and illustrations may point to class conflicts, political polarisations, and gender disparity, among other dynamics. They may also evoke visual structures of protest, such as the weak against the strong, the use of the national flag, solidarity among various profiles, and so on. At the same time, they can display a scene that challenges the existing structure and aims for developing a new understanding of an emotionally condensed symbol, as in the case of the use of the flag. In this sense, this study recommends investigating images in order to have a better understanding of the symbolic dimension of social movements while recognising a fair impact of both structure and agency factors.

Second, by developing a systematic albeit experimental tool for analysing images—grounded visual analysis—this dissertation also aimed to make a methodological contribution to the literature. Despite the presence of various visual analysis methods in the humanities and cultural studies, efforts to apply these to social sciences and develop systematic methods to analyse images remained dispersed (Pauwels, 2015), and social movement scholarship is not an exception (Doerr et al., 2015). The main structure of grounded visual analysis is based on the qualitative strand of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). Mattoni (2014) suggests that grounded theory is an ideal tool for social movement research due to its data gathering techniques and compatibility with other empirical methods. She mentions that key elements of grounded theory have long been in use in social movements, though researchers seldom acknowledge this fact.

Visual sociology offers only a few examples of applying grounded theory to visual research (Konecki, 2011; Mey & Dietrich, 2016; Suchar, 1997). Some of these studies focus on semiotic and representational qualities of images, while others prioritise affective and nonrepresentational qualities in empirical analysis. Both strands are useful for a sociological inquiry into the field of social movements, but, given the present prevalence of rational-cognitive approaches, this dissertation intended to develop a novel systematic method and go beyond such bias. To achieve this, I used Mey and Dietrich's (2016) visual grounded theory model as the main framework for my methodology, while drawing from visual social semiotics (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) and its use by media and communications scholarship to study

visual activism in social movements (Kim, 2015; Onursoy, 2015; Sheehan, 2015), as well as being informed by iconological analysis (Becker, 2013; Johnson, 2012) and its application by art historians to the study of protest images and their impact on the mobilisation of public affects (Schankweiler & Wüschner, 2019a; 2019b). The grounded visual analysis model can be useful for social movement studies but also in other areas of the social sciences. Researchers can use this tool for qualitative studies that seek to understand common and diverging patterns across a number of cases with spatial and temporal factors at work. The method prioritises images but does not completely dismiss text. However, the grounded theory steps are modified for visual analysis, and the consideration of text as equal to the images may create bias in the process of coding and interpretation. Instead, treating textual data as added information to what the image offers is recommended. This being said, it would be good to remember the openness of grounded theory and the possibility of modifying this experimental method further.

Third, the results of this dissertation are relevant for the social science debates that follow the so-called “affective turn” and separate the concept of *affect* in terms of intensity and immediacy from the rather defined and situated one of *emotion* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Slaby & von Scheve, 2019a). Bodily qualities of images provide them with the “ability to affect” (Massumi, 1987) and mobilise public affects. Images function on multiple layers and in complex ways but primarily in an affective register (Featherstone, 2010), meaning that they can help understand the affective positioning of social movements beyond the ideological stance these movements publicly claim. The contemporary social movement environment is shaped by dynamic affects that refer to in-betweenness rather than to one specific emotion instrumental in highlighting intentionality. Creative processes, including visual activist practices related to photography and illustration, evoke affective registers and release transversal energies that may hardly be grasped by approaches that attend to the centrality of emotion in the service of rational and cognitively-decided movement goals. While “emotional opportunity structures” can be essential for the emergence of a political mobilisation (Salmela & von Scheve, 2018), the rational-cognitive approaches prevailing in collective emotion research either assume a strong ideological input in creative works, and therefore an aesthetic void, or a political incoherence that arises from a lack of ideology in creative processes (Ryan, 2014).

