

**LOCATED LOCALLY, DISSEMINATED NATIONALLY: A DISCURSIVE  
ANALYSIS OF THE CASE OF BERGAMA MOVEMENT IN TURKEY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **LOCATED LOCALLY, DISSEMINATED NATIONALLY: A DISCURSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE CASE OF BERGAMA MOVEMENT IN TURKEY**

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This study aims at understanding the 15-year long hegemonic struggle of the Bergama movement. In the pursuit of this aim, it first seeks to develop a conceptual framework through the articulation of the insights of Social Movement approaches within the discourse-theoretical framework of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. Analyzing the Bergama movement within this conceptual framework, it then argues that in spite of its emergence in the local Bergama context as a particular response to the operation of a goldmine, the Bergama movement has gone beyond a local protest campaign. It constituted an anti-gold mining discourse that, tying the issue of the operation of the goldmine in Bergama to some wider issues, such as protection of environment, operation of gold mines, operation of foreign companies, rule of law, human rights, and democracy, posed challenges both to the neo-liberal economic structure and to the authoritarian state structure in the Turkish context. The study also argues that despite its initial success in providing a discursive space for the articulation of a number of unfulfilled social demands and thereby mobilizing a number of social groups, the Bergama movement gradually weakened mainly because the challenges that it posed to the hegemonic structures impelled the several forces of the status-quo to the struggle, who did not only win the popular consent to the necessity of the operation of goldmines by means of constructing a pro-mining discourse on the basis of speculations but also antagonized and repressed the protesters on the basis of inevident allegations.

**Keywords:** Bergama, Hegemony, Political Struggles, Discourse, Social Movement

## ÖZ

### YEREL BİR HAREKETİN ULUSAL YAYILIMI: BERGAMA HAREKETİNİN SÖYLEMSEL ANALİZİ

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Bu çalışmanın temel amacı ‘Bergama Hareketi’nin 1990 ile 2005 yılları arasında sürdürdüğü hegemonik mücadeleyi anlamaktır. Bergama Hareketinin analizinde kullandığı kavramsal çerçeveyi Toplumsal Hareket kuramının önerdiği temel kavramları Ernesto Laclau ve Chantal Mouffe tarafından geliştirilmiş söylem kuramına entegre ederek oluşturan bu çalışmanın ortaya koyduğu temel argüman, Bergama Hareketinin bir altın madeninin operasyonuna karşı Bergama yerelinde doğmuş olmasına rağmen yerel bir protesto kampanyasının oldukça ötesine geçtiğidir. Hareketin inşa ettiği altın madenciliğine muhalif söylem Bergama’daki altın madeninin operasyonunu çevrenin korunması, altın madenciliği, yabancı sermayenin girişi, hukukun üstünlüğü, insan hakları ve demokrasi gibi daha geniş kapsamlı konulara bağlayarak, bir yandan neo-liberal ekonomik yapıyı diğer yandan ise Türk devletinin otoriter yapısını sorgulamıştır. Bu çalışmada ayrıca Bergama Hareketinin farklı toplumsal taleplerin dile getirilebildiği söylemsel bir yüzey sunmak ve böylece farklı toplumsal grupları mobilize etmek gibi önemli başarılarına rağmen giderek zayıflamasına yol açan temel faktörün hâkim yapılara meydan okuması nedeniyle bu yapıların sağladığı çeşitli iktidar konumlarını işgal eden aktörlerin Bergama hareketine karşı, bir yandan çeşitli spekülasyonlara dayandırarak oluşturdıkları altın madenciliğine taraf bir söylemle kamuoyunu altın madenciliğinin gerekliliğine ikna etmek diğer yandan ise birtakım suçlamalarla protestocuları antagonize etmek gibi yollarla, oldukça aktif bir mücadele vermesi olduğu ileri sürülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Bergama, Hegemonya, Politik Mücadeleler, Söylem, Toplumsal Hareket

**Dedicated to my parents Ayten and Turgut Köksal**

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Turkey experienced mobilizations of some social groups against the operation of a gold-mining multinational company in the area surrounded by three villages of Bergama town of İzmir province. While mobilizations emerged in the local context of Bergama, they have gone beyond a local opposition to a mining company, gaining a national, and even international, popularity, support and importance. A number of different social groups, who have different positions, demands, hopes, and aspirations, such as local residents, local politicians, environmentalists, professionals, and local, national, and international NGOs, have been involved in the Bergama protest movement either thoroughly identifying with the ‘anti-gold mining discourse’ the movement constructed, or establishing short-term alliances with the movement. Besides being one of the most peaceful protest movements, the Bergama movement has also become one of the longest-running movements in Turkey since emerging in the early 1990s and continuing to the present.

It is important to understand the emergence, evolution, and consequences of the Bergama movement because it has been one of the rare instances in the last three decades through which ordinary people in the Turkish society demanded and insisted for long years to participate to decision-making processes directly speaking for themselves rather than allowing some other actors to speak on their behalf. Although different forms of mobilizations have emerged in the Turkish context at different times since the foundation of the Turkish Republic, they have emerged around some broader issues, such as ethnic, religious, and class issues, struggling to change the relations of subordination instituted in the Turkish society around these issues. It is for the first time in the Turkish history a local ‘environmental’ opposition has turned into a broad-based movement through the articulation of a number of different particular social demands and mobilization of a number of social groups around different social demands.

Studying the Bergama movement can contribute a great deal to our understanding of both the Turkish politics and the changing dynamics within the Turkish society through

attracting our attention to the outside of the confines of institutionalized politics in Turkey, and to the new forms of social divisions and grievances that emerged in the Turkish society in the last two decades. Since the institutionalized political life in Turkey has been structured in a very narrow way, allowing the mediation of only limited number of interests and social demands that are considered as ‘legitimate’ by the establishment, it is not enough to look at the mainstream institutions and structures in Turkish politics in order to understand the political life in Turkey. Being one of the political instances taking place outside of this context, the analysis of the Bergama movement can add a lot to our understanding of Turkish political life. Besides attracting our attention to enduring forms of relations of subordination in the Turkish institutional system, the study of Bergama movement also reveals the new forms of inequalities and relations of subordination emerged in the Turkish context as a result of neo-liberal transformation and the related phenomenon of globalization.

Formed through the mobilization of different social groups including some people at the grassroots of the Turkish society to voice their social demands, such as environmentalists, academics, professionals, peasants, and local politicians, the Bergama movement told us a different story about the neo-liberal transformation of the Turkish society than those that were told by the powerful actors of this transformation, such as big corporations and the Turkish state. The anti-gold mining discourse that the movement constituted through constructing ‘the investment of gold-mining multinationals’ in a new way posed a challenge not only to the environmental and foreign direct investment policies of the Turkish state but also to the neo-liberal logic that shapes these policies. In challenging these policies and the neo-liberal logic, the Bergama movement acted as a ‘political’ force that sought the restructuration of both environmental policies and the economic space in a completely different manner. Moreover, expressing the demand for the participation of the ordinary people to decisions that affect their life in a context where a considerable part of the society has been subjected to the authoritarian politics of the Turkish state, the Bergama movement also signified a resistance to the authoritarian structure of the Turkish state.

Despite its importance, the existing studies on the Bergama movement fail to provide a satisfactory account of the movement, concerning particularly the emergence of the movement, the constituents of the movement, and the overall character of the movement (see, Öncü and Koçan, 2001; Arsel, 2003; Çoban, 2004; Arsel, 2005a). In their attempt to explain the emergence of the Bergama movement, the existing studies heavily rely on

‘objective conditions’, reducing the emergence of the movement to some ‘objectively existing’ conditions. Accordingly, they regard the emergence of the Bergama movement as a direct and immediate response of the Bergama peasants to the gold-mining project. In this way, they consider the mining project as having an inherent meaning in itself and as such inherently a problem for the residents of the area. Another weakness in these studies pertains to their account of the constituents of the movement. Prioritizing some singular elements of the movement, they tend to view the movement as emerged and developed around the particular demand of a social group in the local context. More specifically, the peasants of the Bergama area are seen in these studies as the only constituents of the movement, and the demands of the peasants are the only demands voiced by the movement. In their almost exclusive focus on the peasants, these studies fail to account for the identification of other social groups with the Bergama movement. Although Bergama movement is popularly known as the movement of the Bergama peasants due to the public visibility of them, it not only expressed the demands of the peasants but voiced the demands of some other groups as well, such as environmentalists, professionals, and local politicians. Because of their failure to consider the other social groups that also became the constituents of the Bergama movement as well as the other demands that were also articulated within the discourse of the Bergama movement, the existing studies envisaged the Bergama movement as a ‘local’ movement that expressed only the ‘particular’ demand for the ‘prevention of the operation of the mine in Bergama area’. As a result, they could not come to grips with the specific meaning that the Bergama movement acquired in the Turkish context. In spite of its emergence in the local Bergama context as a particular response to the operation of the gold mine in Bergama area, the Bergama movement extended itself through tying the issues that surround the operation of the mine in Bergama area to a series of wider issues, such as the protection of the environment, the operation of gold mines, the operation of foreign companies, the rule of law, human rights, and democracy. As such, the movement transformed two forms of ‘relation of subordination’ that had existed within the Turkish social structure in a differential way into an ‘antagonistic relation of oppression’: the subordination of the local people, as well as the natural environment, to the interests of the international capital created by the ongoing processes of liberalization and globalization, and the subordination of society, or citizens, to the authoritarian rule of the Turkish state created through the years after the establishment of the Turkish republic. Thus, the movement did not only challenge the operation of a



particular gold-mining company in Bergama area but also posed a challenge to the logic of the prevailing Turkish socio-political and economic structures.

Regarding the objectivist and one-sided accounts of Bergama movement as problematic, this study starts with a non-objectivist and more comprehensive framework that is constituted by drawing upon the discourse-theoretical approach as developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, and articulating insights from the social movement literature within the context of the discourse theory. In analyzing the Bergama movement within this framework, the study focuses on the hegemonic struggle that the Bergama movement engaged in. In its attempt to understand the hegemonic struggle of the Bergama movement, the study takes the anti-gold mining discourse as its object of investigation. It specifically seeks to understand how, in which ways, and under what conditions the anti-gold mining discourse of the movement was constituted, which social demands were articulated in and through this discourse, which action forms were adopted or developed, in which ways it attempted to construct and interpellate subjects, and the extent to which it succeeded in doing so.

The analysis of the Bergama movement within the constituted framework will go beyond the limits marking the existing studies on the Bergama movement. This is so because unlike the existing studies, this study does not reduce the emergence of the Bergama movement to some 'objective conditions'. Rather, it explains the emergence of the movement with the constitution of a new 'discursive space' that, articulating the 'structural conditions', i.e., the gold-mining project, the investment of multinational companies, economic changes, and so on, in a particular way, provided new meanings and identities for the constituents of the movement. The study also provides a more comprehensive account of the movement, taking into consideration all social demands that were articulated in the discourse of the movement, and all social groups that were mobilized around these demands. Moreover, focusing not only on the hegemonic practices of the movement actors but also to those of the opponents of the movement, it provides a clearer picture of the hegemonic struggle that the Bergama movement engaged in.

Although an important part of this study consists of the analysis of the Bergama movement, it has also some arguments that are theoretical in nature. It is contended in this study that the integration of the insights of social movement theory within the context of the discourse theory provides us better framework for the study of social

movements than the use of these theories alone. While the mainstream social movement approaches offer invaluable insights for the analysis of social movements, they, as it will be explained below, fail to provide an adequate framework due to some ontological and methodological problems inherent in them. On the other hand, although discourse theory provides a non-objectivist and a comprehensive framework for the analysis of political struggles, it has an ontological character, and therefore, lacks some conceptual tools which are important in informing an ontical research on an actualized social movement. It is a contention of this study that with the use of the insights of social movement approaches within the broader framework of the discourse theory both the problems in social movement approaches can be addressed, and the discourse theory can be made more fruitful for the study of social movements.

The study starts with a review of the main social movement approaches classifying them under three broad categories: Collective Behavior approaches (Smelser, 1962; Blumer, 1955) Rationalist approaches (Oberschall, 1973; Jenkins and Perrow, 1977; McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Tilly, 1978; McAdam, 1982; Snow et al., 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988; Gamson, 1992; McAdam et al., 1996a; Mc Adam et al., 1996b; Tarrow, 1998; McAdam et al., 2001), and Constructionist approaches (Touraine, 1985, 1988; Melucci, 1996). Critically examining the mainstream approaches in the social movement literature, in Chapter 2, it argues that, despite their seminal contributions, they hardly provide an adequate framework for understanding and explaining the phenomena of social movements. Drawing on post-structuralist insights, the study advances the claim of the inadequacy of existing movement approaches in explaining movements on the grounds of two broad lines of criticisms. The first line of criticism is related with the ‘objectivism’ of different social movement approaches. Almost all mainstream social movement approaches are, implicitly, grounded on the assumption that it is possible to understand the social world only analyzing the objectivities. In the focus on objectivities, however, they tend to fall into different forms of essentialisms in explaining social movements. Accordingly, they fall short of accounting the constitution of objectivities, fail to see the radical contingency and historicity of objectivities, and underemphasize the role of politics and power relations in the constitution of the objectivities. The second line of the criticism refers to the way in which social movement approaches deal with social structure and social action. Most of the social movement approaches fail to provide a comprehensive framework that accounts for both social structure and social action. Some approaches tend to explain social movements relying either on social

structures or social action, whereas others, that attempt to account for the both, either fail to do so, or bring them together in an eclectic way. A full-fledged account of social movements, however, should take into account both structural and movement-related factors since it is the particular combination of these factors that gives rise to movements.

The critical appraisal of the main social movement approaches, however, does not mean to reject them totally, denying the invaluable contributions of each approach to the understanding of various aspects of social movements. This study rather employs various insights provided by social movement approaches, situating them into the broader framework of the discourse theory. The discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe allows us to ground the insights of social movement approaches in a more adequate and coherent way for it does not merely provide a non-objectivist framework but also considers both structural and agency-related factors without ascribing any privilege to one over the other.

As it is detailed in Chapter 3, Laclau and Mouffe have developed a discourse analytical approach to politics of which hegemony is the central concept. They argue that ‘social’ is constituted through ‘political’ struggles that strive for establishing hegemony. Conceiving the society in a non-objectivist way, Laclau and Mouffe have grounded the concept of hegemony on a different logic of social than the mainstream approaches to politics have. They reject all types of essentialism and argue that different forms of ‘objectivity’ such as structural systems or social totality have been constructed through ‘negativity’, and that meanings of objects, and identities of social actors which take place in these systems constructed ‘relationally’ through their differences from the others within the system. The analysis of the social therefore should focus not on ‘objectivities’ but on the ways in which they have been constructed historically. The objects of investigation, in other words, should not be the objective meanings and identities but the conditions of possibility of these meanings and identities.

Having thus detailed the non-objectivist framework of the discourse theory, Chapter 4 aims to elaborate a new framework for the analysis of social movements. This task is accomplished starting from discursive ontology and articulating the valuable insights offered by social movement approaches within the parameters of the discursive ontology. In other words, the new framework is constituted resituating the insights offered by social movement approaches within the context of discourse theory of Laclau and

Mouffe. The main argument is that social movements have a truly ‘constitutive’ role. They emerge through the articulation of some social demands that are unfulfilled within the existing structural system, and engage in a hegemonic battle to restructure the social space through the discourse they constitute. Within this framework, social movement concepts are employed to account for the ways through which the discourse of social movements, i.e., the meanings and identities, are disseminated by movement actors as well as to understand some specific factors that facilitate or constrain mobilization of people, such as pre-existing structures and formal or informal organizations.

The rest of the study is devoted to the examination of the Bergama movement through applying this new framework. After reviewing the existing studies on Bergama movement and highlighting the methodological considerations of the study in Chapter 5, the study analyzes Bergama movement through tracing its trajectory. The life course of the Bergama movement is divided into three phases: the emergence phase (1990- April 1996); the consolidation phase (April 1996- November 1998); and the weakening phase (December 1998- May 2005). The central contentions that are put forward through the analysis of the Bergama movement are: that the Bergama movement engaged in a hegemonic battle through constituting an anti-gold mining discourse as a particular response to the attempts of a gold-mining multinational company to operate in the settlement area of Bergama peasants; that although the movement emerged in the local context of Bergama, it turned into a broad-based movement by means of constituting and articulating a number of social demands in addition to the particular demand of the Bergama peasants; that both the formation and the consolidation of the Bergama movement was due to its ability to provide a discursive space, i.e., the anti-gold mining discourse, to articulate some interests and some social demands that were excluded within the prevailing structure of the Turkish socio-political and economic spaces on the one hand, and its ability to increase the awareness of the public to the movement through the use of different collective ‘action forms’ on the other hand; that not only the gold-mining multinational company but also the Turkish state became the main antagonistic forces in the hegemonic struggle of the Bergama movement; and that the eventual weakening of the Bergama movement is a result of both the hegemonic efforts of the antagonistic forces and the inability of the movement actors to continue the popular appeals of the anti-mining discourse.

The Bergama movement emerged in the period which was characterized by the liberalization of the Turkish economy in line with the general neo-liberal trend in the

world economy. The economic liberalization, however, was not accompanied by political liberalization. On the contrary, economic liberalization was realized in the Turkish context through authoritarian measures of the Turkish state. Both the increasing hegemony of neo-liberalism and the authoritarian structure of the Turkish state and Turkish politics have been highly influential on the constitution of the Bergama movement and on the hegemonic battle that it engaged in. While Chapter 6 examines the logic of economy and state-society relations in Turkey with the aim of unraveling the patterns of meaning that shape these broader structures, Chapter 7 attempts to indicate how the particular logic of these structures prepared the ground for the emergence of the Bergama movement. The broader structural changes, and the proposal of a gold-mining project by the multinational company as a specific outcome of these changes, played a crucial role in the emergence of the Bergama movement. But contrary to what is implicitly or explicitly assumed in most of the studies on Bergama movement, they did not directly lead to the emergence of the movement. Rather, disrupting the existing meaning structures and failing to satisfy some social demands, they ‘dislocated’ both the locals of Bergama and some other groups, which opened up a space for the construction of a new discourse through political mobilizations. The Bergama movement filled that space proposing a new discourse that articulating the mining project in relation to broader structural changes particularly in the economic realm, provided new meanings and identities. Different groups have involved in the movement identifying with these meanings and identities. Although the broader changes and the proposal of the gold-mining project played a key role in the emergence of the Bergama movement, they neither directly generated the movement nor determined the form and content of its discourse but just provided the ‘conditions of possibility’ for the emergence of the Bergama movement.

In spite of initially emerging as a particular response to the operation of a goldmine in Bergama area, Bergama movement has not simply expressed the demands of the local residents for the ‘prevention of the operation of the goldmine in Bergama’ in an isolated way, but also constituted and voiced some other demands for ‘broader’ changes, such as ‘prevention of gold-mining’ in general, ‘protection of environment’, and ‘prevention of operation of multinational and foreign companies in the country’. From the very outset, therefore, the constituents of the Bergama movement have not been limited with the local people. The different particular demands were articulated in the anti-gold mining discourse through inscribing them in a chain of ‘equivalence’ that was formed against the

operation of the mining company. Accordingly, the boundaries of the coalition between different groups were drawn through identifying the multinational company as their common opponent. As such, an ‘antagonistic’ relation was constructed between the mining company and its supporters, and those who identify with the Bergama movement.

In analyzing the discourse of the Bergama movement, this study does not only focus upon what the movement actors verbally expressed but also examines the action forms that different movement actors adopted to advance their cause. From the very beginning, the actors of the Bergama movement engaged in a number of ‘conventional’ and ‘unconventional’ actions. Particularly in the second phase of the movement, which is the subject matter of Chapter 8, the movement actors engaged in a number of actions that became highly influential in attracting the attention of the media, broadening the support base of the movement, pressurizing the state elites, and forcing the mining company to make some changes in its project. The second phase of the movement also witnessed the expansion of the discourse of the movement through the articulation of some new social demands in addition to the already articulated ones. More specifically, the demand for the ‘rule of law’, the demand for more ‘democracy’, and the demand for the respect for ‘human rights’ were also added to those that had already been articulated within the protest discourse in the emergence phase of the movement. The equivalence between all these demands was constructed through constructing a new frontier and thereby positing all the demands of the protesters against a new common opponent. While in the emergence phase of the movement the opponent had been mainly the company and its supporters, in the second phase of the movement the Turkish state was also explicitly constructed as the opponent of the protesters. As a result of both the use of different forms of action and the expansion of the anti-gold mining discourse, the constituency and support base of the movement considerably increased in its second phase. Moreover, the movement became highly effective in uniting different social groups by means of producing a ‘collective identity’.

In its attempt to understand the hegemonic struggle of the Bergama movement, this study also considers the hegemonic efforts of the antagonistic forces because it is precisely between the movement and the antagonistic forces that the hegemonic struggle took place. While in the first and second phase of the movement the antagonistic forces, i.e., the mining company and the Turkish state, had been reactionary to the movement and weak in terms of proposing an alternative discursive space to that of the movement, in the last phase, appealing to popular interests, they succeeded to form a pro-mining bloc

against the Bergama movement. As detailed in Chapter 9, the active involvement of the Turkish state in the struggle to open the way for the operation of the goldmines in the country played a critical role in the expansion of the pro-mining bloc. The hegemonic efforts of the pro-mining bloc did not only consist of winning the popular consent to the operation of the mine but also consisted of repressing the movement actors through different measures. While the appeal of the pro-mining discourse increased in the last phase of the struggle, the appeal of the anti-mining discourse of the Bergama movement decreased. Partly due to the hegemonic efforts of the pro-mining bloc and partly due to the inability of the movement to increase its hegemonic appeals, the public support of the Bergama movement highly decreased. More importantly, most of the main constituents of the movement became de-mobilized towards the end of the last period mainly because the determination of the Turkish state for the operation of the mine dispelled their confidence to the value of mobilizations.

However, although the Bergama movement could not attain its goals, it produced a number of consequences both in minor social space in the Bergama context and in wider areas in the Turkish context. In the Conclusion, the outcomes and consequences of the Bergama movement concerning both the local Bergama context and some wider structures, such as environmental, foreign direct investment, and mining policies of the Turkish state are elaborated. Moreover, the overall meaning that Bergama movement signified in the Turkish context is discussed with a view to its implications for the democratic politics.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **A CRITICAL REVIEW OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY**

Social movement studies have proliferated as the number and variety of movements have increased in the last decades. A wide variety of movements have emerged and developed since the 1960s, mobilizing on the grounds of some 'new' issues such as environment, human rights, and peace, as well as some 'older' issues such as gender, ethnicity, nationality, and religion. Movement scholars have proposed different frameworks to account for the emergence, development, and outcomes and consequences of these movements. Each approach in the movement literature has provided invaluable insights in making sense of the movements.

However, notwithstanding their seminal individual contributions to social movement theory, mainstream social movement approaches hardly offer an adequate and coherent theoretical framework for the study of social movements. Drawing on post-structuralist insights, this study advances the claim of the inadequacy and incoherency of existing movement approaches in explaining movements on the grounds of two broad lines of criticisms of which one refers to the ontological problems and the other refers to the methodological problems in the mainstream movement approaches. The first line of criticism is related with the 'objectivism' of different social movement approaches. Almost all mainstream social movement approaches are, implicitly, grounded on the assumption that it is possible to understand the social world only analyzing the objectivities. In the focus on objectivities, however, they fall short of accounting the outside of the objectivities, that is, the constitution of objectivities through negativity. Accordingly, they fail to see the radical contingency and historicity of objectivities, and underemphasize the role of politics and power relations in the constitution of these objectivities.

The second line of the criticism refers to the way in which social movement approaches deal with social structure and social action. Most of the social movement approaches fail to provide a comprehensive framework that accounts for both social structure and social action. Some approaches tend to explain social movements in terms of either structure or



agency, whereas others, that attempt to account for the both, either fail to do so, or bring them together in an eclectic way. Any comprehensive account of social movements, however, should take into account both structural and movement-related factors since it is the particular combination of these factors that gives rise to movements.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section will detail the main points of criticisms that are directed against mainstream social movement approaches. The second section, after providing an overview of social movement approaches through considering their chronological emergence, will elaborate the main social movement approaches in greater depths. It will expose each approach and offer an assessment by pointing out their merits on the one hand, and demonstrating how the above-mentioned criticisms apply to each mainstream social movements approach in the movement literature on the other hand.

## **2.1 The Main Lines of Criticisms Directed to Social Movement Approaches**

As briefly mentioned, there are some ontological and methodological problems inherent in existing mainstream social movement approaches, stemming from the objectivistic conceptualization of social movements and from the way these approaches deal with structure and agency. In what follows, employing insights from post-structuralist thought, particularly those offered by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, it will be explained how objectivism and structure-agency dualism prevent the social movement approaches to adequately theorize social movements.

### **2.1.1 Objectivism**

In understanding and explaining the formation of social movements, existing social movement approaches focus their attention only on objectivities because they are grounded on the assumption that social identities and processes have an objective and positive meanings in themselves<sup>1</sup>. The conceptualization of social movements on the

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<sup>1</sup> As it will be explained in more details in the second chapter of the study, such approaches are based on what Derrida and Heidegger call 'metaphysics of presence' that refers to valuing the presence to the total ignorance of the absence. In other words, it refers to a primacy given to Being as presence in opposition to the absences of non-being (Kearney, 1994; Bennington, 1998). Such approaches assume that "society may be understood as an objective and coherent ensemble from foundations or laws of movement that are conceptually graspable" (Laclau, 1990: 180).

basis of objectivism, however, is inadequate and even problematic. It is inadequate because the reliance only on objectivities in explaining social movements results in an ignorance of the constitution of the objectivities. Objectivist conceptions of social movements, or some other social phenomena, fail to see that all objectivities, be it a social identity or broader structure, are contingent outcomes of political struggles, and as such, they are always constructed through power relations (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Explaining a social phenomenon focusing upon the objectivities, therefore, leads to an ignorance of or underemphasizing the role of these factors in the construction of objectivities.

Moreover, objectivistic conceptualizations of social movements tend to fall into different forms of essentialisms. Simply put, essentialism refers to the assumption that there is an essential principle that organizes social formations (Sayyid and Zac, 1998). From an essentialist perspective, it is believed that some concepts or categories provide us ultimate explanations about any social process<sup>2</sup>. Social movement approaches fall into essentialism by means of either seeing the structures as intelligible totalities or regarding meaning-giving subjects as necessary grounds from which meanings and identities flow. As such, they ignore the contingency and historicity of existing meaning structures and identities on the one hand, and underestimate the role of the politics and power relations in the constitution of the meaning structures and identities on the other hand. Most of the social movement approaches have a very narrow conception of power and politics. Some of them tend to believe that power is centralized at the hands of a few privileged elites. With such a narrow conception of power, they miss the point that social relations are always power relations, and the constitution of meanings and identities, or in other words, all ‘objectivity’ is the act of power (Laclau, 1990). Without understanding, therefore, the power mechanisms that make a social identity possible, we cannot understand its conditions of existence. On the other hand, all of them have a very narrow conception of politics. They tend to equate the political with the institutional form of politics. Moreover, most of the approaches in the movement literature tend to put a rigid separation between structural, cultural and political realms, and thereby fail to see that ‘political’ is an ontological category, that is, the social and cultural is constituted through the political (Laclau, 1990).

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<sup>2</sup> Essentialism can take the form of essentialization of the subject or essentialization of the object. The former involves the preordination of the experienced object by the experiencing subject, whereas the latter refers to the “reduction of the subject to a passive recipient of an already constituted meaning” (Torfing, 1999: 46).

The conceptualization of social movements from an objectivist vision is also problematic in the sense that it leads to locate social movements within the existing structures. Although almost all social movement approaches underline that social movements are the agents of change, they still regard them as internal moments of the existing social totalities due to their objectivist vision. Accordingly, social movement approaches fall short of specifying how it would be possible for a movement to change a structure if it is an internal moment of that structure.

The main reason behind the inherence of objectivism in social movement approaches is that most of the social movement approaches have been developed on the basis of ontical research, largely neglecting the ontological dimension. This is to say that social movements, to a large extent, have been theorized on the basis of the manifold social movements most of which emerged in advanced capitalist societies. The exclusive focus on ontical research, and conceptualizing social movements on the grounds of this research, however, bears the certain risk of transforming a particular ontic occurrence into an ontological category (Laclau, 2004). As it is underlined by Laclau, this is “the best prescription to end in ethnocentrism” (Laclau, 2004: 298).

### **2.1.2 Structure –Agency Dualism**

There has been traditionally a controversy among sociologists as to whether a social phenomenon is to be explained with underlying structural factors or with the intentional actions of agents. Those who stress only structural factors in explaining a social or political phenomena deny or neglect the efficacy of agency, whereas those who emphasize only agency ignore the social embeddedness of agents. This controversy has also taken its place in the social movement field and been expressed in different approaches to the study of social movements. As Alberto Melucci states the “study of social movements has always been divided by the dualistic legacy of structural analysis as a precondition for collective action and the analysis of individual motivations” (1995b: 42). Those who stand on the structural side privilege structural factors in explaining movements, whereas those standing on the other side privilege the social action. More precisely, some social movement approaches view the emergence of social movements as a consequence of structural transformations and changes such as modernization, industrialization, urbanization, or globalization (e.g., Political Process approach), while some others as an outcome of the efforts of movement leaders (e.g., Resource Mobilization approach, and Framing approaches). Simply put, those

approaches that emphasize the role of structural factors in explaining movements assume that changes in structural factors would automatically generate social movements. On the other hand, those approaches standing on the agency side explain movements through meaningful action of the participants of movements. In this way, these one-sided efforts either essentialize the subject or essentialize the object in explaining social movements. Some other movement approaches in movement literature attempt to consider both structural factors and agency in different ways. However, despite their intent, some of them fail to do so (e.g., New Social Movement approaches), and others cannot provide a coherent account of the role structural factors and social action play in the generation of movements for they bring these factors in an eclectic way<sup>3</sup> (e.g., the Synthetic approaches). Thus, mainstream movement approaches cannot provide comprehensive and coherent accounts of social movements due to their failure to capture the full complexity of movements.

Social movement analysis must be sensitive to both structure and agency. Being one of the engines of social change, social movements refer to agency. Yet, they operate in and attempt to change certain social structures. Thus, there are, on the one side, structures which influence and shape, to some extent, the emergence and formation of movements, and on the other side movements as collective agents that attempt to change the existing structures and constitute new ones. In studying social movements, therefore, both of these factors should be taken into consideration. In other words, any account of social movements should deal simultaneously both with agency and structure since both of them are indispensable in understanding the emergence, formation, and consequences of social movements. This, however, should be done in an anti-essentialist way, that is, without regarding social agents as unified, homogenous subjects, and without regarding social structures as wholly intelligible totalities, and as the foundation of its elements and processes.

Having explained the main points of criticisms that this study directs against the mainstream social movement approaches, the study now turns to elaborate the main

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<sup>3</sup> This refers to the efforts of those scholars who attempted to provide more comprehensive frameworks not through proposing new conceptual frameworks but through synthesizing the existing different approaches. (e.g., Mc Adam et al., 1996a; McAdam et al., 1996b; Tarrow, 1998; McAdam et al., 2001). Arguing that each approach in the movement literature refers to one dimension of social movements, they have combined them to account for both structural factors and agency. However, as it will be indicated in the following sections in more details, they could not become successful in their attempts.

social movement approaches as well as to demonstrate how these criticisms apply to each of the main social movement approaches. The critical appraisal of the main social movement approaches, however, will not blind the study to invaluable individual contributions of each approach in highlighting aspects of social movements.

## **2.2 The Main Social Movement Approaches**

The different conceptual frameworks offered by movement scholars can be broadly grouped as ‘early theories’ and ‘current theories’. These two broad categories can further be divided into two: early theories as Marxist theories and Collective Behavior theories, whereas the current theories as Rationalist and Constructionist theories. It should be noted here that none of these categories refers to a cohesive or homogeneous theory. All of them, in effect, have internal variations and complexities because they encompass different approaches developed by different scholars. Although classifying different approaches into a few categories entails obvious risks, it is nevertheless fair to group some approaches under the same categories because they share some broad assumptions.

Up until the 1960s, two traditions, collective behavior and marxist traditions had become influential in the analysis of social movements. The former were predominant in the USA whereas the latter in Europe. The inadequacy of these approaches in explaining the emergent movements has led movement scholars to search for more adequate frameworks (Cohen, 1985; Eyerman and Jamison, 1991; Garner, 1996; della Porta and Diani, 1999; Crossley, 2002). Consequently, these two traditions have been to a large extent replaced by the new ones. In the USA, first ‘resource mobilization’ approach and then ‘political process’, or ‘political opportunity’, approach have become influential, which are located in this study under the category of rationalist theories. In Europe, on the other hand, different ‘new social movements’ approaches have been proposed by movement scholars, which are grouped in this study under the category of constructionist theories. These new approaches have been built upon a critique of the previous ones. Thus, resource mobilization and political process<sup>4</sup> approach heavily criticized collective behavior approach and proposed different frameworks for the analysis of movements than those offered within the collective behavior tradition, whereas new social

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<sup>4</sup> Political process approach criticized not only collective behavior but also resource mobilization approach, and offered an alternative framework to both of these approaches. However, as it will be indicated later, it incorporates the key insights of resource mobilization theory into the framework it offers and for this reason these two approaches are placed in this study within the rationalist tradition.

movements approaches criticized Marxism for its inadequacy in accounting for the new movements and offered new ways for the analysis of the new movements.

In their effort to understand movements, these approaches focus on different levels. New social movements approaches provide a macro-level theory focusing on wider structural transformations, political process approach provides a middle range theory focusing on specific institutional contexts, and resource mobilization approach provides a micro-level theory focusing on movement organizations and participants. More precisely, resource mobilization approach explains social movements mainly focusing on formal movement organizations and availability of resources and emphasizing rationality of movement actors; political process approach focuses on the political and institutional environment of movements; and new social movements approach emphasizes the appearance of new grievances and aspirations as a result of broader structural shifts. Movement scholars extensively used these approaches during 1970s and 1980s. However, towards the end of 1980s and in 1990s, some movement scholars advanced a synthesis of the existing theories in the field, arguing that each of these theories focuses and explains an important aspect of social movements. It is assumed that a synthesis of concepts developed by different approaches would result in a more comprehensive model for explaining social movements.

In what follows, the study will elaborate the movement approaches developed within collective behavior, rationalist, and constructionist traditions. The study will not deal with Marxist approaches in this chapter since it will consider them in elaborating the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe in the following chapter.

### **2.2.1 Collective Behavior Tradition**

Within the collective behavior tradition social movements are considered not as a category in itself but as part of a broader category of ‘collective behavior’ that refers to riots, collective enthusiasm, fads and rumors, and also social movements. All the approaches in this tradition, despite their differences, hold that there is a sharp distinction between collective action and institutionalized politics.

Some of the approaches in this tradition are criticized for being not sociological but social psychological (McAdam, 1982) due to their focus on explaining individual participation in collective action, and their consideration of collective action as the aggregation of individual behaviors (Jenkins, 1983; Jamison and Eyerman, 1991; Della

Porta and Diani, 1999). William Kornhauser's 'mass society' theory, James Davies' 'relative deprivation' theory, and Herbert Blumer's symbolic interactionist approach are cases in point. Kornhauser (1959) argues that social movements arise among those people who feel isolated in mass societies. It is claimed from this perspective that isolated people participate in social movements to get a sense of belonging. In a similar vein, Davies (1962) argues that social movements arise among those people who subjectively feel deprived in comparison to their earlier conditions. Blumer (1955), on the other hand, contends that it is 'social unrest' experienced by individuals that give rise to movements. In short, these approaches focus on explaining the conditions that lead individuals to develop dissatisfaction, and to be ready for action (Rucht and Neidhardt, 2002). However, some other variants of collective behavior approach develop more sociologically derived frameworks for the study of social movements. In this regard, the work of Neil Smelser is particularly pertinent. For Smelser (1962), movements emerge to correct the structural strains.

Considering their subsequent effects on the study of social movements, the study will elaborate Smelser's and Blumer's approaches in some details in the following sections. The approaches offered by these scholars draw attention only to one side of movements. Smelser's work offers a structural account of movements and ignores social action, whereas Blumer's approach stresses social action to the neglect of structural factors. Moreover, adopting an objectivist ontology, they tend to essentialize these factors.

### **2.2.1.1 Symbolic Interactionist Collective Behaviorism**

Herbert Blumer (1955) develops a symbolic interactionist perspective to the study of collective behavior<sup>5</sup>. Accordingly, his approach to collective behavior is grounded on the assumption that the social world is made up by meanings that are produced through day-to-day social interaction of individuals. From Blumer's perspective social world changes as these meanings change and develop. In order to account for collective behavior, therefore, Blumer focuses on the interaction processes of individuals.

Blumer's approach is strong in that it proposes a plausible explanation for the reasons of the emergence of movements, but weak in accounting for the structural factors that also play important roles in the emergence of movements. He argues that it is through social

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<sup>5</sup> Turner and Killian (1957) further developed the approach of Blumer by studying the processes of collective identity formation by social movements. Like Blumer, they also focus on the involvement of individuals in social movements.

movements that social orders are challenged and changed or replaced with a new one. He views social movements as “collective enterprises to establish a new order of life” (Blumer, 1955: 199). Concerning the emergence of movements, he argues that they arise when there is a ‘social unrest’ that refers to “disturbances in the usual forms of living or routines of life”, and when there are “wishes and hopes for a new scheme or system of living” (1955: 171, 199). Thus, from the perspective of Blumer, social unrest plays a critical role in the rise of social movements because when there is a social unrest, that is, when the existing forms of life are no longer satisfactory for people, social movements emerge offering a new way of living. Through the formation of a social movement, on the other hand, a “new order of life” is developed. In its initial phase, a movement is “amorphous, poorly organized, and without form”, but as it develops it “takes on the character of a society”, that is, it “acquires organization and form, a body of customs and traditions, established leadership, an enduring division of labor, social rules and social values- in short, a culture, a social organization, and new scheme of life” (Blumer 1955: 199).

As to the emergence of a social unrest, Blumer argues that it emerges with the interaction of individuals. As it is explained by him, unrest turns into a social unrest through a mechanism he calls “circular reaction” which refers to “a type of interstimulation wherein the response of one individual reproduces the stimulation that has come from another individual and in being reflected to this individual reinforces the stimulation” (1955: 170). Although Blumer takes the social unrest, that is, the disturbances in the routines of life, as his starting point, he does not offer any detailed explanation as to why and when the existing forms of life are disturbed.

Distinguishing between general movements and specific movements, Blumer argues that general social movements provide the background out of which specific social movements develop. From his perspective, general movements refer to those movements that are concerned with general issues such as labor, youth, peace and women issues. They emerge as the values of people change, that is, as the conceptions of people about themselves and their rights and privileges change. As a result of these changes, people experience dissatisfaction since their new conceptions do not conform to their actual positions. According to Blumer, this provides a motivation for the emergence of general social movements. Concerning the characteristics of general social movements, he argues that they are “unorganized, with neither established leadership nor recognized



membership, and little guidance and control” (1955: 200). Although they have a general direction, they refer to uncoordinated efforts of a group of people.

On the other hand, a specific social movement, which develops out of general movements, can be regarded as “the crystallization of much of the motivation of dissatisfaction, hope, and desire awakened by the general social movement and the focusing of this motivation on some specific objective” (1955: 202). Thus, specific social movements are individual expressions of general movements. Blumer (1955) gives antislavery movement as an example to specific movement which, according to him, emerged out of the general humanitarian movement of the nineteenth century. In order to achieve its well-defined specific objective, a specific social movement develops an organization and structure as well as “a recognized and accepted leadership and a definite membership characterized by a ‘we-consciousness’” (Blumer, 1955: 202).

Concerning the formation of specific movements out of general movements, Blumer defines some mechanisms, such as agitation, development of esprit de corps, development of morale, formation of ideology, and development of tactics, and argues that successful development of a movement are affected by all these mechanisms. The first mechanism, agitation, operates through questioning old ways of thinking and replacing them with new ones. It has a primary importance for movements because it turns people into “possible recruits for movements” (Blumer, 1955: 203). The second mechanism, esprit de corps, refers to the creation of shared beliefs and values by movements. It is through this mechanism a movement offers its members a new conception about themselves. In other words, a movement offers a new form of identification for its members with the esprit de corps it forms. It is, in Blumer’s words, “a collective feeling which gives life, enthusiasm, and vigor to a movement” (Blumer, 1955: 208). Esprit de corps is further developed and supported by a third mechanism, morale, which is constituted through the creation of ‘myths’, ‘martyrs’, ‘heroes’, and so on. The fourth mechanism, developing a group ideology, on the other hand, is seen by Blumer as an essential mechanism for the persistency and development of movements. As he states, ideology consists of:

.....*first*, a statement of the objective, purpose, and premises of the movement; *second*, a body of criticism and condemnation of the existing structure which the movement is attacking and seeking to change; *third*, a body of the defense doctrine which serves as a justification of the movement and of its objectives; *fourth*, a body of belief dealing with policies, tactics, and practical operation of the movement; and *fifth*, the myths of the movement (Blumer 1955: 210).