The framing model takes the presence of ideational elements in collective framing efforts for granted and develops arguments based on existing ideological backgrounds, which can be rather static tenets that can be traced back several decades, if not centuries. Key concepts of framing, such as frame alignment, frame resonance, and master frames, should be considered as cultural products and not ideological outputs (della Porta & Diani, 2006). However, as visual

frames that developed across Gezi and Anti-Coup show, movements have affective ways of branding and developing collective identity rather than means based on ideologies. Affective qualities of visual framing are loosely tied to the ideological basis of each case. While part of the photographic and illustrated content can include ideology-condensed symbolic elements, visual activist practices and remediation efforts in particular aim to increase the affective resonance of images by applying certain techniques of masking and accentuating several qualities of the image. The illustrations analysed in this study focused on everybody figures that refer to an ordinary person in a modern consumer society (de Certeau, 1988) who can act as a mediator between the individual and a collectivity by opening a gateway for becoming everybody/everything (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Becoming is not a product but an ever-changing and ever-incomplete cycle. Images of everybody figures do not initiate and finalise political mobilisation processes but are affectively resonant intermediary actors within this process. Going beyond structural and ideological definitions, they urge people to take public positions in the society according to a universally appealing situation, thus creating a moment of resonance between the audience and the “image event” (DeLuca, 1999). They set a common denominator in social conflict that can find acceptance across political divides. Just like a famous iconic photograph of a protest, the public position urged by everybody figures is recognized by everyone. It “brings in a logic of creation, of joining different times together, a logic of multiplicity as opposed to the logic of one, also in terms of subjectivity and the individual” (Bandi, 2019, p. 153).

Indeed, social movement research has not totally ignored everybody figures and their role in the process of becoming, although this focus has been mainly logocentric. For example, “We are the 99%” slogan was an important condensed symbol in the Occupy Wall Street Movement and referred to the capacity of the people—of ordinary citizens (Calhoun, 2013). Claiming an ordinary place in the society and demanding political change can be read in other slogans, such as “We are the people” of the 1989 demonstration in Berlin’s Alexanderplatz Square in the German Democratic Republic, and “Power to the People” of the 1960s student protests in the US, and in other movements around the world, such as in the 1986 People Power Revolution in the Philippines, and through the Anti-Apartheid Resistance in South Africa. Identification of a larger part of a society with an ordinary person as a common denominator can probably be found most clearly in the Zapatista Movement. Portrayed as an everybody figure, Subcommandante Marcos (1994) crystallises this in his response to the Mexican government’s attempt to discredit him by claiming that he was gay:

Marcos is gay in San Francisco, a black person in South Africa, Asian in Europe, a Chicano in San Isidro, an anarchist in Spain, a Palestinian in Israel, an Indigenous person in the streets of San Cristóbal, a gang-member in Neza, a rocker on [University] campus, a Jew in Germany, an ombudsman in Department of Defense [Secretaria de Defensa, Sedenal], a feminist in a political party, a communist in the post-Cold War period, a prisoner in Cintalapa, a pacifist in Bosnia, a Mapuche in the Andes, a teacher in National Confederation of Educational Workers, an artist without a gallery or a portfolio, a housewife in any neighbourhood in any city in any part of Mexico on a Saturday night, a guerrilla in Mexico at the end of the twentieth century, a striker in the CTM, a sexist in the feminist movement, a woman alone in a Metro station at 10 p.m., a retired person standing around in the Zócalo, a campesino without land, an underground editor, an unemployed worker, a doctor with no office, a nonconformist student, a dissident against neoliberalism, a writer without books or readers, and a Zapatista in the Mexican Southeast. In other words, Marcos is a human being in this world. Marcos is every untolerated, oppressed, exploited minority that is resisting and saying, "Enough!" He is every minority who is now beginning to speak and every majority that must shut up and listen. He is every untolerated group searching for a way to speak, their way to speak. Everything that makes power and the good consciences of those in power uncomfortable – this is Marcos. (para. 19)