According to Blumer, the ideology of a movement should carry a respectability and prestige, and should have a popular appeal. Finally, tactics are the last mechanisms essential for any social movement, which for Blumer, change depending on situations.

Although, Blumer rightly draws attention to the construction of new systems of meaning by social movements, he essentializes subjectivity regarding individuals as the sources of meaning. Moreover, he provides a one-sided view of social movements almost totally ignoring the contextual factors. In addition, there is no account of power in his approach. It is as if social movements could easily arise and establish a new way of life without confronting with the resistance of those who want to keep the existing structures.

### **2.2.1.2 The Structural-Functionalist Collective Behaviorism**

In an attempt to overcome the problems of Blumer's approach, Neil Smelser proposes another approach of collective behavior through drawing on structural- functionalist thought as developed by Talcott Parsons. The main argument of Smelser on collective behavior is that "people under strain mobilize to reconstitute the social order in the name of a generalized belief" (Smelser, 1962: 385). Thus, he defines collective behavior as "mobilization on the basis of a belief which redefines social action" (Smelser, 1962: 8).

According to Smelser, collective behavior differs from other forms of behavior in that it is based on some generalized beliefs different from the ordinary ones, and in that it is not an institutionalized behavior. As he puts it, each form of collective behavior, such as the panic, the craze, the hostile outburst, the norm-oriented movement, and the value-oriented movement, is oriented to a distinct component of social action. For instance, value-oriented movement aims at reconstituting values, whereas norm-oriented movement attempts to reconstitute norms.

Smelser argues that social movements and other forms of collective behavior emerge as a result of a "value-added process", a combination of different determinants of collective behavior. It is called value-added process because, for Smelser, each determinant is a necessary condition for the next one. As he outlines, the determinants of collective behavior are *structural conduciveness*, the opportunities different social systems provide for collective behavior; *strain*, the malfunctioning of the system as a result of the impairment of the relations among parts of a system; *generalized beliefs*, the formulation of the problem and its possible solutions by social movements; *precipitating factors*, some events that trigger collective action; *mobilization for action*, mobilizing through networks and organizations; *social control*, the actions of authorities in response to

collective action (Smelser, 1962: 15-17). It is the prevalence of all these factors that, according to Smelser, lead to the emergence of collective behavior.

Thus, in view of Smelser, when the existing structures do not meet the expectations of those within them, that is, when there is a social structural dislocation, individuals collectively react to the situation. In fact, Smelser seems to believe that a collective behavior cannot by itself bring change. Rather, he tends to view them as stimulating the processes of self-correction in a social system for he argues that collective behavior occurs “when conditions of strain have arisen, but before social resources have been mobilized for a specific and possibly effective attack on the sources of strain” (Smelser, 1962: 73). Since social systems can themselves correct strains through a process of social readjustment, collective behavior becomes “the action of the impatient” in Smelser’s conception because it “short-circuits” the system (Smelser, 1962: 73).

In his focus on structural determinants of social movements, Smelser largely ignores subjective factors that are also important in the formation of a movement. Although he mentions those factors such as generalized beliefs, he explains collective behavior mainly with structural determinants. Even those factors that are also related with social action and agency, such as mobilization and the formation of general explanations, are explained by Smelser with structural factors (Crossley, 2002). In addition to providing a one-sided explanation, he falls into essentialism regarding the structures as the necessary grounds for the emergence of social movements. He assumes that social structural dislocation directly produces collective behavior. Moreover, in line with his objectivist and essentialist thought, he marginalizes the role of politics.

### **2.2.2 Rationalist Tradition**

The approaches that are gathered in this study under the rubric of rationalist share the same basic assumption that both movements and participants of movements are rational actors. In other words, their way of approaching social movements flow from rationalist assumptions. As it has been mentioned before, among the different variants that take place in this tradition two approaches have been widely employed by movement scholars: resource mobilization approach and political process approach. These approaches later supplemented by some other approaches, the so-called framing

approaches, that draw attention to some ‘cultural’ aspects of movements<sup>6</sup>. All these approaches are influenced, to varying extents, by the collective action model proposed by Mancur Olson (1965) on the grounds of individualistic rational actor assumptions. The emphasis of Olson in explaining collective action is on rational and strategic individuals who, he believes, act on their interests and are motivated by material incentives. Though Olson’s approach is methodologically individualist, it focuses on the aggregation of individual choices not on individual choice (Levi, 1997).

Despite their reliance on the same rationalist assumptions, the approaches within rationalist tradition differ in their focus on different aspects of movements in explaining the emergence of movements. Thus, in contrast with Olson’s individualistic model, political process approach focuses on political and institutional environment, resource mobilization focuses on formal movement organizations and availability of resources to them, and cultural approaches focuses on meaning generation or identity formation by movements. These approaches do not so much concern with the development and consequences of movements as with the emergence of social movements.

In what follows, the study will first review and evaluate these approaches focusing on the theoretical formulations of the main pioneers of them. Then, it will consider and discuss those efforts that attempt to synthesize these approaches into one in order to form a comprehensive framework for the study of social movements.

### **2.2.2.1 Resource Mobilization Approach**

The main arguments of Resource Mobilization approach have been built upon a critique of the main arguments of different collective behavior approaches. In contrast with collective behavior approaches, resource mobilization approach seeks to understand not “what makes people aggrieved” but “what makes aggrieved people protest” (Klandermans, 1997: 204). Moreover, unlike some approaches within collective behavior tradition, resource mobilization approach does not regard movements as irrational outbursts. On the contrary, it conceives them as emerging through rational actions. In this regard, it argues that the emergence and development of collective action and its long-term survival requires organizations (Rucht and Neidhardt, 2002). Resource

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<sup>6</sup> The movement scholars from US categorize these approaches in a different way. They classify resource mobilization approach as a rationalist approach, political process approach as a structuralist approach, and the others as culturalist approaches (see McAdam et al., 1996a; 2001). However, such a classification misses the point that all these approaches, despite their emphasis on different points, regard movements as rational actors.

mobilization approach differs from the collective behaviour approaches with regard to its conception of the participants of a movement as well. While the collective behavior approaches envisage the participants of a movement as largely marginal, isolated, or malintegrated individuals, the resource mobilization approach argues that the participants of a movement are recruited “primarily from previously active and relatively well-integrated individuals within the collectivity” (Oberschall, 1973: 135). Finally, in contrast with some approaches in collective behavior tradition, resource mobilization theory does not view social movements as noninstitutionalized form of action, rather it sees them as extensions of institutionalized action (Jenkins, 1983).

With these arguments, resource mobilization approach has shifted the focus of movement studies, particularly in US, from grievances, unrest, and strains to the rational action of movement leaders and participants. Those factors such as the construction of meanings and identities by movements are totally ignored, or as some critics of the approach have stated, they are considered as irrelevant for the study of social movements (Snow and Benford, 1992). Thus, its main argument is that the proper object of the study of movements is not grievances, structural strain or unrest, or generation of new meanings by movements but mobilization of resources by formal movement organizations through the rational action of movement leaders and participants. The approach has mainly been formulated by Anthony Oberschall (1973), Jenkins and Perrow (1977), and John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1977). It has underpinned many movement analyses especially in the US. However, resource mobilization approach has some considerable weaknesses. Besides its objectivism and essentialism, it suffers from its one-sided focus on social action. What is more, it offers only a partial understanding of social action conceiving it narrowly in terms of ‘rational’ action of groups to advance their interests. More importantly, blurring the distinction between conventional, institutionalized politics and politics of social movements, it fails to account for the distinctive aspects of social movements.

In order to grasp the conceptions of resource mobilization theorists we first need to know their definition of social movements because the way in which they define social movements shape almost all of their arguments. It is considered by resource mobilization approach that social movements represent the interests of those groups who are excluded from formal politics (Jenkins and Perrow, 1977; Tilly, 1978). Social movements are not seen as oriented to change social structures, rather they are viewed as oriented to change only some elements of the social structures. As it is argued by McCarthy and Zald

(1977), for instance, different social movements in a given society represent different preference structures for change. As they state, social movements refer to “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of social structure and/or reward distribution of the society” (McCarthy and Zald, 1977: 1218). Accordingly, resource mobilization theorists regard social movements as extensions of institutionalized actions (Jenkins, 1983). In other words, they conceive movements as operating within the existing system, and as parts of the normal political processes (della Porta and Diani, 1999). As such, resource mobilization approach has a tendency of normalizing social movements, that is to say that it tends to see social movements not as operating “outside of normal politics” and “against normal politics” but simply as normal politics (Piven and Cloward, 1995: 139). As a result, the proponents of resource mobilization approach treat protest activities “as more organized than it is, as if conventional modes of formal organization also typify the organizational forms taken by protest” (Piven and Cloward, 1995: 138). Accordingly, they take the formal organizations of social movements as the main unit of analysis of social movements, and attempt to explain movements through these organizations.

Grounding their approach on a model of agency that is rooted in rational actor theory, resource mobilization theorists argue that social movement organizations and their members are rational and calculative actors (Crossley, 2002). From the perspective of rational action theory, individual action has an explanatory primacy in relation to social phenomena and therefore must be central to any sociological enterprise (Goldthorpe, 1998). This methodological individualism is incorporated by the resource mobilization theory to the extent that the broader environment within which movements emerge is largely neglected. That is, adopting the “atomized and asocial model of agency posited in rational actor theory”, resource mobilization theory ignores the social context in which movements emerge and operate (Crossley, 2002: 90). Thus, building the theory upon the assumption that movement organizations themselves and their participants are rational-calculative actors, resource mobilization theorists claim that the rational efforts of these actors play the major role in the emergence of a movement. Therefore, it is necessary, they argue, to focus on the activities of these actors in order to understand the emergence of movements.

As it has been mentioned above, resource mobilization theorists believe that the existence of grievances and discontent are not sufficient alone for the rise of social movements. In their view, grievances and discontent even do not play the major role in

the emergence of social movements because they argue that although most people experience some discontent, movements do not arise among all the categories of people who feel deprived or experience some discontent. Therefore, discontent should be regarded not as central analytic component to be incorporated in explaining the formation of movements but rather just a component, even sometimes a secondary component, among others in the emergence of movements (McCarthy and Zald, 1977: 1215). McCarthy and Zald even go further and assume that discontent does always exist in any society since it is “defined, created, and manipulated by issue entrepreneurs and organizations” (McCarthy and Zald, 1977: 1215). Therefore, rather than focusing only on grievances and discontent as preconditions for the emergence of a movement, the proponents of resource mobilization theory offer to focus also on the process through which they are turned into mobilization. In their search for the analytical tools to account for this process they employ some insights from micro-economic theories. They argue that in order to translate preferences into collective action, social movements need both organizations and resources such as money, time and people. It is only through mobilizing these resources that it would be possible to organize for change for the “unorganized but aggrieved groups” (Jenkins and Perrow, 1977: 250). The mobilization of these resources, on the other hand, becomes possible through broadening the support base of a movement.

Drawing on insights from economic theories, resource mobilization theorists distinguish between a social movement, a social movement industry, and social movement organizations (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). While a social movement refers to “preference structures”, a social movement industry consists of all social movement organizations that represent a certain preference for change, and a social movement organization refers to a “complex, or formal, organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a counter movement that attempts to implement those goals” (McCarthy and Zald, 1977: 1218). Social movement sectors, on the other hand, consist of all social movement industries. In a parallel fashion with economic theories that see firms operate within an industry, they see social movement organizations as operating within a social movement industry. In fact, they believe that social movement organizations, as rational units, act in the same manner business organizations act, that is, movement entrepreneurs compete with each other to attract the people into their organizations.

Attracting people to a movement, on the other hand, requires offering rewards and reducing costs of collective action for the participants because as rational actors they would always weigh its costs and benefits and decide to participate if benefits exceed costs. For the proponents of resource mobilization theory, not merely the attraction of people into social movement organizations but also the support of outsiders, particularly the support of elite, is also important for the success of a movement organization. They argue that resources might not necessarily come from direct beneficiaries of social movements since “a negatively privileged minority is in a poor position to initiate a social protest movement through its own efforts alone” (Oberschall, 1973: 214). The model of society on which resource mobilization theory grounds these claims is an elite model (McAdam, 1982). Distinguishing between mass supporters and elite supporters, resource mobilization theory emphasizes the importance and necessity of elite support for social movements. It argues that unlike masses, elites control larger resource pools, and therefore, it becomes necessary for social movement organizations to get the support of elites in order to possess necessary resources. Actually, they believe that the success of movements depends to a great extent on the support of elites.

Though resource mobilization approach captures some of the important aspects of movements, such as the strategic actions of movements, the importance of resources in the emergence of movements, and the insufficiency of grievances to generate social movements, it fails to provide an adequate and comprehensive framework for the study of social movements. One of the important reasons behind its inadequacy is that it tends to see social movements as a function of ‘rational’ actions of individuals and movement organizations. Therefore, it heavily focuses on strategic actions of movement leaders, and in doing so neglects the role social structural factors play in the formation of movements. The second reason of the failure of resource mobilization approach is related with its objectivism. It regards individuals as fully constituted agents with well established interests. It is assumed that on the grounds of their interests individuals can weigh costs and benefits of engagement in collective action. Thus, conceiving individuals as interest maximizers, resource mobilization approach rests on an essentialist conception of agency.

On the other hand, the conception of social movements resource mobilization approach develops is highly questionable. Considering social movement as parts of existing institutionalized systems, resource mobilization scholars miss the crucial point that movements mobilize against the institutionalized systems. As it is well explained by



Blumer and also Smelser, movements emerge to change the existing structures when they are no longer satisfactory for the people. Moreover, the proponents of the approach take the 'preferences for change' as given. As Crossley (2002) notes, they ignore the sources of preferences for change. In other words, they neglect how preferences for change are constructed and by whom. On the other hand, despite their claim that social movements represent the interests of the excluded groups, they do not explain how this can be possible without changing the existing system. They seem to believe that it is possible to include the excluded groups within the existing system without changing the system. As it will be argued later on the grounds of discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe, it is not possible simply to include the excluded groups into the system, if the system came into being through the exclusion of these groups.

In fact, as it is argued by some scholars (McAdam, 1982; Jenkins, 1983; McAdam et al., 1996a), resource mobilization approach offers not so much a theory of social movements as an account of interest groups or voluntary associations. That is, the framework resource mobilization approach offers might work better in understanding the activities of nongovernmental organizations and interest groups than those of social movements because the former, in contrast with the latter, operate within the existing systems and do not aim at changing the existing structures.

#### **2.2.2.2 Political Process Approaches**

Like resource mobilization approach, political process approach, also known as the political opportunity structure perspective, has a rational view towards social movements (McAdam, 1982; Della Porta and Diani, 1999; Morris, 2000; Crossley, 2002). Both approaches view social movements "as rational attempts by excluded groups to mobilize sufficient political leverage to advance collective interests" (McAdam, 1982: 37). Yet there are many differences between these approaches, and, in fact, the political process approach has been developed as an alternative to the resource mobilization perspective. In contrast with resource mobilization approach political process approach takes structural factors into consideration in explaining social movements. In other words, although political process theory conceives movements as rational attempts, it argues that the emergence of movements are less dependent on rational actions of movements than on structural factors. It is only after structural changes provide opportunities by reducing the costs of and increasing the benefits of collective action, that movements, as rational actors, come into being through seizing these opportunities. Thus, a movement

arises in a rational way when structural factors provide the opportunities to do so. Emphasizing structural factors in explaining social movements, political process approach attempts to propose a more comprehensive framework than the one resource mobilization approach offers. However, as it will be explained below, its conception of structure is problematic. Moreover, it tends to suffer from some of the problems associated with rationalist explanations.

Political process approach has been developed around different varieties of the ‘political opportunity structure’ concept<sup>7</sup>, mainly through the works of Doug McAdam, Charles Tilly, and Sidney Tarrow. Many other scholars employed the basic insights of this approach in their own studies (Kitschelt, 1986; Della Porta, 1988; Koopmans, 1993; Kriesi et al., 1995). The main focus of these scholars is on the political and institutional environment in which social movements emerge and operate since they believe that the factors which shape institutionalized political processes also shape social movements. Thus, from this perspective, the institutional-political context, with its constraints and opportunities, should be understood in order to understand and explain the emergence of a social movement.

Social movements are defined by political process theorists as “a collectivity acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional channels for the purpose of promoting or resisting change in the group, society, or world order of which it is a part” (McAdam and Snow, 1997: xviii). In contrast with resource mobilization theorists, they believe that social movements, unlike interest groups, are not embedded within mainstream political environments. As Gamson (1990: 140) put forward;

...the central difference among political actors is captured by the idea of being inside or outside of the polity. Those who are inside are *members* whose interest is vested- that is, recognized as valid by other members. Those who are outside are challengers. They lack the basic prerogative of members -routine access to decisions that affect them.

The proponents of this approach believe that taking place outside of the institutionalized politics, aggrieved people cannot advance their claims within the existing institutional-

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<sup>7</sup> As it is stated by McAdam et al. (1996a), the concept “structure of political opportunities” was originally introduced by Peter Eisinger (1973) on the grounds of the protests in the USA in the late 1960s. Eisinger argued that openings in the political opportunity structures might empower some previously powerless groups. This stimulates these groups to challenge the system if they at the same time feel themselves deprived. It is in this way the political opportunity structures have become influential in the generation of social movements. Eisinger’s concept is further developed by the political process theorists.

political context unless some changes in this context provides them with opportunities to do so. Therefore, collective action emerges when some changes make the political system “more vulnerable or more receptive to the demands of particular groups” (McAdam et al., 1996a: 6).

Concerning political opportunities, on the other hand, different factors have been pointed out by different political process scholars<sup>8</sup>. Combining different arguments, McAdam (1996a) argues that political opportunities should be analyzed in terms of four dimensions: first, the degree of the openness or closure of the institutional political system; second, the stability or instability of political alignments; third, the presence or absence of elite allies; and fourth, the state’s capacity of repression. He suggests that a change, or changes, in these dimensions provides social movements with new opportunities (McAdam, 1996a). That is, a change in any one of these dimensions can turn a political system into a more receptive one to the challenges of social movements. What is assumed from this perspective is that expanding opportunities reduce the costs of collective action and increase benefits of it. Thus, drawing on rationalist assumptions, proponents of political process theory argue that a social movement emerges when insurgents seize the opportunities provided by the changes in the institutional-political environment.

However, although the main emphasis of the proponents of political process approach is on political opportunities, they also argue that the existence of opportunities is not sufficient for the emergence of movements. In addition to opportunities which are external to movements, they believe that some other factors internal to movements also play crucial roles in the emergence of movements. As it is put forward by Tilly (1978), there are four main components of collective action: organization, mobilization, interests and opportunities. While the first three components refer to the internal structure of social movements, the last one is an external factor. According to Tilly, all these factors should be taken into account in explaining movements. While the internal factors together reveal the contender’s capacity to act, external factors shape the opportunities to act.

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<sup>8</sup> As reviewed by Tarrow (1988: 429), these are “the degree of the openness or of closure of the polity (Eisinger, 1973); the stability or instability of political alignments (Piven and Cloward, 1977); the presence or absence of allies and support groups (Gamson, 1990; Jenkins and Perrow, 1977); divisions within the elite or its tolerance for protest (Jenkins and Perrow, 1977); and the policy-making capacity of the government”.

In a similar vein, criticizing both collective behaviour approaches and resource mobilization approach as being one-sided, that is focusing exclusively either on external or internal factors, McAdam (1982) argues that both external and internal factors should be taken into consideration in order to understand the dynamics of social movements. He identifies three sets of factors that play crucial roles in the emergence of movements. The first is the 'structure of political opportunities' that refers to new political opportunities for the protests that emerge as a result of changes in the political system. The second factor that is critical in the emergence of movements is the 'indigenous organizational strength' that refers to both formal and informal existing organizations of insurgents. These organizations are primary source of resources for movements, since it is through these organizations participants or members to a movement are recruited. They also constitute a communication network for the insurgents. And the third is 'cognitive liberation' of participants that leads to a change in consciousness. According to McAdam, the 'structural potential' offered by the first two factors can be translated into collective action only on the condition that a process of cognitive liberation takes place within the aggrieved population. As a result of such a process people collectively believe that their situations are unjust and should be changed through collective action. It is the confluence of these three factors that become influential in the generation of movements.

Although McAdam and Tilly point out the role of some other factors besides political opportunity structure in the emergence of movements, the latter took a central place in the political process approach to such an extent that other factors are largely neglected. This is particularly true for the empirical works conducted from this perspective (Tarrow, 1998)<sup>9</sup>. Hence, for the political process theorists, the rise of movements is seen as the result of the expansion of political opportunities. In fact, not only the emergence of movements but also their development and consequences are envisaged from this perspective as shaped by political opportunities. As McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow put forward in a collaborative work, "the guiding assumption" of political process tradition is that "movements arise, change, succeed or fail as a function of changes in opportunities" (McAdam et al., 1996a).

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<sup>9</sup>The empirical works conducted from this perspective focused on showing either how different state structures or political institutional structures influence collective action (Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi et al., 1995) or how changes in a political system provide new opportunities for collective action (McAdam, 1982; Tarrow, 1989).

The centrality of the concept of political opportunity structure in the political process approach has led some other scholars to criticize the approach for overemphasizing structural factors (Goodwin and Jasper, 1999; Morris, 2000) and neglecting other issues, such as culture and identity formation (see, Morris and Mueller, 1992; Johnston and Klandermans, 1995). Although these criticisms rightly point out the failure of political process approach to account for the meanings and identities a movement constructs, the contention that political process approach is overly structural is questionable. In fact, political process approach cannot be regarded, in conventional terms, as a 'structuralist' approach because the notion of structure it adopts, as Crossley states "is quite narrow and ignores much of what usually belongs to 'structure' in sociological work" (2002: 124). They focus only on institutionalized political structure and do not consider wider social structures<sup>10</sup> (Della Porta and Diani, 1999). As a result they fail to consider the role of broader social structures in the emergence and formation of social movements.

On the other hand, like resource mobilization approach, political process approach has an essentialist conception of agency. Regarding social actors as rational actors, it is assumed that due to their rationality, actors seize the opportunity to mobilize. Moreover, it is assumed that people mobilize on the grounds of pre-given interests. As Goodwin and Jasper (1999: 37) state, the "term 'opportunity' implies a preexisting desire waiting for a chance at fulfillment". It is as if people had well established interests, and were just waiting for opportunities, and once they seized that there are opportunities they would mobilize.

Thus, political process approach combines a very narrow conception of structure with a rationalist conception of agency. The result, however, is far from satisfactory for the analysis of movements because what they offer is not very much different from the framework resource mobilization approach proposes. Although political process theorists consider the institutional-political environment, they, in the last instance, provide a rationalist account of movements. Therefore, they tend to suffer from the same problems associated with resource mobilization approach. Moreover, although they claim the contrary, they tend to see social movements as part of normal, institutionalized politics.

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<sup>10</sup> Although political process theorists regard their approach as a structural approach, they call it "softer" structuralism (McAdam et al., 1996a: 3). They also point out that Western European movement scholars develop "a different kind of structuralism" as "a variety of macro structuralism" (McAdam et al., 1996a: 2). They maintain that "American version" of structuralism is "more sensitive to the nuances of political process", while the European version has a "broader macro sociological perspective".

In their conceptualization, movements take place outside of the polity, the institutionalized political system, but try to change something through these institutions. In this way, they neglect those movements that aim at changing the existing political institutions.

### **2.2.2.3 Framing Approaches**

Criticizing resource mobilization and political process theory for neglecting ‘cultural’<sup>11</sup> issues, some movement scholars have proposed some models to overcome the ‘cultural’ deficit in these approaches (see Gamson et al., 1982; Snow et al., 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988; Gamson, 1992; Morris and Mueller, 1992; Snow and Benford, 1992; Johnston and Klandermans 1995; Klandermans, 1997). All these works offer different ways to account for cultural aspects, or what some scholars call ‘framing’ activities, of movements. They employ some basic insights which are borrowed from social psychological, social constructionists, and symbolic interactionists works. Most of them focus on individuals in their attempt to understand “actors’ experience and the larger forces that shape their motives, ideas, and identities” (Swidler, 1995: 31). They seek to explain the decision of individuals to engage in collective action. Put it in another way, they try to understand how a movement provides the commitment of people to its goals and ideas. These works are placed in this study within rationalist tradition because they conceive movements as rational actors, and consider their ‘cultural’ activities in an instrumental way<sup>12</sup>. Among these works, it is the work of David Snow and his collaborators that has become the most influential (see Snow et al, 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988; Snow and Benford, 1992; Benford and Snow, 2000; Snow and Benford, 2000). The concept ‘framing’<sup>13</sup> developed by these authors has been widely used by many scholars within the rationalist tradition in order to account for the construction of meanings by movements.

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<sup>11</sup> The term cultural is employed in the social movement literature to refer to those issues such as identity, ideology, and meaning construction.

<sup>12</sup> Drawing on the discourse theory of the Bakhtin circle, Marc Steinberg (1998) criticizes framing approaches claiming that ideological contention, that is meaning production, cannot be wholly controlled by the calculated and conscious actions of the participants of movements. He also points out that meaning production has a collective character, and therefore, there is a need to focus on the “complex multi-level processes by which meanings are both circulated and transformed between the level of the small group and the mass media” (1998: 862). Instead of framing approach, he offers a “dialogic analysis” of collective action and social movement discourse (Steinberg, 1998; 1999; 2002).

<sup>13</sup> The term originally introduced by Erving Goffman (1974).

In their early elaborations of the concept, Snow and his collaborators emphasize the cognitive status of frames (Johnston and Klandermans, 1995). They define it as “an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the ‘world out there’ by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past environments” (Snow and Benford, 1992: 137). Thus, framing processes, they argue, “affect the interpretive schema movement participants construct as they make sense of their social worlds” (Hunt et al., 1994). However, they reformulate it later as collective meanings generated through movement activities. From this perspective, movements are seen as “signifying agents actively engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists, and bystanders or observers” (Benford and Snow, 2000: 613).

As Benford and Snow (2000) explain it, the concept of framing refers to an agency for it involves the strategic framing efforts of movement leaders. It also refers to a process in the sense that meaning construction is realized through a “dynamic, evolving process” (Benford and Snow, 2000: 614). As a result of the framing activities and processes a “collective action frame” is generated. Collective action frames “help to render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organize experience and guide action” (2000: 614). Concerning the processes through which frames are constructed, Benford and Snow claim that there are three sets of processes: discursive, strategic, and contested. The first process involves the speech acts and written communications of the participants of movements. The second process refers to deliberate, goal oriented framing activities of movements that are directed to the recruitment of new members or to get new resources. And final process refers to the challenges in the framing processes largely stemming from the framing efforts of different parties who involve in the struggle. As Benford and Snow state, these challenges tend to take three forms: “counterframing by movement opponents, bystanders, and the media; frame disputes within movements; and the dialectic between frames and events” (2000: 625).

Although framing approaches draw attention to highly neglected issues in social movement studies, they suffer from some problems that stem from their adoption of a narrow conception of culture on the one hand, and a narrow conception of constructionism on the other. They tend to see culture as a narrow issue consisting only of individual values and ideas. Therefore, they regard meaning construction or framing processes not as the central dynamic in understanding social movements but as one of the central dynamics alongside mobilizing structures and political opportunity structures

(Johnston and Klandermans, 1995; McAdam et al., 1996a; McAdam et al., 1996b; Benford and Snow, 2000). In other words, framing is seen as an important strategic device of movements to be used in mobilization. In some works, it is regarded as mediating between political opportunities and mobilization of people (see McAdam et al., 1996b). In some others, it is argued that culture should be incorporated with other factors that are influential in the formation of movements such as social structure, material resources, and organizations (Johnston and Klandermans, 1995). Conceptualizing culture as such, these scholars fail to see that interests, organizations, mobilizing structures, and political opportunities are also shaped by the larger context of meaning structures.

Framing scholars also have a very narrow and objectivist conception of constructionism. As Snow and Benford (2000: 13) state, although they regard framing perspective “as a variant of the broader social constructionist perspective”, they situate it “toward the constrained, contextual end of the constructionist continuum”. Accordingly, from their perspective, framing activities are not conceived as challenging the socio-cultural context, rather they are seen as operating within that context. Similarly, they do not see movements as capable of creating new ideologies, rather they believe that movements draw insights from existing ideologies. For this reason, they argue that ideology should be viewed as a “cultural resource for framing activity” (Snow and Benford, 2000: 9).

#### **2.2.2.4 Synthetic Approaches**

The approaches that are put in this study under the rubric of rationalist are attempted to be synthesized by some movement scholars (see McAdam et al., 1996a; McAdam et al., 1996b; Tarrow, 1998; McAdam et al., 2001; Meyer et al., 2002). It is believed by these scholars that each approach in the field emphasizes a different set of concepts focusing only on one aspect of movements. For instance, resource mobilization approach emphasizes resources, political process approach emphasizes institutional factors, and framing approaches emphasize the importance of meaning and identity in mobilizing the people. It is assumed that a synthesis of the main concepts of these approaches would provide a broader and a more comprehensive analytic framework for explaining social movements<sup>14</sup>. This section will review the synthesizing attempts of McAdam, McCarthy

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<sup>14</sup> In fact, what emerges out of the synthesizing efforts is still called by some scholars as political process, or more precisely political opportunity structures perspective because the concept of political opportunity structure maintains its central status in the synthesized approaches despite



and Zald (McAdam et al., 1996b); McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (McAdam et al., 1996a); Tarrow (1998); and McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (McAdam et al., 2001), and argue that although synthetic approaches offer broader frameworks, they still fail to provide an adequate framework largely due to their rationalist assumptions.

There are four key concepts emphasized and used by these scholars in different combinations in their synthesizing efforts: political opportunities, mobilizing structures, collective action frames, and repertoires of contention. For McAdam et al. (1996b) three factors are crucial in the emergence and later development of social movements: political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes. The first one refers to the structure of political opportunities and constraints unique to each national context in which movements emerge and operate. In fact, the concept of political opportunities structure developed by political process approach is employed without making any modification to it. The second involves formal and informal organizations through which people mobilize. The third concept, framing processes, refers to the collective processes of interpretation, attribution, and social construction that, according to McAdam et al. (1996b), mediate between opportunity and action. For McAdam et al. (1996b), all of these factors are necessary for the emergence of a movement. If, for instance there are no formal or informal organizations, or shared meanings, then changes in the structure of political opportunities alone would not lead to the emergence of a movement. McAdam et al. (1996b) argue that there is a dynamic reciprocal relation between these factors. For instance, structural changes lead to perceptual changes which in turn lead to define the situation as an opportunity or not.

Despite their effort to combine all these factors McAdam et al. (1996b) stress that political opportunities have a central importance in understanding movement dynamics. They argue that the changes in political opportunities would be independent from the movement until the emergence of a movement. After the emergent phase, however, opportunities will be shaped through the interaction of movement with its environment. Concerning the fate of a movement after its emergence, they claim that it is no longer informal networks but formal movement organizations and “their efforts to shape the broader political environment which influence the overall pace and outcome of the struggle” (1996b: 13). As to the framing processes, they also maintain the same line of

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the addition of some other concepts. Thus, it can be said that political process theory, realizing that the approach neglects some important factors, has absorbed the insights of some other approaches and increasingly turned into a synthetic model of social movements.

reasoning. They argue that later framing processes are “to be shaped by conscious, strategic decisions on the part of SMOs”. Thus, it seems that they conceive the initial phase of a movement as shaped more by structural factors, while the following phases by strategic actions of movements.

Sidney Tarrow (1998) proposes another synthetic approach to the study of social movements. It is quite similar to that of McAdam et al. (1996b). Tarrow regards social movements as part of a broader category: contentious politics. He argues that social movements are triggered when changing political opportunities and constraints create incentives for social actors who do not have resources on their own. For Tarrow, there are four important factors that affect the emergence and development of social movements: political opportunities and constraints, mobilizing structures, collective action frames, and repertoires of contention. As seen, the main difference of Tarrow’s approach from the approach of McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald is his addition of one other dimension, the repertoire of contention that refers to different forms of contention, such as petition, strike, march and so on, available in the cultural repertoire of a society.

Although Tarrow argues that the combination of all these factors give rise to movements, he, like McAdam et al., nevertheless stresses the centrality of the structure of political opportunities for the emergence of movements. In his work, however, not only opportunities but also constraints to collective action are considered. He argues that changes in both opportunities and constraints within the political environment should be taken into account in explaining the emergence of movements since they create “the most important incentives” for insurgents to initiate a movement (Tarrow, 1998: 7).

Finally, McAdam et al. (1996a) argue in an article<sup>15</sup> for the necessity of a synthesis of the resource mobilization, political process and framing approaches, categorizing them as rationalist, structuralist, and culturalist, respectively. They argue that none of the existing social movement approaches [in rationalist tradition] explains movements in a comprehensive way. The insights provided by them should, therefore, be integrated. That is, a movement approach should consider cultural, structural, and rational factors. Criticizing those approaches that consider culture as all-encompassing, they argue that culture “risks broadening conflict until, in Hegelian fashion, all politics become

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<sup>15</sup> The article can be seen as a first step in their attempt to provide a coherent framework that takes into account different dimensions of movements. As it will be explained, these attempts are culminated in their collaborative book *Dynamics of Contention*.

enmeshed in meaning” if there is no “a solid rational base and a relationship to structural constraints” (1996a: 2).

According to McAdam et al. (1996a), the framework of political process approach provides the terrain for the integration of different approaches<sup>16</sup>. They believe that there is “nothing contradictory in this blending of theoretical influences”, and “one of the virtues of contemporary movement theory is its consistent openness to nominally antagonistic theoretical perspectives” (McAdam et al., 1996a: 7). In explaining how these different approaches can be brought together, McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly refer only to some points of convergence between these approaches in accounting for movements. In fact, their explanations are less related with the ways through which they synthesize different approaches than the need for such a synthesis for comprehending social movements. They argue that “integration cannot simply take the form of aggregation of variables drawn from different traditions, but can best occur in the context of a dynamic approach to processes of contention” (1996a: 10). A processual approach, they believe, would demonstrate how structural, cultural and rational factors affect each other, and play important roles in the emergence of movements<sup>17</sup>.

The synthetic approach put forward by McAdam et al. (1996a) also come to be known as political process or political opportunity approach. It has been widely employed by many different scholars both in US and in Europe. It has also been subjected to many criticisms. One of the criticisms directed to it is that it overemphasizes structural factors. Goodwin and Jasper (1999) argue that it has a structuralist bias. They also argue that structures and strategies are conflated in political process theory because it treats nonstructural factors such as strategy and agency as if they were structural. It should rather be argued, however, that there is not a structuralist but a rationalist bias in the

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<sup>16</sup> For McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly political process model is a structuralist model, however, as it has been mentioned before political process approach is also built upon some rationalist assumptions.

<sup>17</sup> It is, in fact, contradictory to bring structuralist, rationalist, and culturalist (more precisely, constructionist) approaches together. This is because these approaches are grounded on different ontological and epistemological assumptions. They, therefore, can be brought together either on the basis of the assumptions of the one approach or in an eclectic way. In the case of the former, one approach subsumes the concepts of the others. Although it is not explicitly stated by McAdam et al (1996a), it seems that they bring the different approaches together on the basis of rationalist assumptions because they conceptualize structure and culture in a rationalist way. That is, they conceive meaning construction in an instrumental way only as an instrument of movements to advance their interests, and see structural shifts as reducing costs of collective action. They do not consider wider social structures, and they do consider state structures insofar as these structures increase the benefits of and reduce the costs of collective action.

synthetic approach of McAdam et al. The rationalist bias in the synthetic approach is manifested in the way these scholars conceptualized structure and culture. That is, the rationalist outlook of these scholars shapes the way they conceive structure and culture. The structures are taken into account insofar as they open new possibilities for collective action through increasing its benefits and decreasing its costs, whereas the culture is used only to refer to some strategic activities of movement leaders.

Thus, the synthetic approach put forward by McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly fall short of providing a comprehensive framework for the study of movements. In fact, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly also criticize this synthesized model later for being static and non-interactive and propose a new, more dynamic, and interactive model in their study *Dynamics of Contention* (DOC). In the rest of this section this new synthetic model will be elaborated.

With their new approach, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) attempt, on the one hand, to overcome the shortcomings of the existing dominant synthetic approach, which they call the “classical model”, and on the other hand, to eliminate the boundaries between the specialized literatures on different types of political contention such as social movements, revolutions, nationalism, ethnic mobilization and democratization. The authors do not want to offer a general explanation for all these types of contentious politics. Rather, they search for parallels across these different forms of contention by means of a strategy which is “in between the celebration of particularism and the laying down of general laws” (2001: 347).

Criticizing the classical model for being static and non-interactive, McAdam et al. (2001) offer a relational approach that regards social movements as ongoing constructions and focuses on the *processes* of the formation of social movements. Moving from static to dynamic theory, they try to account for those mechanisms and processes through which collective actors as well as episodes of contention are constructed. In order to account both for different forms of contention and for the interaction between multiple actors who involve in a struggle, they substitute ‘contentious politics’ for ‘social movements’. Thus, they offer contentious politics, not social movements, as the unit of analysis, which is defined as:

Episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants” (McAdam et al., 2001: 5).

The key elements of the new research agenda proposed by McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly is based on three concepts: mechanisms, processes, and episodes. While mechanisms refer to "delimited class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways", processes refer to "regular sequences of such mechanisms that produce similar (generally more complex and contingent) transformations of those elements", and episodes refer to "continuous streams of contention including collective claims making that bears on other parties' interests" (2001: 24). It is offered by the authors that instead of analyzing the whole episode, we should analyze the processes and mechanisms in different episodes of contention in order to find whether there are recurrent mechanisms and processes and whether the different sequences of these mechanisms and processes in different historical contexts produce different outcomes. In analyzing contentious politics, therefore, first, parallels in mechanisms are to be searched, and then how these mechanisms combine in political processes is to be examined. In these examinations the specific historical features of different countries should also be taken into account. But the main unit of analysis should always be mechanisms.

As McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly state, their approach, ontologically, has a relational realist view since "it assigns a great causal efficacy to relational processes" (2001: 23). According to them, in addition to considering the historical and cultural settings where contention occurs, the relational perspective also takes into account the interaction between different actors who involve in a struggle. They believe that a focus on social interaction is necessary in movement analysis because "social interaction, social ties, communication, and conversation" are not merely "expressions of structure, rationality, consciousness, or culture" but also "active sites of creation and change" (2001: 22). Therefore, "interpersonal networks, interpersonal communication, and various forms of continuous negotiation" play a central role in the formation of a movement. Thus, McAdam et al. built their approach on the basis of a conversation model (Mische, 2003), regarding identities and contentious politics in general as "continuously negotiated outcomes of conversational processes" (Tilly, 2003: 93)<sup>18</sup>.

In spite of directing criticism to the 'classical approach', McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) argue that their aim is not to replace that model with a completely new one for studying social movements. Rather, they point that they build their model on previous

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<sup>18</sup> In formulating their approach, McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow use some insights provided by symbolic interactionism (Tilly, 2003).

ones putting the constituent concepts of these models in motion. That is, they argue that the key concepts of the classical model, political opportunities, mobilizing structures, collective action frames, and repertoires of action, are kept and used but in a more dynamic way. Accordingly, from their new perspective, opportunities and threats are not regarded as objective structural factors but as subject to attribution. The attribution of opportunity and threat is seen as “an activating mechanism responsible in part for the mobilization of previously inert populations” (McAdam et al., 2001: 43). In accounting for mobilizing structures, on the other hand, they argue that instead of considering preexisting mobilizing structures, one should attend whether they are appropriated by movement actors. Social appropriation, then, is the “second mechanism that permits resource-poor populations sometimes to overcome their organizational deficits” (McAdam et al., 2001: 44). Concerning framing activities, they argue that framing should not be seen as “a strategic tool of movement leaders”, rather it should involve the interactive construction of disputes among participants, opponents, the media, the state and important third parties. Finally, they contend that not only the action repertoires of challenging groups but also innovative collective action of both challengers and opponents should be taken into consideration. They believe that all these mechanisms interact with each other. Therefore, contention is a contingent outcome of interaction of these mechanisms. In order to understand a contention, then, one should consider not only the origins of episodes of contention but the whole episode of contention.

The reformulation of McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly overcomes some of the weaknesses of what they call classical social movement model. They no longer view structural or environmental factors as determinants of collective action (McAdam, 2001). From their new perspective, the emergence of a contention is rather seen as related with the “collective interpretations and resulting actions that people fashion in response to perceived environmental conditions” (McAdam, 2001: 223-4). As McAdam et al. (2001) also point out the most important implication of the new program is that it places social construction at the center of the analysis emphasizing the development of contention through social interaction. While the ‘classical model’ attempts to provide “an objective accounting of the opportunities, the organizational capacity, the available frames and repertoires of a given ‘mobilizing structure’”, the new program consists in a “dynamic analysis of the internal debates and interactive process through which social groups seek to define and act on a shared sense of collective purpose and identity” (McAdam et al., 2001: 50). Another important merit of the new approach is its attempt to account for

different types of political contention. Moreover, it does not deal only with the emergence of movements but considers the whole period of mobilization.