This type of positioning as a common person as well as the symbolic performances claiming ordinary citizenry and representation of “people” are very successfully used by populist leaders as well, which will be the fourth line of debate in this list. Populism is no new phenomenon, but the global rise of the right-wing around the world over the past decade and the establishment of populist governments in European countries and the US has made it a current topic, proving that it is not a third-world political fashion. The existing literature on populism has fragmented opinions on the use of the term ranging from syndrome to ideology (Canovan, 1981; Hawkins & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019; Laclau, 2005; Taggart, 2000; Weyland, 2001), though these conceptualisations generally refer to the impact of populism in the political sphere and rarely touch on its social and cultural implications (Ostiguy, 2017). Populism raises the duality of “the pure people” vs. “the corrupt elite” (Mudde, 2004), a stark societal contrast that populist leaders instrumentalise in order to address the society. They position themselves among the “pure people”, but, even more, as ordinary people from within—as everybody figures. Populists claim “commonality” (Highmore, 2011) not only in their public speech but also through a series of symbolic actions. Schober (2019a) shows how populist leaders may use

social media images to increase their appeal by using certain techniques of body positioning and showing enthusiasm for the most popular elements in the society, such as TV series. Following Canetti's line of thought on the cult of the leader, Dematteo (2019) investigates the unmediated visual representations of populist leaders in public as a powerful form of mask-like trickery. Their public performances of interaction can be identified as "typically from here".

Besides these examples, the results of this dissertation are particularly relevant to the symbolic dimension of populism and the ways in which its symbols are constructed online. Populism is a leader-dominant phenomenon, but the contemporary technologies render it a participatory one. While populist leaders tend to depict themselves visually as everybody figures who can unite divided identities in the society (Freistein & Gadinger, 2019), people independent from any organisational hierarchies also produce and disseminate images. Recent examples show various aspects of populist visual production both from left-wing (Milner, 2013) and right-wing affiliates (Fielitz & Thurston, 2018). Similarly to the process of the Guy Fawkes mask becoming a global symbol of anarchism and left-wing dissent (Call, 2008), the anthropomorphic *Pepe the Frog* appeared on 4chan and Reddit platforms as a "cute" meme before being associated with hate speech and growing into a right-wing populist symbol (Miller-Idriss, 2018). Comparative research across left- and right-wing symbols and political communication shows that established political imageries are also prone to be hijacked (Doerr, 2017; Galis & Neumayer, 2016). Humour, satire, and irony, as well as established activist practices, such as the Situationist International's *détournement*, are no longer the exclusive property of the critical left. Former political activist practices that are understood in a resistance and subculture fashion due to the restrictions set by governments at the time (Aysan, 2013) can today help populism establish itself as an insurgent force (Rovira Kaltwasser, Ochoa Espejo, & Ostiguy, 2017).

Fifth, with all of these topics touched on above, this dissertation locates itself in the heart of an ongoing debate about the digital era and its impact on social and political life. Zapatistas and the Global Justice Movement that ran protests against the World Trade Organisation's 1999 Seattle meeting were among the first to benefit from the fast communication brought by the Internet. Activists from all over the world could communicate much faster than before and organise collective action with the participation of diverse actors. Certainly, technology not only influences and shapes how we communicate for collective political struggle, but also the ways in which we might think, feel, and act everyday (Thrift, 1996). A sentence such as "the advent of the Internet and social media has changed our daily life radically" may sound banal today. Since the proliferation of computers and the