Despite its certain merits over the other approaches within rationalist tradition, however, the reformulation of McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly is not wholly satisfactory. Although the authors are more attentive to the process of the formation of social movements, they neither completely abandon rationalist assumptions nor give up their objectivist vision. As a result, the new framework they propose fail to account for the truly constitutive role of social movements on the one hand, and cannot consider the structural and subjective factors in a non-eclectic way on the other hand. In spite of shifting their focus from 'opportunity structures' to interactive processes between different actors, they could not deliver a clear account concerning how meanings are constructed through interactions. It seems that they regard the negotiations between various actors as the necessary ground of meaning construction because they conceive social interaction as taking place through the negotiations of social actors. Such a view, however, in addition to being objectivist, also relies on rationalist assumptions since it regards agents as fully constituted around clearly defined interests. Yet, on the other hand, the authors also claim that they consider the historical and cultural setting within which contention occurs. However, they fall short of explaining how and to what extent these broad structures exert influences to interactive processes which, they believe, constitute contention. Moreover, although they do not claim that politics is not limited to institutionalized politics, they nevertheless maintain prioritizing institutionalized politics in understanding and explaining contention. They still believe it is the changes or ruptures in the relations of different political actors within the formal or institutionalized politics that set contention in motion (McAdam, 2001).

### **2.2.3 Constructionist Approaches**

Constructionist approaches consist of new social movement approaches which, as it has been mentioned, have been developed largely in opposition to Marxism. The proponents of these approaches argue that contemporary social movements are 'new' in the sense that new actors are mobilized around new forms of conflict that emerge in the structural conditions of a new type of society. Thus, they believe that it is no longer economical or political problems as typically conceived by Marxist theorists as the main problems of industrial society that lead to the emergence of movements. Accordingly, the Marxist arguments that the fundamental conflict in capitalist societies is between capitalist class

and working class, and that workers' movement is the main movement of capitalist societies are rejected by new social movements theorists<sup>19</sup>. Rather, they argue that collective action is different within the framework of contemporary societies than the working class action within the framework of industrial societies. In other words, they postulate that contemporary societies are no longer industrial, but refer to a different type of society (post-industrial or information society) with different tensions and struggles that lead to the emergence of different types of movements. Therefore, contemporary movements are 'new' movements different from the 'old' movements of industrial societies. These new movements include the ecology movement, the peace movement, the solidarity movement (solidarity with the Third World), the women's movement, and those that have been mobilized against the discrimination of minorities (Kriesi et al., 1995). Unlike the old movements which were mobilized mainly around economic and political issues, the new movements are mobilized around issues of culture and identity. Therefore, new social movements theorists believe that it is necessary for the analysts of social movements to study the processes by which collective identities and new meanings are constructed by new movements.

Thus, unlike rationalist approaches, the approaches in new social movement tradition considers the macro-social context of social movements, and therefore, provides a broad view of society with its tensions and struggles that lead to the emergence of movements. Among the different scholars who contributed to the development of new social movement tradition with different approaches (Offe, 1985; Touraine, 1985, 1988; Eder, 1993; Melucci, 1996)<sup>20</sup>, it will be focused on the two: Alain Touraine and Alberto Melucci. This is because these two scholars are the most notable theorists in the new social movements field for they have developed theoretical frameworks and engaged in

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<sup>19</sup> This, however, does not mean that new social movement theorists reject class analysis altogether. Claus Offe (1985) and Klaus Eder (1993) provide explanations about the class bases of the actors of new social movements. For Offe, although the demand of new social movements are not class specific, their social bases largely consists of the new middle class. The politics of that class, which is expressed through new social movements, is "typically a politics of a class but not on behalf of a class" (Offe, 1985: 833). Eder (1993) also, although argues that classes and collective action are independent from each other, presumes a relation between new social movements and new middle classes.

<sup>20</sup> There are some other scholars who also study 'new social movements' (Kitschelt, 1990; Duyvendak, 1995; Kriesi, 1992; Kriesi et al., 1995). The arguments of these scholars, however, are different than the arguments of those scholars who are located in new social movement tradition. The former scholars study new social movements within the framework provided by rationalist approaches, whereas the latter scholars develop their own approaches to the study of new social movements.



empirical analysis of these movements more than the others. Both Melucci's and Touraine's conceptions of social movements have certain merits when compared with the other approaches outlined in the study so far. However, as it will be explained below, both of them suffer from objectivism and the problems associated with it on the one hand, and fail to provide a coherent approach that accounts for both structure and agency on the other hand. Moreover, like most of the new social movement theorists, they fail to see that 'new social movements' also emerge in those societies that cannot be considered as 'post-industrial' or 'information' society. In what follows, the study will first focus upon the work of Melucci, and then that of Touraine on new social movements.

### **2.2.3.1 Alberto Melucci's 'New Social Movement' Theory**

Arguing that collective action cannot be explained with structural determinants, Alberto Melucci proposes a constructivist approach for the analysis of social movements that focuses on the processes through which collective actors come into being. He defines a social movement as the "individual and collective reappropriation of the meaning of action that is at stake in the forms of collective involvement, which make the experience of change in the present a condition for creating a different future" (1996: 9). He is highly critical of the other social movement approaches, particularly those approaches within rationalist tradition. He argues that these approaches exclusively focus on the relationship between social movements and political systems, and thereby neglects the social and cultural dimension of movements (Melucci, 1996). It is, for Melucci, especially the cultural dimension of movements that deserve a special attention because the principal activity of social movements in contemporary 'complex' societies is the production of cultural codes. As he states:

In the last thirty years emerging social conflicts in complex societies have not expressed themselves through political action, but rather have raised cultural challenges to the dominant language, to the codes that organize information and shape social practices (Melucci, 1996: 8).

Melucci defines social movements as "a form of collective action" which is "(a) based on solidarity, (b) carrying on a conflict, (c) breaking the limits of the system in which action occurs" (Melucci, 1985: 795). From Melucci's perspective, social movements refer to a "phenomena which closely involve the fundamental processes whereby a society maintains and changes its structure" (1996: 3). Therefore, they are always related with the issue of power relations and about "defending or contesting a specific position or form of dominance" (Melucci, 1996: 3).

According to Melucci, a new form of dominance, and accordingly a new field of conflict, has emerged in contemporary information societies as a result of social structural changes. As he explains it, the forms of power in contemporary societies are related with “an ability to inform (give form)” (1995a: 116). Therefore, conflict emerges in the contemporary information or postmaterial society “only in so far as actors fight for control and allocation of socially produced potential for action” (1995a: 116). This potential, Melucci maintains, is not based only on material resources but increasingly on the ability to produce information. On the grounds of this, Melucci (1994; 1996) argues that social movements do not express an antagonism toward the logic of the system they challenge, but rather, they are just pressures to join in an institutional system of benefits and rules from which those who form a social movement are excluded. As such, Melucci maintains, social movements do not aim at seizing state power. Instead, they challenge dominant cultural codes, that is, they operate largely in cultural arena offering new languages, life-styles, and new definitions of reality. Collective action, thus, represents “a message broadcast to society conveying symbolic forms and relational patterns which casts light on the dark side of the moon- a system of meanings which runs counter to the sense that the apparatuses seek to impose on individual and collective events” (Melucci, 1995a:116). More precisely, contemporary movements question society asking.

...who decides on codes, who establishes rules of normality, what is the space for difference, how can one be recognized not for being included but for being accepted as different, not for increasing the amount of exchanges but for affirming another kind of exchange? (Melucci, 1985: 810).

According to Melucci, one should adopt a processual approach for the analysis of social movements. In contrast with other approaches to social movements that “has been led so far by a widespread ‘realistic’ attitude toward the object, as if collective actors existed in themselves, were unified ontological essences that the researcher had to understand by referring them to some underlying structural condition or by sorting the motives behind the behaviors”, he argues that movements cannot be represented as homogeneous, unified subjects (1995b: 42). As he puts it, movements “are not entities that move them with the unity of goals attributed to them by their ideologues”, but rather, “systems of action, complex networks among the different levels and meanings of social action” (Melucci, 1996: 4). Moreover, collective identity which turns movements into actors should not be seen as a datum, or essence for “it is the outcome of exchanges, negotiations, decisions, and conflicts among actors” (Melucci, 1996: 4). Therefore, instead of conceiving collective actors as unified entities that have fixed essences, we

should regard them as constructed through complex processes. Accordingly, social movement analysis should be shifted from “a monolithic and metaphysical idea of collective actors” to “processes through which a collective becomes a collective” (1995b: 43).

Melucci tries to overcome the dualism between systems and actors with the processual and constructivist approach he offers. He argues that a social movement is not “either the simple effect of structural preconditions or the expression of values and beliefs (Melucci, 1995b: 43). Any full-fledged account of social movements, therefore, requires considering both structures and actors. In order to consider both of them, he believes, we should focus on the processes through which meanings are constructed. More precisely, we should focus on day-to-day relations, daily interactions of actors situating them “within the field of possibilities and constraints that actors observe and utilize” (Melucci, 1994: 109). As he puts it:

Collective action should thus be considered as the result of purposes, resources and limits: as a purposive orientation constructed by means of social relationships within a system of opportunities and constraints. It therefore cannot be viewed as the simple effect of structural preconditions or the expression of values and beliefs (Melucci, 1995a: 111).

It is the action of movements, according to Melucci, that create a link between actors and opportunities and constraints in their environment. From his perspective, collective action is constructed through the “interaction of a multiple field of forces and analytically distinct social processes” (Melucci, 1996: 4). The analysis of movements should focus on identifying these components and explaining how they come together in a specific conjuncture in a given society. More precisely, Melucci believes that the focus of movement analysis should be the construction of collective identity by movements<sup>21</sup>. He is more attentive to the complexities of processes of identity formation than the other movement scholars. Collective identity is defined by him as:

an interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals (or groups at a more complex level) and concerned with the orientations of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which the action takes place (Melucci, 1995: 44).

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<sup>21</sup> Melucci distinguishes his constructionist approach from radical constructionism. According to him, the process of construction has limits, that is, it always takes place within the boundaries of a given field. In this way, he believes that it is possible to avoid “the risk of a radical constructivism” which “finishes by destroying the relational dimension of social action and presents itself as the ultimate version, perhaps more sophisticated, of a voluntaristic paradigm” (Melucci, 1995b: 61).

Concerning the construction of collective identity, Melucci draws attention to three points. One is that collective identity involves “cognitive definitions concerning the ends, means, and field of action”, the other is that it refers to a network between the actors who are involved in it, and finally the formation of collective identity requires some emotional investment, that is it cannot be reduced to cost-benefit calculation (Melucci, 1995b: 45). In the collective identity construction process, movements enter into certain relations with their environments. In fact, from Melucci’s viewpoint collective actor and system “reciprocally constitute themselves, and a movement only becomes self-aware through a relation with its external environment, which offers to social action a field of opportunities and constraints that are in turn recognized and defined as such by the actor” (1995b: 47).

With his conceptualization of social movements, Melucci provides valuable insights for the analysis of movements. His emphasis on the constructed nature of movements, his focus upon processes of movements formation, his consideration of wider structural factors, and his attempts to overcome the dualistic legacy in social movement approaches through the concept of collective identity places him beyond those theorists who take place within rationalist tradition. Yet, there are also some problematic aspects in Melucci’s conceptualization of social movements. First, Melucci, like rationalist theorists, equates political with institutionalized forms of politics, and thereby fails to see the political character of ‘cultural’ movements. Second, his argument that contemporary movements do not express antagonism is problematic. As it will be indicated in the following chapters, it is in fact through the construction of antagonism that social movements come into being. Finally, and more importantly, like the other movement theorists, Melucci has an objectivistic conception of society. He assumes that “society is the a priori of its constituent elements” (Vahabzadeh, 2001: 622). In line with this, he sees social movements as internal moments of existing systems. Despite his arguments that social movements construct new meanings and identities, he considers new social movements as organized around the conflicts that are structurally determined. That is, he sees new social movements as largely shaped by information society, or more precisely as a function of information society. Thus, conceiving society as the ultimate source of all meanings, he suffers from objectivism. His objectivistic conception of society prevents him to put forward “a nondeterministic notion of identity” (Vahabzadeh, 2003: 22). If social conflicts are determined or are given by structures, then, it becomes not possible to see collective actors and action as constructed in the strictest sense of the

term. As a result, Melucci, in fact, grounds his arguments on an essentialist conception of society, and in spite of his intentions, cannot provide a truly constructivist framework that accounts both for structure and agency in explaining social movements in a non-essentialist way.

### **2.2.3.2 Alain Touraine's 'New Social Movements' Theory**

Alain Touraine offers a highly different and the broadest framework for the study of social movements than the other theorists of movements<sup>22</sup>. Conceiving social movements as the central actors in the society, Touraine argues that social movements are the main subject of sociology. In other words, he develops a 'sociology of action' in which social movements are seen as the central actors. He conceptualizes social movements in opposition to structural-functionalism, structural Marxism, 'strategic', and 'civilizational' schools (Touraine, 1985). In order to understand Touraine's conceptualization of social movements in general and contemporary social movements in particular, we first need to understand his conception of society. As Rucht (1991) also points out, this is necessary because Touraine's conception of social movements is strictly connected to his conception of society. Therefore, in what follows, Touraine's conception of social movements will be elaborated after his conception of society and his critiques to other social movement approaches will be given.

Touraine criticizes structuralist social movement approaches developed by structural-functionalist and structural marxist schools for being one-sided. He argues that structural-functionalism fails to account for the social actors because it regards them as elements of an existing social system (Touraine, 1985). Moreover, he argues that structural functionalist approaches, reducing social life to "institutional rules and hierarchized statutes", fall short of accounting "uncertainty, negotiation, conflict, transformation" that are always existent in the social life (Touraine, 1985: 771). Concerning structural Marxism, on the other hand, Touraine argues that although structural Marxists consider conflict, they conceive society as completely closed, and

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<sup>22</sup> Touraine also develops a method of analysis for social movements called 'sociological intervention' through which he aims at understanding the meanings of movements for both participants and observers. The method is "intended to assist incipient social movements in acquiring an ability to engage in self-analysis as a prelude to locating their sense of collective identity and their definition of opposition and domination to a larger societal totality which transcends the blinders of movement ideologies and elevates their consciousness to that system of historicity" (Kivisto, 1984: 362).

thereby deny “the ubiquitous existence of actors” (Touraine, 1985: 771). Touraine is also equally distant from ‘subjectivist’ approaches that identify themselves “with the actors’ opinions” (Touraine, 1985: 766). He puts subjectivist accounts of social movements under the rubric of ‘strategic school’ and locates rationalist approaches to social movements, particularly resource mobilization and political process approaches, in this school. As he argues, in contrast with structural-functionalism and structural Marxism, the ‘strategic school’ does not make reference to structural problems. It sees social life “as a complex flow of change without any structural conflict”, and regards social actors as defined only by their goals. Accordingly, they develop a “pragmatic strategic conception of social action” (Touraine, 1985: 769). Finally, ‘civilizational school’ identifies social life with ideologies and neglects social actors by privileging national cultures and emphasizing specificity of civilizations (Touraine, 1985).

Against these approaches, Touraine argues that both social actors and structural problems should be taken into account in the analysis of the social. He believes that the duality between actor and system can be overcome with the idea of action system. ‘Social action’, therefore, should take place at the center of any social analysis (Touraine, 1988). Accordingly, Touraine replaces the notion of society by social action. He argues that, societies, as hierarchical systems of action, consist of three levels: historicity, institutional system, and organizational system. Historicity is the most important and highest level of accomplishment, and defined by Touraine as “the set of cultural models (cognitive, economic, and ethical)” through which “a collectivity sets up relations with its environment; in other words, produces....a culture” (Touraine, 1988: 42, 40). That is, the prevalent cultural models in a society are determined through collective work, and it is this level of action that Touraine calls the level of historicity. Institutional system is the second level and refers to “the mechanism through which cultural orientations are transformed into social practices” (Touraine, 1988: 40). All institutions, for Touraine, are political. The organizational system, on the other hand, refers to the third and the lowest level. Each of these levels produces different types of social conflicts and gives rise to different forms of movements (Touraine, 1985). At the highest level, conflicts are organized around the control of main cultural patterns and resources, at the institutional level conflicts are organized to change institutional rules, and at the organizational level, they are organized to “respond to an organizational status and to organizational change” (Touraine, 1985: 752).

The concept of historicity has a central place in Touraine's conception of social movements. As it has been mentioned, Touraine believes that it is through the action of collectivity at the level of historicity that cultural models of a society are determined. He, however, does not regard historicity, or the cultural models, as "solidly established at the center of society" (1988: 41). Historicity, rather, refers to "a set of instruments, of cultural orientations, through which social practices are constituted" (Touraine, 1988: 41). In other words, it is "the capacity to produce an historical experience through cultural patterns, that is, a new definition of nature and man" (Touraine, 1985: 778). Thus, the concept refers to the capacity of a society to produce itself not by reference to a transcendental order but by its own actions (Bell, 2001). Touraine argues that historicity is always controlled by a specific group, the ruling group, which identifies with historicity and also identifies historicity with its own interests. The others, that is, those who do not control the historicity, try to protect themselves from that specific group and also attempt to get the control of historicity. Thus, there emerges a conflict between the ruling groups and the others in a society to control historicity.

Touraine goes on to argue that the conflict between the ruling group and the rest of the population in a given society is the central conflict of that society. From his perspective, there is only one central conflict in each society. This, to him, does not mean that there is only one conflict, there are in fact several conflicts but only one conflict is central in a given society. In other words, the central social conflict has a priority over the other conflicts. This is because the form social life takes is determined by the central conflict (Touraine, 1991). The central conflict, therefore, arises at the level of historicity, that is, around the prevalent cultural models of a community and divides the community "between those who make themselves the actors and the masters of these cultural models and those who partake of them only from a dependent position and seek to disengage them from the social power that determines their orientation" (Touraine, 1988: 9). These conflictual groups are called by Touraine "social classes". As he also states he does not use the term in the sense Marx used it (Touraine, 1988). In his conception, social classes, rather, refer to "groups that are opposed to each other in a central conflict for the appropriation of the historicity toward which they are oriented and which constitutes the stakes of their conflict" (Touraine, 1988: 41).

As to the social movements Touraine defines them as "conflicts between organized actors over the social use of common cultural values" (2002: 90), or more precisely, "collective action aiming at the implementation of central cultural values against the

interest and influence of an enemy which is defined in terms of power relations” (1991: 389). There are three elements in Touraine’s conception of social movements: the actor (or the identity of the actor), opposition (or an opponent), and the totality (or historicity). His concept of social movements is, in fact, strictly connected with his notion of class since, simply put, social movements refer to action of social classes. In other words, social movements refer to action of an actor, whereas social classes to a situation. However, social movements, as an action of a subject, cannot be explained through the latter. As he defines them:

A social movement is the action, both culturally oriented and socially conflictual, of a social class defined by its position of domination or dependency in the mode of appropriation of historicity, of the cultural modes of investment, knowledge, and morality toward which the social movement itself is oriented (1988: 68).

On the basis of his conviction that there are two classes in a given society which are formed around the central conflict of the society, Touraine further argues that there is only “*one* central coupling of social movements” in each society. He does not see all forms of movements as social movements. On the basis of the idea that civil society and state are two separate realms, he argues that social movements and political action should be analytically separated (Touraine, 1985). He uses the term social movements only to refer to the conflicts that emerge at the highest level, that is, to refer to the conflicts for controlling the central cultural patterns. Social movements, for him, represent “the attempts of ‘society’ to liberate itself from ‘power’” (Touraine, 1985: 776). In this sense, he believes that his concept of social movements is “clearly anti-Leninist” because for Lenin revolutionary party has the central role in the mobilization of people. In contrast with this, Touraine’s concept, as he puts it, “implies that the nature of social movement can be defined only in terms of cultural stakes and conflicts between social, ‘civil’ actors” (Touraine, 1985: 776).

Accordingly, Touraine uses the term ‘political movements’ to denote the political action. For him, political movements refer to the conflicts at the institutional level since, he believes, they are just political pressures of a political force. According to him, due to their operation at the institutional level, political movements do not lead to decisive changes in the structure of society. They just aim at controlling state power (Touraine, 1985). The conflicts at the organizational level, on the other hand, is seen by Touraine as giving rise to “collective pursuits of interests”, but not to movements (Touraine, 1985: 761).



Thus, from Touraine's perspective social movements, unlike those which operate at the institutional and organizational levels, play a crucial role since they, operating at the highest level, attempt to control cultural patterns in a society. Put in another way, social movements are not merely actors among others in a social system, but the historical agents who transform a social system (Bell, 2001). Having such a transformative role, then, all social movements are "signs of an internal crisis and reorganization of a social system" (Touraine, 1985: 772). As such, collective actors experience their actions as a "rupture with predominant cultural values or institutional rules" (Touraine, 1985: 772). It is because of their central role in the transformation of society, or in Touraine's words in the formation of historicity, social movements should be seen as the main subject of sociology.

Concerning contemporary social movements, Touraine argues that they are 'new' because they correspond to a new type of society. In his various works, Touraine argues that contemporary societies are no longer industrial but post-industrial, programmed societies<sup>23</sup>. Post-industrial society refers to "a new culture and a field for new social conflicts" (Touraine, 1985: 781). Unlike industrial societies which are based on the production of material goods, and characterized by the centrality of economic exchange, post-industrial societies are based on the production of symbolic goods which "shape or transform our representation of human nature and of the external world" (Touraine, 1971; Touraine, 1985: 781). The conflicts that likely to emerge in these two societal types are different because domination is realized through material production in industrial societies, whereas it is through the production of knowledge and manipulation of the symbols in post-industrial societies. Therefore, unlike industrial society in which politics is the locus of conflicts, in postindustrial society the field of culture becomes the locus of conflicts. Thus, for Touraine (1988), unlike labour movement in industrial societies, contemporary movements affect not the division of labour and forms of economic organizations but cultural values. They originate "at an even greater remove from the political system than the workers' movement did" (1988: 150). For Touraine, the new social movements, in fact, try to limit their relations with the political system. That is, they seek to limit the extent of political intervention, to reject the idea that everything is political, and to protect a non-political area which represents a conception of public space. Touraine maintains that the most important outcome of this development

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<sup>23</sup> Touraine distinguishes between four types of societies: the agrarian, merchant, industrial, and post-industrial (Rucht, 1991).

is “the growing gap between social movements and revolutionary action” (Touraine, 1988: 152).

Touraine believes that the field of action of contemporary movements is much larger than that of the old movements. The field of social movements is extended into “all aspects of social and cultural life” in contemporary societies (Touraine, 1985: 778). They deal with problems that are regarded private such as health, sexuality, information, communication, life and death. These movements, according to Touraine, have risen against the growing concentration of power and the penetration of decision-making apparatuses into all aspects of social and cultural life. Their main objective is not the conquest and the transformation of the state, but the defense of the individual, interpersonal relations, small groups, and minorities against a central power. The reason behind this extension is that unlike the past societies, there is no “metasocial guarantees of social order” in contemporary societies, which was variously called “order of things, divine rule, natural law, or historical evolution” (Touraine, 1985: 778). Therefore, in contemporary societies “we feel that our capacity of self-production, self-transformation, and self-destruction is boundless” (Touraine, 1985: 778).

As mentioned, Touraine’s conception of social movements is highly different than all the other approaches outlined in the study so far. It has some certain merits over the other movement approaches. Touraine’s consideration of wider structural factors, and his emphasis on the constitutive and transformative role of social movements, and on the central role of conflicts and power relations in the constitution of social movements particularly deserves credit. However, despite all its merits, Touraine’s approach suffers from objectivism. Accordingly, in spite of his efforts of refraining from essentialism, his approach lapses into essentialism. He essentializes society conceiving it as the ultimate domain of explanation of social movements<sup>24</sup>. From his perspective, it is the central conflict, which is seen as structurally pregiven, in a given social formation that leads to the generation of social movements. It at the same time determines the position of the classes, that is, the actors. Thus, in Touraine’s conception both conflict and the identities of actors are structurally determined. Such a conception assumes that social is a fully constituted objective whole which determines both conflicts and actors. Despite his

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<sup>24</sup> Vahabzadeh (2001; 2003) also criticizes Touraine, and also Melucci, for considering society as the ultimate domain for explaining new social movements. He argues that in the conception of these authors society functions as the “ultimate referentiality” for they consider society as “fully knowable and the pregiven source of social movements” (Vahabzadeh, 2003: 38).

intentions, therefore, Touraine's approach cannot account for the constitutive role of movements.

Reviewing the main social movement theories, this chapter has argued that, despite their invaluable contributions to the study of social movements, the main social movement theories suffer from an objectivist vision to the social world on the one hand, and fail to provide a balanced account of structural conditions and subjective practices of movements on the other hand. As mentioned, this study will attempt to overcome these weaknesses in social movement theory by situating its valuable insights within the context of the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe. In order to be able to do so, however, it will first elaborate the discourse theory. The following chapter, therefore, will provide a detailed account of the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe.

### CHAPTER 3

#### A DIFFERENT ONTOLOGY: DISCOURSE THEORY OF ERNESTO LACLAU AND CHANTAL MOUFFE

The discourse-theoretical perspective of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe offers a more promising framework for the analysis of social movements than the mainstream social movement approaches in the sense that it overcomes the ontological and methodological problems inherent in the main social movement approaches. It proposes a broad and non-objectivist framework for the analysis of the constitution of the social through the political struggles. Moreover, it provides a more balanced view of structure and agency without giving a special priority to the one over the other.

The term ‘discourse’ has been widely used in recent social research and often understood as only related with what is said and written. The approach of Laclau and Mouffe moves beyond such narrow accounts of discourse and envisages discourse as systems of meaning in the broadest sense. Drawing on Marxism, structuralism, poststructuralism, and psychoanalysis, Laclau and Mouffe have developed a theoretical framework for understanding the constitution of discourses through political struggles. The main assumption characterizing the whole theory is that the closure of the social, and therefore the ultimate fixation of meanings, is impossibility. The most important implication of such an assumption is that there will always be political struggles on the definitions of meanings and identities. Different political actors will compete to fix meanings and identities through imposing their own definitions to the social field. According to Laclau and Mouffe, it is the proliferation of these struggles that will create the preconditions for a radicalization of democracy (Laclau, 1990).

In this chapter, the study will present the discourse theory as developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe mainly in their collaborative work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985), and in Laclau’s singular works *New Reflections on the Revolutions of Our Time* (1990), *The Making of Political Identities* (1994), *Emancipation(s)* (1996a), and *On Populist Reason* (2005). It will begin by providing a brief account of the whole theory in order to introduce the main themes and concepts that will be elaborated in

subsequent parts in details. The reason of giving such a preliminary account is to prevent confusion that is likely to occur due to the complexity of discourse theory, which stems partly from the novelty of its arguments and partly from the interdependency of its main categories. Then, through the examination of the intellectual roots of the discourse theory, it will be attempted to situate the work of Laclau and Mouffe in a context within which it has been shaped. In relation with this section, the fundamentals which characterize Laclau and Mouffe's thought will be clarified in the third section. In particular, it will be endeavored to highlight the main philosophical underpinnings of the theory as well as its main themes. After elaborating the main categories of the discourse theory in greater depths in the fourth section, the chapter will conclude with a brief account of why discourse theory should be fed by the insights from social movement theory for the analysis of social movements.

### **3.1 A Preliminary Account of the Discourse Theory**

Laclau and Mouffe have developed a discourse analytical approach to politics of which hegemony is the central concept (Laclau, 2001). Conceiving the society in a non-objectivist way, Laclau and Mouffe have grounded the concept of hegemony on a different logic of social than the mainstream approaches to politics have. They reject all types of essentialism and argue that different forms of 'objectivity' such as structural systems or social totality have been constructed through 'negativity', and that meanings of objects, and identities of social actors which take place in these systems constructed 'relationally' through their differences from the others within the system. The analysis of the social, therefore, should not focus on 'objectivities' but on the ways in which they have been constructed historically. The objects of investigation, in other words, should not be the objective meanings and identities but the conditions of possibility of these meanings and identities.

The construction of meanings and identities, on the other hand, becomes possible only through political struggles. In the absence of foundations and essences, the political becomes primary since it is only through the practice of politics the social world is constructed. This is to say that the 'objective' structures, which refer to the institutionalized frameworks that provide the conditions for social reproduction through repetitive and determinate social practices, are the contingent outcomes of political struggles. According to Laclau and Mouffe, the 'objective' structures are not constructed

for once and all, and therefore it is possible to reconstruct them in a radical way. Thus, the social world does not only involve the 'objective' structures but also involves the possibility of a radical reconstruction of them. This is because the social has an open and indeterminate character in which it is not possible to fix meanings and identities for once and all.

The social consists of an "infinite play of differences" in an open, incomplete, and indeterminate system (Laclau, 1990: 90). The existing structural systems are the outcomes of the attempts of limiting that infinite play through temporarily fixing the meanings and identities within a system. These attempts, however, will never result in a total fixity of meanings within a closed system. In other words, it would not be possible for the objective structures to exhaust all the meanings and possibilities in the social. They will always be predicated on the exclusion of some other possibilities. Therefore, the meanings and identities would only be partially fixed, and structural systems would only be relatively closed. As such, the social always bears other meanings and possibilities than the existing ones, which are repressed but can be reactivated.

As a result of the impossibility of the full closure of the structures, the 'fullness' of society, as a totally closed system, becomes an object which is impossible to achieve. However, although full closure is not possible, a relative and temporary closure of structures is required for the construction of meanings and identities because otherwise there would be an infinite dispersion of meanings, and it would not be possible to construct any meaning. Because of this necessity, the 'fullness' of society should have access to the field of representation. But due to the impossibility of 'fullness', the means of representation will always be particular and distorted (Laclau, 1999). It is the representation of the impossible 'fullness' by one or the other particularity, and thereby the establishment of a certain social system, is what Laclau and Mouffe (1985) call *hegemony*. Different political forces, which have different hegemonic projects, attempt to fix meanings within a relatively closed system and thereby to establish different social orders. The construction of the social in this way, that is, fixing the meanings in a system, is realized through *hegemonic articulation*. The outcome of the partial fixation of the meaning through the relative closure of the social is *discourse* (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

A discourse is constituted by drawing boundaries that separate it from what it is not. This is the only way of unifying a discourse in the absence of any ultimate foundations. The

boundaries are established by pointing out an outside, an enemy. In this way what Laclau and Mouffe (1985) have called *antagonism* becomes constructed. Thus, those that are constituted as the outside play a crucial role in the construction of a discourse. However, it is also the existence of the outside that, posing a threat to the inside, prevents the inside from becoming a closed system.

Hegemonic articulation, then, refers to the construction of social antagonisms. The existence of a hegemonic discourse refers to the relative closure of the social, and therefore, a relative stability. Insofar as the stability of the structures is not challenged, the constructed and contingent nature of social structures cannot become apparent. In other words, social structures are perceived as 'objective' structures, and this 'objectivity' is not questioned as far as social structures ensure social reproduction. It is only when existing structural systems fail to provide a meaningful framework, which refers to a *dislocation* (Laclau, 1990), a political intervention that aims at providing a meaningful framework becomes possible. Thus, the recognition of the socially constructed nature of any objectivity opens new opportunities for restructuring the social space, and this recognition can only become possible with dislocation. The existing structures become dislocated when it is no longer possible to integrate new events within them.

According to Laclau (1994) the construction of new frameworks is radical in the sense that it is not based on anything in the existing social order. In other words, the existing social order does not provide any ground to that construction. It is a radical institution, and as such it has its foundation in itself. It is this instituting dimension what is called in discourse theory *political*. When a social order is no longer able to provide a meaningful framework for the objects and subjects, new discursive spaces are formed to represent an order. These new spaces which are formed as a principle for the reordering of a dislocated structure, are called *myth* (Laclau, 1990). A structural dislocation may lead to the emergence of more than one myth that attempt to institute a new social order. Which one will become able to hegemonize the social field depends on their capacity of becoming an *imaginary*, an unlimited horizon to which any social demand and any possible dislocation can be inscribed (Laclau, 1990). Thus, when the existing social structures are dislocated the social reproduction will depend not on these structures but on the production of myths. Myths are constitutive of social structures to the extent that they are transformed into social imaginaries.

Dislocation also opens up the way for the emergence of the political agency. In the conceptualization of Laclau and Mouffe, the category of subject refers to subject positions within a discourse on the one hand, and to the agency of the subject on the other. As long as a structure is not dislocated it organizes the social field and determines the subject positions. But dislocation of structures, which leads to the disruption of social orders and together with them subject positions, forces the subject to act in the sense of constructing an identity through the acts of identification. Thus, as a result of dislocation subject emerges to reconstruct both the social world and itself. In fact, the construction of subjects and the construction of objects refer to the same process; both are constituted through hegemonic struggles.

In order to better comprehend the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe, we need to consider its main sources of inspiration. Therefore, the following section provides a sketch of the theoretical perspectives that have been important in the formation of the discourse theory.

### **3.2 From the Category of Ideology to Discourse: The Intellectual Roots of Discourse Theory**

Two currents of thought have become particularly, though not exclusively, influential on Laclau and Mouffe's formulation of the theory of discourse: Marxism and post-structuralism. For Laclau and Mouffe these currents have become the main sources of inspiration because they have developed their theory of discourse through appropriating many insights from these thoughts on the one hand, and through trying to overcome some of the limitations and flaws of these thoughts on the other hand. In effect, the theory of discourse has emerged through the efforts of transcending the limitations of the Marxist theory of ideology in the conceptualization of the social world. In these efforts, it has extensively drawn on the arguments developed within the post-structuralist current of thought. Hence, an understanding of the main topics of debate and the main arguments advanced within these currents of thought is required for comprehending Laclau and Mouffe's work. To this end, this section will consider some arguments and developments in Marxism and post-structuralism which have been influential on the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe. It should be immediately noted that neither all the figures in Marxism and post-structuralism nor all the fundamentals of these thoughts but just the



arguments of some figures that have been significant in the development of the discourse theory will be dealt with.

### **3.2.1 The Influence of Marxist Tradition on Discourse Theory**

Like those scholars who have developed the so-called new social movements approach, Laclau and Mouffe have developed their approach on the grounds of a critique of Marxism. However, their aim is not a total rejection of Marxism and replacement of it with a totally different approach but to eliminate its essentialist assumptions. Both Laclau and Mouffe come from Marxist tradition and it has become one of their preoccupations to overcome essentialist reasoning within Marxist theory. Thus, the main target of Laclau and Mouffe's attack to Marxism is the different forms of essentialism that characterize different variants of Marxism, particularly classical Marxism, that is, Marxism of the Second International.

According to Laclau and Mouffe (1985), Marxism has failed in explaining the emergence of new forms of conflict that are voiced through contemporary social struggles. They argue that it has become apparent with the emergence of new conflicts and struggles that the conception of socialism that "rests upon the ontological centrality of the working class, upon the role of Revolution, with a capital 'r', as the founding moment in the transition from one type of society to another, and upon the illusory prospect of a perfectly unitary and homogeneous collective will that will render pointless the moment of politics" does no longer provide a meaningful framework to explain the social and political phenomena (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 2). Accordingly, they believe that both theoretical and political frameworks of the left-wing thought have gone into a crisis.

The formulation of the theory of hegemony by Laclau and Mouffe is a response to this crisis in left-wing thought. With this theory they aim at providing a framework that would make it possible both to analyze the new social struggles and to outline a new politics for the Left based upon the project of a radical democracy<sup>25</sup>. As it is stated by

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<sup>25</sup> This study is concerned not so much with Laclau and Mouffe's project of radical democracy as with the theoretical framework they provide for the analysis of political struggles. Yet, it might be insightful for the comprehension of their conceptions to understand what they put forward through their project of radical democracy. Broadly speaking, radical politics, for Laclau and Mouffe, no longer refer to the struggle of working class, or any other universal subject, against the existing dominant system. Rather, it refers to the struggle of various different subjects

Laclau and Mouffe, this new conception of politics is both *post-Marxist* and *post-Marxist* for it has been formulated through a “critique and deconstruction of the various discursive surfaces of classical Marxism” (1985: 3-4). Thus, in shaping their approach, Laclau and Mouffe have employed and developed some discursive forms constituted within Marxism on the one hand, and eliminated some others that have had a central importance for that tradition on the other hand. It is in this respect, the approach of Laclau and Mouffe is both *post-Marxist* and *post-Marxist*. It is *post-Marxist* because, unlike Marxism, it rejects to see history and society as intelligible totalities, and the working class as the ontologically privileged subject. It is no longer possible, they argue, “to maintain the conception of subjectivity and classes elaborated by Marxism, nor its vision of the historical course of capitalist development, nor, of course, the conception of communism as a transparent society from which antagonisms have disappeared” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 4). On the other hand, it is *post-Marxist* because it is through Marxism they have formulated their new conceptions to politics.

In attempting to understand the influence of Marxist tradition on the work of Laclau and Mouffe, it is necessary to understand particularly the theory of ideology developed within Marxist tradition for it provided the background against which the discourse theory has been formulated. The approaches to the problem of ideology within Marxist tradition are based on different interpretations of the deployment of the concept by Karl Marx. In Marx’s conception, ideology is conceived as the distorted representations of contradictions in social reality (Larrain, 1979). This does not mean that ideology is produced by a particular subject through distorting the reality. Rather, distortion or mystification in consciousness results from the contradictory and inverted nature of reality. For Marx, both contradictions in reality and ideology are produced by the one and the same practice: the material mode of activity. It first leads to the emergence of contradictory relations and then to ideology which corresponds to these contradictory or inverted social relations (Larrain, 1979). Thus, ideology is a consciousness which conceals contradictions, and thereby, legitimizes the existing social structure in the interest of the dominant class (Larrain, 1979).

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constructed around different discursive identities, which can be connected to each other through hegemonic politics.

However, there are some ambiguous points in Marx's conceptualization of ideology, which later would become the source of confusions and different interpretations<sup>26</sup>. As it is explained by Larrain (1979: 63-7), one ambiguity stems from the lack of clarity whether ideology refers to all forms of consciousness or only to distorted consciousness which conceals contradictions. Another ambiguity in Marx's formulation is the use of the concept of ideology referring to the relationship between consciousness and practice on the one hand, and the relationship between base and superstructure on the other hand<sup>27</sup>. Within the context of the former, ideology "appears as the free and conscious product of a subject, as a false consciousness which protects some class interests", however within the context of the latter, it "appears as a secondary ideal structure which is directly determined by the economic structure" (Larrain, 1979: 65).

The deployment of Marx's concept of ideology in these two ways, perceiving it as a level of social totality or identifying it with a false consciousness, have become two classical approaches to the problem of ideology within Marxist tradition (Laclau, 1990). Both of these approaches are economistic for they explain ideologies by relating to and in terms of economic structure of society. The former confines ideology to the superstructural level in a social totality which is centered around base and superstructure distinction. In this conception, it is believed that it is the necessary laws of the base that integrate, and constitute, a social formation (Laclau, 1998). The latter, on the other hand, conceives ideology as determined by the "place occupied by the subject in the relations of production" (Mouffe, 1979: 199). Thus, regarding it essential, both conceptions overemphasize economy and neglect the role politics and ideology play in the constitution of the social. In this respect, they have an essentialist conception<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> In fact, as Laclau (1990: 182) argues, there exists a duality in the works of Marx in general between "the 'rational and objective history'- grounded on the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production- and a history dominated by negativity and contingency-grounded, consequently, on the constitutive character of class struggle". The former refers to the logic exists in the Preface to the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, and the latter in the *Communist Manifesto* (Laclau, 1990: 6).

<sup>27</sup> As outlined by Marx in the Preface to the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, the structure of a society is constituted by two levels: base and superstructure, the former referring to economic structure and the latter to legal, political and ideological structures. In this model economic structure is seen as the real foundation of a society on which the legal and political superstructure arises.

<sup>28</sup> These approaches are essentialist also in the sense that they are grounded in essentialist conceptions of society and social agency (Laclau, 1990). The approach that identifies ideology with 'false consciousness' has an essentialist conception of social agency for it presupposes a conception of subject who has "an ultimate essential homogeneity whose misrecognition was

The problem of economism in classical Marxism has been recognized by some later Marxist theoreticians in varying degrees, who attempted to solve it through different ways. In this regard, the works of some later Marxist scholars such as Antonio Gramsci, Michel Pecheux, and Louis Althusser are particularly pertinent. They attempted to go beyond the economism of classical Marxism proposing a different model of society and different conceptions of ideology than those of classical Marxism.

Gramsci attempted to break with the economism of classical Marxism by means of emphasizing the role of politics and ideology (Mouffe, 1979). He advanced a different conception of ideology rejecting both the base-superstructure distinction and the view of ideology as false consciousness. He used the term ideology in a positive way as a class world-view (Larrain, 1979), attributed a material force to it (Hall, Lumley, McLennan, 1978), and referred to, though implicitly, the existence of ideology in all social formations as a necessary level (Mouffe, 1979). Moreover, he attributed new meanings to both civil society and politics. In his conception, civil society refers to the terrain where classes contest for economic, political and ideological power, whereas politics refers to a level of superstructure which has its own laws distinct from the economic ones (Hall, Lumley, McLennan, 1978). As such they became the key concepts through which Gramsci attempted to break with the base and superstructure distinction of classical Marxism (Hall, Lumley, McLennan, 1978).