intensification of Internet communication through the 1990s, researchers have been interested in cyber/virtual (later referred to as digital) forms and mechanisms of quotidian interactions. In the 1996 edition of his book, Castells (2004) already mentioned that social life was moving away from a division between “real vs. virtual” toward hybridity. Only 20 years later, the fact that people consider the Facebook as separate from the Internet (Markham, 2017) raises the question as to whether research on digital interaction should be considered separate from interaction on the street or elsewhere. Marres (2017) applies Mauss’s term *total social fact* to digitality to describe the contemporary phenomenon: “it must be understood as irreducible, as affecting most if not all areas of social life, and as itself generative of new social practices, ties and relations” (p. 14). In terms of sociological analysis, there is a major difference between the study of “digital society”, which requires a theorisation of the social as such, and the study of “digital data” to understand the social (Lupton, 2015; Marres, 2017). Although I find myself much intrigued by a myriad of conceptualisations of social interactions in the light of digital technological advancements, this dissertation can be mostly linked to discussions of hybridity and hybrid space.

Latour (2005) conceptualises hybridity as a state of assemblage where human and nonhuman elements intermingle in multiple and undefined ways. Similar to the philosophy of Deleuze, these elements affect and are affected by each other. Political imagery is shaped by human experience. Both in terms of temporality, which is to say either effective in the form of constructing activist repertoires (Tilly, 2008) or affectively emerging as part of memory (Papailias, 2018; Schankweiler, Straub, & Wendl, 2018), and in terms of technological reproduction, either in the form of photographs (Flusser, 2011) or remediations (Lievrouw, 2011), images display, carry, and transmit aesthetic qualities affected by humans—and vice versa: The same images, as nonhuman elements, “encourage, permit, suggest, influence [...]” the human experience (Latour, 2005, p. 72). The idea of assemblage applies to contemporary conceptualisations of space as well. Social movements have already produced transnational solidarity networks and enjoyed the contributions of participants from various geographies (Adams, 2002; Kavada, 2014; della Porta & Tarrow, 2005). However, in the wake of contemporary technologies, social movements have become increasingly hybrid spaces of political activity, where participants can concurrently take part in the making of the movement regardless of their physical location. Even more than 10 years ago, despite the fact that it was hailed as one of the early Twitter revolutions, Morozov (2009) showed that only a small part of social media activity was recorded inside Iran during the 2009 Green Revolution. Digital-born movements such as #MeToo (Jeppesen, 2018) and street protests taking place without actual

people but through holograms in the Spanish 15-M Movement (Lopez, 2016) pose new questions about the relationship of space and locality to political representation and visibility.

The debates I have covered in the overview here do not constitute an exhaustive agenda that this study might be connected to or trigger a discussion about. As I write these sentences, the world has already been hit hard by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and many countries have been struggling to mitigate its lethal consequences on human health and, maybe at times with more precision, on the economy. Photographs and illustrations of people dancing during lockdowns and curfews receiving likes and hearts on Facebook and Instagram were oxymoronic examples of the digital divide, as the hazards of hypercapitalism to social justice, solidarity, and access to basic health services have culminated in and revealed the class-based implications of the pandemic. Social media platforms have been flooded with images and videos of people working from home, playing with their children, cooking, exercising, reading books, and watching movies. An explosion of announcements of companies and nonprofits granting free online access to art and culture have accompanied this trend. The more social distancing measures are in place, the more hybrid the local communities and social spaces have become. Internet-based social life has grown to be normal, at least for those on one side of the digital divide, and its impact on future decisions regarding social and political life is yet to be seen. I will end this dissertation with an image that portrays a set of societal tensions revealed by the coronavirus pandemic. The illustration seen in Figure 52 was drawn by Dimitris Hantzopoulos for Greece's Kathimerini newspaper on 29 March 2020. With all its possible interpretations aside, including the biased depiction of COVID-19 as the "China virus", it exemplifies how the symbolic dimension of social movements and iconic images of collective political struggle continue to inspire and shape our understanding of the social.



Figure 52. Hantzopoulos, D. (2020). *A healthcare worker stops COVID-19* [Illustration]. Retrieved from <https://www.kathimerini.gr/1071237/sketch/epikairothta/politikh/skitso-toy-dhnhtrh-xantzopoyloy-290320>

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