Gramsci's conceptualization of ideology is directly linked with his conception of *hegemony*. Unlike the Marxist thinkers before him, Gramsci believed that the rule of one social group over the others depends not only on domination through force and coercion but on winning ideological hegemony as well (Femia, 1981). While the former is realized through the coercive mechanisms of the State, the latter is realized through intellectual leadership in civil society. According to Gramsci, any social group that aims at overturning the dominant rule should first establish its ideological hegemony. Hence, ideology plays a crucial role in the process of formation of a hegemony. Ideologies, in Gramsci's words, "organize human masses, and create the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc." (Gramsci, 1971: 377). The spread of ideologies throughout the whole society determines economic and political objectives

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postulated as the source of ideology" (Laclau, 1990: 89). The other approach that conceives ideology as only confined to the superstructural level has an essentialist conception of society for it sees society as "an intelligible totality" which is itself perceived as "the structure upon which its partial elements and processes are founded" (Laclau, 1990: 89).

on the one hand, and brings intellectual and moral unity on the other hand (Gramsci, 1971).

The category of hegemony, on the other hand, refers to a “complete fusion of economic, political, intellectual and moral objectives which will be brought about by one fundamental group and groups allied to it through the intermediary of ideology” (Mouffe, 1979: 181). As this definition makes it clear hegemony for Gramsci does not refer to a simple class alliance<sup>29</sup>, it rather consists in formation of a ‘collective will’ through ideology. In other words, it refers to an ideological unity that is created between different social groups. It is worth emphasizing here that ideological unity between different social classes does not mean that one class imposes its own class ideology on the others, but means the creation of a common conception of the world which will serve to unite multiple and diverse wills of different social groups (Mouffe, 1979). The social totality which is unified in this way, that is, through collective wills, is called by Gramsci “historical bloc” (Laclau, 1998). With this formulation Gramsci broke with the reductionist conception that all subjects and all ideological elements have a necessary class belonging and each social class has its own class ideology (Mouffe, 1979).

In short, in Gramsci’s thought ideology has a crucial role to play, particularly in the formation of hegemony, and more generally in political struggles through which social formations and social identities are constituted. Thus, Gramsci formulated a very different conception of ideology which challenged the economism that characterizes classical Marxism. However, it cannot be said that Gramsci’s thought is totally devoid of economism for he held the belief that only a fundamental class in capitalist system can become hegemonic (Laclau, 1998). Ascribing an ontological privilege to classes in this way, Gramsci maintained, to some extent, the economic tendency in classical Marxism. Nevertheless, his contribution to Marxist theory of ideology, and more generally to the analysis of the social world, is of great value since he opened the way for totally anti-essentialist conceptualizations that are “able to deal with the fragmented and incomplete character of social identities in the contemporary world” (Laclau, 1998: 468).

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<sup>29</sup> As explained by Laclau (1998: 463), the idea of a class alliance that can be found in Lenin’s conception refers to a kind of co-operation between different groups for a definite time period to realize a particular aim. In such an alliance, each party entering into the alliance keep its own identity and aims, that is to say that each social group remain diffuse from each other, they are not unified around a common worldview. As such class alliance does not lead to a change in the social identity of its participants.

Like Gramsci, Althusser also attempted to go beyond the essentialisms that characterize ‘false consciousness’ approach to ideology and the ‘base-superstructure’ model of society. However, he provided a different theory of ideology than that of Gramsci. He tried to overcome economism of classical Marxism by incorporating insights into his own approach both from structuralism and psychoanalytic theory<sup>30</sup>. Arguing, in a Lacanian fashion, that ideology represents not the real conditions of existence of individuals but their imaginary relations to their real conditions of existence, he moved away from false consciousness approach (Althusser, 1971: 154-5). In rejecting the conceptualization of ideology as false consciousness, Althusser also rejected the notion of subject who participates in the origin of ideology (Larrain, 1979). On the contrary, he conceptualized ideology as constitutive of subjects. He put forward the concept of ‘interpellation’ in order to explain the mechanisms through which ideology constitutes the subject. In his conception, ideology transforms individuals into subjects by ‘interpellating’ or ‘hailing’ them (Althusser, 1971: 162-3). To put it differently, an individual turns into a subject by recognizing that “it is really him who is being hailed”, that is, by recognizing itself as a subject (Althusser, 1971: 163).

The model of society Althusser proposed is highly different from the model of social totality structured around base-superstructure distinction. In Althusser’s conception society consists of three levels: economic, political, and ideological. These three levels are relatively autonomous and contradictions within any social formation have an overdetermined character, that is to say that there is a complex relationship among different elements of society rather than a one-way determination. Moreover, questioning the Marxist tradition in which state is identified only with its repressive functions, he introduced a different conception of the state. According to Althusser, the reproduction of the conditions of production is a necessity for any social formation to maintain its smooth functioning. He believed that ideology has a crucial role to play in this respect, that is, in reproducing the conditions of production (Althusser, 1971). From the perspective of classical Marxism, it is believed that the reproduction of conditions of production is provided by the state only through its repressive apparatuses such as police, courts, and so on. However, for Althusser, they are also provided through the functioning of ideological state apparatuses such as schools, mass media, political parties, and so on.

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<sup>30</sup> Althusser’s target of attack was not merely economic interpretations of Marx, but also overhumanist interpretations of Marx, that were, then, voiced mainly by Jean Paul Sartre (McLennan, Molina, Peters, 1978).

These ideological state apparatuses ensure the subjection of the masses to the ruling ideology. In other words, individuals live in ideology through involving in certain practices within these ideological apparatuses (Larrain, 1979).

The concept of interpellation is regarded as the most important contribution of Althusser to the study of ideology (Purvis and Hunt, 1996; Torfing, 1999). With this conception Althusser advanced a notion of subject that cannot be seen as the source of a consciousness since it is constituted through ideological interpellation (Torfing, 1999). Althusser also indicated through the notion of ideological state apparatuses that ideologies do not merely consist of ideas but also exist in practices, and as such they have material existences. Moreover, Althusser's use of the concept of overdetermination is also an important advance over the one-way determinist accounts. It is important especially for the conceptualization of identity because it suggests that it is in the symbolic terrain that identity is constructed (Smith, 1998).

However, despite all its novelty, Althusser's conception cannot completely overcome the economism of traditional Marxism (Torfing, 1999). Although he questioned the base-superstructure model and argued instead that there are different levels that are relatively autonomous, he conceived ideology as a superstructure and believed that in the last instance it is the economic level that determines which level is to be dominant. Moreover, he formulated ideology as the reflection of class positions, and regarded ideological state apparatuses mainly as instruments of dominant class (Torfing, 1999).

Althusser's theory of ideology became the source of inspiration to the work of Pecheux who aimed to develop a materialist theory of discourse. Like Althusser, Pecheux also drew on structuralism, particularly structural linguistics, and psychoanalytic theory of Freud and Lacan in developing his own approach. Pecheux distinguished between discourse and language asserting that language forms the common basis of different discursive processes, and as such while everyone bears a similar relation to language, they do not have the same discourse (Pecheux, 1982: 58). He argued that discursive processes are inherent in discursive formations and refer to system of relations between linguistic elements in a given discursive formation. They do not develop as the expressions of individuals but on the grounds of the internal laws each linguistic system has. Discursive formations, on the other hand, refer to "specific areas of communicability that set in place both sender and receiver and which determine the appropriateness of messages" (MacCabe, 1981: 208). According to Pecheux, discursive

formations “represent ‘in language’ the ideological formations that correspond to them” (1982: 112). This does not mean that there is equivalence between ideology and discourse, rather, as Pecheux stated, there is “an ‘imbrication’ of discursive formations into the ideological formations” (1982: 112).

Pecheux took Althusser’s thesis of ‘ideology interpellates individuals as subjects’ as his starting point and attempted to overcome a problem inherent in this thesis. In Althusser’s formulation, as claimed by Pecheux (1982: 106), it is aimed that a “non-subject is interpellated-constituted as subject by ideology”. However, Pecheux maintained, Althusser failed to see that the interpellated individuals are already subjects before they are interpellated. This is so because Althusser’s account suggests that the meaning of what they hear (‘who’s there?’) and say (It’s me!) is evident to individuals, and this requires that these individuals are already subjects. In order to address this problem, Pecheux focuses on understanding how the meaning of what they hear and say becomes evident for individuals.

For Pecheux, the evidentness of meanings of words and utterances are provided by ideology, that is, they become meaningful by reference to ideological formations. Therefore, words and utterances do not have any fixed meaning but different meanings in relation to different ideological formations. This means that the meanings of words, expressions, and propositions are constituted and determined by discursive formations. Thus, it is the discursive formation in a given ideological formation that determines what can and should be said. This is where the material character of the meaning of words lies; they are dependent on ideological formations in their constitution.

Concerning the constitution of the subject Pecheux argued that subject is produced in a discursive formation through the interpellation of the individual “as speaking-subjects”, that is, as subject of his discourse (1982: 112). However, individuals are turned into subjects not merely through interpellation but also through identification. According to Pecheux, the interpellation of the individual as subject of his discourse is achieved by the identification of the subject with the discursive formation that dominates him.

Hence, in Pecheux’s conception both subjects and meanings are constituted by ideological practices. In effect, they are constituted through the one and the same process, that is, meanings are constructed when the individuals are interpellated as subjects. Thus, arguing that they are produced by discursive formations, Pecheux developed an anti-essentialist understanding of the constitution of meanings and subjects.



However, Pecheux's conception, like Althusser's, also suffers from essentialism since he held that discursive formations are located in ideological formations which are seen by him, following Althusser, as one level of any social formation (Howarth, 2000).

In sum, neither Gramsci nor Althusser and Pecheux have become able to totally eliminate essentialist assumptions of traditional Marxism. Despite all their efforts, they ultimately failed to develop an anti-essentialist theory to account for the constitution of the social through the political. Nevertheless, they markedly contributed to the development of the discourse theory by providing invaluable insights through the arguments they advanced to overcome the limitations of classical Marxism. Gramsci's theory of hegemony, Althusser's concepts of interpellation and overdetermination, and Pecheux's arguments on the constitution of subject and meaning within discursive formations have become particularly important in this respect. In developing their theory of discourse with the aim of replacing the Marxist theory of ideology, Laclau and Mouffe have drawn upon the valuable contributions of these scholars. But, on the other hand, they have attempted to eliminate the remnants of essentialisms in these approaches as well.

In Laclau and Mouffe's conception, it is discourse, not ideology, that has a central place. This does not mean, however, that the concept of ideology is completely abandoned by Laclau and Mouffe. On the contrary, it is used by them but in an entirely different manner. Before considering how Laclau and Mouffe employ the concept of ideology, their main objections to the classical concept of ideology within Marxist tradition will be given.

According to Laclau (1990; 1996b), the two conceptions of ideology which were widely employed in classical Marxist tradition, ideology as false consciousness and ideology as a superstructural level, are essentialist. The false consciousness approach is grounded on the assumption of the "possibility of a metalinguistic vantage point which allows the unmasking of ideological distortion", while the other that sees ideology as one level of social totality, conceives the social in an objectivist way as closed and complete on the grounds of a "holistic and naturalistic conception of the social" (Laclau, 1996b: 212). The former identifies the ideological with the discursively constructed and presupposes the existence of a non-discursive realm as the location of the reality from where it is possible to criticize ideology as opposed or different than the reality. As it will be detailed later, Laclau and Mouffe do not make any distinction between discursive and

non-discursive. From their perspective, therefore, there is no point from which “reality would speak without discursive mediations” (Laclau, 1996b: 202). In the latter conception of ideology, on the other hand, ideology is conceived as a level of the social whole different from economic and political levels (Laclau, 1996b: 212). According to Laclau and Mouffe, however, it is not possible to divide the social into different levels due to the complex mechanisms, relations and dependencies characterizing all of them. Moreover, ideological mechanisms play a crucial role in constituting and maintaining both economic and political structures. In this respect the concept of discourse is better than ideology since it refers to “the horizon of the constitution of any object” (Laclau, 1990: 185). In other words, the category of discourse better accounts than ideology for the historical and contingent character of the being of objects (Laclau, 1996b).

Nevertheless, Laclau and Mouffe, as it has been mentioned, hold that the concept of ideology should be retained, but not to refer to a social level or to false or distorted consciousness which can be criticized from an extra-discursive viewpoint. It should, rather, be used to show that it is the extra-discursive viewpoint which should be seen as the ideological illusion (Laclau, 1996b: 203). That is to say that it should be used to refer to those distorting mechanisms that create an illusion of the extra-discursive closure. As briefly mentioned before, from the perspective of Laclau and Mouffe, the closure of the social is an impossibility because any social formation is constituted by an outside. The social, therefore, will always be more than the concrete social formations. But the constitution of any social formation requires its closure and therefore any actualized social formation leads to a temporary closure of the social. This closure, however, will always be illusory because it is in fact not possible to achieve to a full and permanent closure of the social (Laclau, 1996b). It is in this sense ideology refers to distorting mechanisms that lead to an illusion of the closure of the social. Ideology operates attributing the impossible role of closure to a particular content. Thus, as in traditional concept of ideology, the existence of an illusion, or misrecognition is maintained by Laclau, but they are no longer conceived as an illusion or misrecognition of an objective reality or a “positive essence” (Laclau, 1990: 92). Rather, they are perceived as the misrecognition of the impossibility of a closure of the social.

In developing these arguments Laclau and Mouffe have incorporated many insights from the works of poststructuralist scholars such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan. In effect, it is not merely the work of these scholars that have become the sources of inspiration for Laclau and Mouffe in advancing their anti-essentialist

conception but also the work of the later Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Barthes (Laclau, 2002). All these scholars have challenged philosophical essentialism and emphasized the constructed character of the social world. As Laclau (2002: 1) explains, they broke with the “illusion of immediacy” that is based on the assumption that it is possible to have a “direct access to the things as they are in themselves”. It is as a result of the dissolution of such an illusion that discourse begins to be conceived as constitutive (Laclau, 2002: 1). However, although the thought of all these scholars have become influential in the formation of the discourse theory, it is the poststructuralist thought which has been the most important (Laclau, 2002: 1). Therefore, in what follows the study will survey the concepts proposed by the poststructuralist scholars which have become insightful for the thought of Laclau and Mouffe.

### **3.2.2 The Influence of Post-structuralism on Discourse Theory**

Michel Foucault’s writings are important because it is first in these writings discourse theory is put in place of ideology theory (Purvis and Hunt, 1993). There are several reasons for Foucault to reject the concept of ideology. The first one is that “it always stands in virtual opposition to something else which is supposed to count as truth” (Foucault, 1980: 118). According to Foucault, the truth, or more precisely the effect of truth, is produced within discourses which in themselves are not true or false, and therefore it is not possible to classify discourses as true and scientific or as ideological. The second reason of Foucault’s rejection of the concept of ideology is that it refers “to something of the order of a subject”, and the third is that it “stands in a secondary position relative to something which functions as its infrastructure, as its material, economic determinant, etc” (Foucault, 1980: 118).

Thus, Foucault rejected using the concept of ideology and in its place put forward a conception of discourse. However, there are differences in Foucault’s use of the concept of discourse throughout his works (Howarth, 2000). This is because he advanced two different understanding of discourses along with two different methods, archaeology and genealogy, for analyzing them. Although these two methods do not refer to a rupture or substantial differences in Foucault’s thought, they nevertheless refer to some significant changes in his conception. In fact, it can be said that Foucault supplemented his earlier archaeological studies of discourse with his later genealogical studies that focus not only on discourse but also on extra-discursive power, and production of truth regimes and subject positions (Glynos, 2001).

In his archaeological writings, Foucault (1973a; 1973b; 1989) endeavored to advance a new form of historical analysis that focuses on identifying the conditions of possibility of knowledge, that is, the rules that determine the emergence of particular discourses at particular times. In these works, he treated discourse as systems of rules that produce its own objects. He advanced an anti-essentialist conception proposing to analyze a discourse in its own terms without relying on an external principle. Discourses should be analyzed as they emerge, in their own terms, because they do not reflect or represent an external reality, rather they constitute their own objects. In his own words, he tried to “substitute for the enigmatic treasure of ‘things’ anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse”, and attempted to “define these objects without reference to the *ground*, the *foundation of things*, but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as object of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance” (Foucault, 1989: 47-8). Moreover, Foucault questioned a number of concepts that refer to an origin, to a unifying notion of subject, or to discursive continuities. He neither searched for an origin nor intentionality of a subject, but just rules that make discourses possible. He also attempted to reveal discontinuities beneath the level of discursive continuities. It is after questioning all these, according to Foucault, that it becomes possible to account for the emergence of a particular discourse at a particular time, and this will take the form of a pure description of discourses.

With his genealogical works (1977; 1978), Foucault’s emphasis on discourse as an internally regulating formation is replaced by a notion of discourse both determined by and constitutive of the power relations (Sheridan, 1980). In these works, he also considered the non-discursive regime, which, for him, refers to institutions, political events, economic practices and processes (Best and Kellner, 1991). There are very important implications of the genealogical works of Foucault. One of the most important is that power is not the privilege of the dominant class or the state. There are diverse centers of power; it is exercised from several points. It is everywhere “not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere” (Foucault, 1978: 93). Thus, power is not “institution, nor a structure, nor a position”, rather, it is “the name we give to a complex strategic situation in a particular society” (Foucault, 1978: 93). Another important implication is that discourses are constituted by excluding many alternatives through the exercise of power, that is to say that discourses are constituted on behalf of the powerful and this means to exclude many other possibilities. Since

power is exercised from innumerable points, so the resistance is. To Foucault, resistance is linked with power, and as there is no center of power, there is no center of resistance. There are multiple, localized resistances which in turn may have an effect on the entire network (Sheridan, 1980; Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982).

Michel Foucault has become particularly influential in the extension of the concept of discourse to social practices. His theory of discourse is a non-linguistic theory in that he proposed “a rigorously social, or even materialist, examination of the formation of discourses” (Purvis and Hunt, 1983: 490). His ideas on the formation of objects and subjects within and through discourses, and his arguments on the constitutive role of power have been particularly influential. However, Foucault failed to see the discursive nature of all social phenomena and made a distinction between discursive and non-discursive regime. As it has been mentioned, it is with Laclau and Mouffe the concept discourse is used to refer to all social practices. Unlike Foucault, for Laclau and Mouffe it is not possible to maintain the discursive–nondiscursive dichotomy since all social practices have a discursive character.

Having outlined some arguments of Foucault that become influential on Laclau and Mouffe’s work, the study now turns to consider the arguments of Derrida and Lacan. The thought of these scholars have been developed both on the basis of and against the structuralist tradition. The structuralist tradition, on the other hand, has been developed on the grounds of the arguments Ferdinand de Saussure (1974) advanced through his theory of language. In contrast to a referential theory of language, that regards language as a naming process and sign as linking a name and a thing, in Saussure’s theory of language a linguistic sign, which is produced through linking a signified and a signifier, unites a concept and a sound image. In another way of saying it, for Saussure, a linguistic sign does not correspond to, or represent, an external, extra-linguistic quality. The meanings of signs, then, are constituted not through their reference to external objects but through their differences from one another in a particular linguistic system. Thus, language is not constructed through reading the ‘transparent meanings’ of objects, on the contrary it is the language that constructs its objects, that is to say that all meanings and identities are constructed through signification and there is no signified that exists before signification. As Saussure (1974: 120) states, “language has neither ideas nor sounds that existed before the linguistic system”.

Saussure's arguments become very influential in the development of anti-essentialist conception of social. However, Saussure's structural linguistics has some limitations. As it is explained by Laclau (2002), there are two flaws in the approach of Saussure. One is that it is not possible with his approach to move from the linguistic level to a more generalized semiology, and the other is that there is a strict isomorphism between the order of signifier and the order of signified, that is, there is a strict, one-to-one, correspondence between concepts and streams of sounds (Laclau, 2002: 2). These limitations were overcome by the Prague and Copenhagen schools that radicalized the structural formalism introduced by Saussure (Laclau, 2002). They, on the one hand, broke the link between linguistic categories and the speech and thereby made it possible to extend the structural analysis to the ensemble of social life, which was practiced by some scholars such as Levi Strauss and Roland Barthes, and on the other hand, constructed, in purely formal terms, the difference between the order of the signified and the order of the signifier (Laclau, 2000; Laclau, 2002). However, both in the thought of Saussure and in other variants of classical structuralism there is an underlying assumption that the system, be it language or any other social system, is a closed totality. This leads to the fixity of the meanings of signs since in a closed system they become fully constituted. It is particularly this aspect of Saussure's thought which has been put into question by the scholars who take place within current of post-structuralism (Laclau, 2002).

Derrida criticized structuralism for regarding sign systems as closed and abstracted from time and change, and for characterizing these totalities as determining meanings and identities (Critchley and Mooney, 1994). For Derrida, as for Saussure, meanings and identities are formed relationally through differences. However, while for Saussure and other structuralists all differences constitute a system, a closed totality, for Derrida it is not possible for any structure to subsume all the possible meanings in it. Therefore, any system is incomplete in the sense that there are other possibilities which are not included in it. In fact, any structure needs an outside, an externality in order to be constituted. That is, meanings are formed not only through the play of differences within the system but also through deferring some other possibilities<sup>31</sup> (Derrida, 1987).

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<sup>31</sup> The term Derrida introduces to account for both the play of differences and deferment of some possibilities is *différance*. In Derrida's words, ".....*différance* refers to the (active *and* passive) movement that consists in deferring by means of delay, delegation, reprieve, referral, detour, postponement, reserving. In this sense, *différance* is not preceded by the originary and indivisible unity of a present possibility that I could reserve, like an expenditure that I would put off

Thus, from Derrida's perspective, each process of signification is a formal play of differences. Every element is constituted "on the basis of the trace within it of other elements of the chain or system" (Derrida, 1987: 26). Nothing is simply present or absent but rather there "are only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces" (1987: 26). Something which is present has the traces of some other things that are absent or not present. As a result of the necessity of an outside to constitute an inside, the relation between the two becomes undecidable. This is so because it is not possible to give a priority to the one over the other. The constitution of every structure or discourse, then, will involve undecidability. In such an incomplete system of signs, in which the meaning of signs is produced through the play of differences, the meaning of signs cannot be fixed. In other words, the relation between signifier and signified is to be instable for only a fully structured system can fix that relation. This means that signs get different meanings in different contexts.

Moreover, Derrida questioned Saussure's conception of signifier and signified. He specifically questioned seeing signified as distinct from signifier and equating the signified with the concept. He argued that such a distinction "leaves open the possibility of thinking a *concept signified in and of itself*, a concept simply present for thought independent of a relationship to language, that is of a relationship to a system of signifiers" (Derrida, 1987: 19). Derrida believed that in making a distinction between the two, Saussure "accedes to the classical exigency of what I have proposed to call a "transcendental signified," which in and of itself, in its essence, would refer to no signifier, would exceed the chain of signs, and would no longer itself function as a signifier" (Derrida, 1987: 19). Once, however, it is recognized that such a transcendental signified is not a possibility and "every signified is also in the position of a signifier", the distinction Saussure made between signified and signifier becomes problematical (Derrida, 1987).

The relation Saussure postulated between signifier and signified was also questioned by Lacan. Lacan was highly concerned with linguistics and particularly with structural linguistics of Saussure. As a psychoanalyst, his interest on language stemmed from his belief that linguistic structures operate at the unconscious level. In effect, articulating insights from the work of Freud, Saussure, and other structuralists such as Levi-Strauss, Lacan argued that 'unconscious is structured like a language'. He believed that it is in

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calculatedly or for reasons of economy. What defers presence, on the contrary, is the very basis on which presence is announced or desired in what represents it, its sign, its trace...." (1987: 8).

and through linguistic structures, which operate at the unconscious level, that the human desires and fantasies are structured (Kearney, 1994).

As to the relation between signifier and signified, Lacan introduced a different logic of signifier. He rejected tying each signifier to a single signified and argued for the autonomy of signifier (Dor, 1997; Richardson, 1998). Thus, attributing a primacy to the signifier over the signified, he reformulated the relation between signifier and signified in the following way: S/s, where the upper side of the bar represents Signifier and the lower side signified (Kearney, 1994; Dor, 1997; Richardson, 1998). The bar between signifier and signified refers to a barrier which prevents an immediate one-to-one correspondence between the two. In this way, Lacan liberated the signifier from any fixed relation to the signified (Laclau, 2000). Rather than directly referring to any corresponding signified, a signifier refers to another signifier in a chain of signifiers (Richardson, 1998). The meaning of any signifier, then, is constituted in its relation to other signifiers in the chain of signifiers for there is nothing that ultimately gives a meaning to a signifier or determines the movements of signifiers. This leads to the instability in the meaning of signifiers, or more precisely, this prevents the fixity, the stability of meaning of any particular signifier.

In the conception of Lacan any kind of instability or unfixity is “organized around an original lack” (Laclau, 2000: 71). The lack is always tried to be filled, although it is ultimately not possible. In Lacan’s theory, the emergence of such a lack is related with a certain event all human beings experience in their infancy. An infant initially cannot separate itself from its mother, that is, it initially experiences an imaginary fusion with its mother and therefore a fullness, but eventually, as the child begins to speak, this fusion is broken up, leading to an irretrievable lack of unity, an emptiness in the child (Kearney, 1994; Richardson, 1998; Dor, 1997). The child, and later adult, tries to turn to this fullness by means of overcoming the lack he/she experiences<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> The realm in which the infant enjoys a unity with its mother refers, according to Lacan, to the realm of the Real, a psychic phase in the life of the individual. There is no lack in the Real, and as such it is fullness. The child tries to turn to this fullness by means of overcoming the lack he/she later experiences. This happens at what Lacan calls mirror phase (Lacan, 1994). Mirror phase refers to the identification of subject with an image. At this phase, in order to overcome the incompleteness, the child imaginarily identifies him or herself with an external image, his/her own body image in the mirror. In this way, the fragmented body-image of the child, which emerges as a result of his/her separation from the mother’s body, turns to a form of its totality (Lacan, 1994). Through identifying with this image the child experiences him or herself as a unified totality and in this way misperceives him or herself as not having any lack. He/she acquires an imaginary sense of unity, a completeness, a fullness. This psychic phase is called by



As it will become clear later in this chapter these arguments of Lacan are vital for the theory of Laclau and Mouffe. Suffice it to mention here that Lacan's liberation of the signifier from the signified is of utmost importance for Laclau and Mouffe's conceptualization of hegemony since it leads them to develop their conception without any dependency on the signified. As Laclau puts it, the autonomy of the signifier is "the very precondition of hegemony" since hegemony "structures the social from its very ground and is not the epiphenomenal expression of the transcendental signified" (Laclau, 2000: 66). Moreover, Laclau and Mouffe extensively draw on Lacan's arguments on lack in accounting for the structuration of the social on the one hand, and for the emergence of the subject on the other hand. Lacan's arguments are particularly important concerning the theorization of the subject. In effect, it is Lacan who provided the necessary tools to Laclau and Mouffe<sup>33</sup> for the analysis of the subject which is weakly theorized in post-structuralist thought. As Žižek argues post-structuralism fails to advance an adequate conceptualization of the subject since it, focusing only on subjectivation process, neglects to theorize the subject before this process. In Žižek's words:

In 'post-structuralism', the subject is usually reduced to so-called subjectivation, he is conceived as an effect of a fundamentally non-subjective process: the subject is always caught in, traversed by the pre-subjective process (of 'writing', of 'desire', and so on), and the emphasis is on the individuals' different modes of 'experiencing', 'living' their positions as 'subjects', 'actors', 'agents' of the historical process (Žižek, 1989: 174).

Thus, in contrast to post-structuralism in which the relation between discourse and the subject is one-sided, in Lacan's conception the relation is two sided, that is, both the

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Lacan Imaginary. In this process, the child, in fact, identifies him or herself through the Other, the body image in the mirror, which is not him or herself but his/her image, his/her own Other. Thus, he/she identifies him or herself through the recognition of his or her image in the mirror, which is in fact not recognition but misrecognition since the image in the mirror is not child itself, just an image. Such a self-sufficiency that is produced through the relation to the Other is also relevant for adults, that is, adults also identify themselves with the symbolic Other. In this way the Other becomes a structuring principle of subject's own identity (Dor, 1997). This relation to the Other refers to the Symbolic realm, to the language, to the unconscious (Kearney, 1994). In fact, the conscious ego denies its relation to the Other and believes, in an illusionary way, the primacy of the self over the Other (Kearney, 1994). In other words, the subject misrecognizes its radical dependence on the Other (Žižek, 1989). However, the self is different from itself for it is constructed through an unconscious relation to the Other, and thus, the subject is a split and divided subject (Kearney, 1994).

<sup>33</sup> In fact, Laclau and Mouffe follow the post-structuralist thought to account for the subject in their collaborative work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. It is after their conception of subject in this work is criticized by Žižek on the grounds of Lacan's formulation of subject, Laclau and Mouffe turned to take Lacan's arguments into account.

subject and discourse operate on one another (Alcorn, 1994). Unlike the poststructuralist subject, then, the Lacanian subject is not wholly a “passive entity constituted by participation in social language” (Alcorn, 1994: 29). For Lacan, subject, devoid of all subjectivation, refers to an empty place. It is “this original void, this lack of the symbolic structure, is the subject, the subject of the signifier” (Žižek, 1989: 175). The subjectivation masks, then, “not a pre- or trans-subjective process of writing but a lack in the structure, a lack which is the subject” (Žižek, 1989: 175). The subjectivation of the subject to different subject positions represent just the efforts of filling this lack.

Having now sketched in broad outline the framework within which the work of Laclau and Mouffe is to be understood, the study returns to the work of Laclau and Mouffe. However, before going on to elaborate the concepts they put forward, the fundamental parameters of their thought will be indicated. In studying the fundamentals of Laclau and Mouffe’s thought, it will be clearer how the arguments of different scholars that has been outlined so far contributed to the formation of the work of Laclau and Mouffe.

### **3.3 The Fundamental Parameters of Discourse Theory**

The conceptual framework Laclau and Mouffe put forward with their political discourse theory is highly different than the mainstream approaches used in the analysis of the social. In order to fully grasp the theory we need to understand first its main philosophical assumptions, and then the conceptualization of the social in a non-objectivist way on the basis of these assumptions. In the following part, first, the metatheoretical assumptions upon which Laclau and Mouffe built their discourse theory will be outlined. In this respect, their assumptions related with ontology and epistemology will be given. Then, the main arguments of Laclau and Mouffe concerning the formation of meanings and identities, and the characteristics of the social, which are developed through conceptualizing the social in a non-objectivist way, will be outlined.

#### **3.3.1 A Radical Constructivist Approach**

Rejecting all forms of essentialisms and foundationalism, Laclau and Mouffe propose a radically constructivist theory. This theory, as mentioned, differs from the mainstream approaches to politics not only with the theoretical framework it offers but also with its philosophical foundations. The philosophical assumptions underpinning the discourse

theory are very much worth considering in the effort to comprehend the theory since it has been developed in opposition to some traditional philosophical assumptions. In the following part some of the philosophical assumptions, particularly those related with ontology and epistemology, will be outlined.

### **3.3.1.1 Anti-essentialism of Discourse Theory**

As it has been already mentioned Laclau and Mouffe develop their approach in opposition to essentialism which can be defined as “a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties” that define the “whatness of a given entity” (Fuss, 1989: xi). From an essentialist perspective it is assumed that the social totality is structured around an essential principle. As Derrida (1978: 278) points out, an essentialist account structures the social whole “giving it a center, or of referring it to a point of presence a fixed origin”. This center functions through organizing the structure and limiting the play of meaning. Nevertheless, as Derrida argues, while governing the structure, the centre itself escapes the structuration process. As a center, it is at the center of the social totality but at the same time it is not part of the totality. “The concept of a centered structure”, therefore, “is contradictorily coherent” (Derrida, 1978: 279). According to Derrida (1978), the idea of determining a center in the constitution of structure is an outcome of a desire of controlling and overcoming an anxiety which is the result of a certain mode of being implicated in the structuration process. In Derrida’s words, the “concept of centered structure is in fact the concept of a play based on a fundamental ground, a play constituted on the basis of a fundamental immobility and a reassuring certitude, which is itself beyond the reach of play” (1978: 279). In the history of western metaphysics there are different forms and names given to center that, as Derrida states, relate to fundamentals, to principles, or to center, and that “have always designated an invariable presence- eidos, arche, telos, energia, ousia (essence, existence, substance, subject) aletheia, transcendentality, consciousness, God, man, and so forth” (1978: 279-80). So, the center, a central presence, is never itself but always already exiled from itself and substituted. Therefore, the center is not a “fixed locus” but “a sort of nonlocus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions come into play” (Derrida, 1978: 280).

Hence, an anti-essentialist perspective rejects to search for a center or a foundation or an essence that give the meanings of objects, and emphasizes instead the constructed nature of meanings and identities. Therefore, no category or concept can “a priori, serve to

understand political processes in all possible situations, and which might become ‘ultimate’ explanations, be they class, gender, race, or the collective unconscious” (Sayyid and Zac, 1998: 251). In the absence of any foundation or center, the meanings of objects are constructed relationally and negatively. As stated by Laclau:

....there is no beyond the play of differences, no ground which would a priori privilege some elements of the whole over the others. Whatever centrality an element acquires, it has to be explained by the play of differences as such (Laclau, 2005a: 69).

### **3.3.1.2 Anti-Foundationalism of Discourse Theory**

Foundationalism can be defined as relying on foundations in understanding the social world (Sayyid and Zac, 1998). An anti-foundationalist stance refuses all foundations, and permanent and unvarying standards through which the ‘truth’ can be known (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). Rejecting to lean on foundations in trying to understand the socio-political phenomena, discourse theory adopts an anti-foundationalist epistemological position. Put differently, from the perspective of discourse theory there is no permanent category or essence which would serve as the fixed grounds of knowledge in understanding the historical and political phenomena. Rather, as mentioned, it envisages all the objects and subjects as constituted within a discourse. The meanings of objects and subjects, therefore, can only be understood by means of studying their construction in and through a discourse.

### **3.3.1.3 A Materialist Constructivism**

As a result of its anti-essentialist stance, the approach of the discourse theory to ontology, the nature of the social world, is a radical constructivist one. It conceives the world as “an entirely social construction of human beings which is not grounded on any metaphysical ‘necessity’ external to it- neither God, nor ‘essential forms’, nor the ‘necessary laws of history’” (Laclau, 1990: 129). Such an approach does not mean invoking an idealist stance towards the social world as it was claimed in some of the criticisms directed to the work of Laclau and Mouffe<sup>34</sup>. The constructivist approach Laclau and Mouffe have developed is not an idealist constructivism, on the contrary it is realist and materialist (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990; Torfing, 1998; Torfing, 1999).

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<sup>34</sup> Norman Geras (1987) directed such a criticism towards the work of Laclau and Mouffe.

In a reply to the criticisms, Laclau and Mouffe (1990: 105- 112) clarify the distinctions between idealism and realism on the one hand, and idealism and materialism on the other. The distinction between idealism and realism lies on the question of “the existence or non-existence of a world of objects external to thought” (1990: 106). For the latter the world exists independent of our thoughts. In this sense, that is, in terms of affirming the existence of the external reality out of our thoughts, it can be said that Laclau and Mouffe take place on the realist side<sup>35</sup>. It should be immediately pointed out, however, that affirming the existence of a world external to thought does not make their approach a non-idealist one because as they clearly show us while some variants of idealism, that of Berkeley for instance, totally subordinate external reality to thought, some other variants such as that of Hegel does not deny the reality of external world (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990). In order to understand what makes Laclau and Mouffe’s approach a non-idealist one we should consider the distinction between idealism and materialism. As it is explained by Laclau and Mouffe (1990: 106), idealism, as opposed to materialism, is “the affirmation not that there do not exist objects external to the mind, but rather that the innermost nature of these objects is identical to that of mind”. Thus, the most important distinction between idealism and materialism is the former’s affirmation and latter’s negation of “the ultimately conceptual character of the real” (1990: 106). A move from idealism towards materialism is possible through questioning the reduction of distance between the conceptual and the real. The reduction of distance between the thought and the reality involves either the essentialization of the object or essentialization of the subject (Torfing, 1999). Essentialization of the object reduces “the subject to a passive recipient of an already constituted meaning”, whereas essentialization of the subject makes the subject the absolute source of meaning and thereby reduces the object “to an object of thought” (Torfing, 1999: 46-7). The approach Laclau and Mouffe develop is materialist in the sense that it rejects both of these approaches questioning “the symmetry between object and thought” (Torfing, 1999: 47).

Those approaches that essentialize the object presume that the being of any object belongs to thing itself, that there is an independent existence of an external objective world, an objective reality, which can and should be uncovered by social analysis. In

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<sup>35</sup> It should be added here that realism is not used only in this manner. It is also used to denote those approaches that suggest the independent existence of an external, objective world, an objective reality which can be read from the things themselves that shape how we experience the world. In other words, these approaches are grounded on the belief that “the form of experienced” predetermines “the experiencing” (Staten, 1984: 10).

contrast with these views, a constructivist view holds that the meanings through which we apprehend objects are not directly given to us. Rather, the meanings of objects are constituted within discourses through complex processes. Thus, discourse theory holds that the beings of objects are historical, contingent and have a constructed character. They are constructed as part of an ensemble of relational conditions which constitute the whole of a social formation. The “being (esse) of object” is different from the “entity (ens)” of that object (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990: 103). While the latter is not changing, the former is historically constituted and therefore subject to change. Moreover, there is no essential and necessary relation between the entity of an object and being of an object. Thus, we cannot derive the meaning of an object, its being, from the mere existence of the entity. That is, objects do not have meanings in themselves, and in order to be apprehendable by us they should be ascribed some meanings. Every object, then is constituted as an object of discourse since they cannot constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive formation (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Thus, there is no distinction between discursive and nondiscursive. In this way the opposition between thought and reality, or idealism and realism, is abandoned (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

On the other hand, those approaches that essentialize the subject conceive the subject as sovereign, as the absolute source of all meaning. This form of essentialism is also rejected by Laclau and Mouffe. From their perspective, subject, being radically incomplete, is constituted through hegemonic processes. In effect, they hold that both subjects and being of objects are constituted through the same process, and therefore there is no duality between subject and object. (Laclau, 1990)

Having outlined the metatheoretical assumptions of the discourse theory, the study now turns to the key arguments of Laclau and Mouffe concerning the character of the social and the construction of meanings and identities, which are of course, as it will be indicated below, strictly linked to these underlying assumptions.

### **3.3.2 A Non-Objectivist Conception of the Social**

Laclau and Mouffe have developed a non-objectivist conceptualization of the social by emphasizing the open and contingent character of the social on the one hand, and the role of negativity in the construction of meanings on the other. In such a conception of the social there is no objective and positive meaning of social identities and processes in themselves, rather any objectivity is regarded as socially constructed through negativity.

In the following section, the main arguments of Laclau and Mouffe, which characterize their non-objectivist conceptualization, will be given. These are the relational and differential character of meanings and identities, the openness of the social, and the contingent nature of the social structures. After presenting these arguments, it will be considered how social relations are characterized in a social world that is not objectively out there but radically constructed through political struggles.

### **3.3.2.1 The Relationality of Meanings and Identities**

As we have seen, Laclau and Mouffe reject both foundationalist perspectives that appeal to some ultimate universal grounds as the source of true knowledge, and essentialist perspectives that hold that there are unchanging essences of things that ascribe them their true character, and that it is possible to explain a process or a phenomena a priori according to their essences. Emphasizing instead the contingent construction of all social meanings, Laclau and Mouffe argue that we should abandon the assumption that the entities have some substantive and positive quality in themselves. In the absence of any substantive or positive quality, all meanings and identities need to be constructed through political struggles, and they can only be constructed as differences from the others in a system. Thus, drawing on Saussure's conception, Laclau and Mouffe argue that 'relationality' and 'differences' play a crucial role in the constitution of meanings and identities. In Laclau and Mouffe's words:

This purely relational or differential character is not, of course, exclusive to linguistic identities but holds for all signifying structures- that is to say, for all social structures. This does not mean that everything is language in the restricted sense of speech or writing but rather that the relational or differential structure of language is the same for all signifying structures (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990: 109).

As explained in what follows, however, Laclau and Mouffe diverge from Saussure's thought, and from other variants of structuralism, in that they do not believe that language and the social refer to closed totalities. In questioning the notion of 'closed totality', they largely draw on the arguments developed within post-structuralist thought particularly by Derrida and Lacan.

### **3.3.2.2 The Infinitude of the Social**

For structuralists the relations that determine meanings and identities form an intelligible and an identifiable system (Laclau, 1990). In other words, the social system is considered

as a totality which is closed and complete<sup>36</sup>. This conception of the social as a fully constituted, and as such closed, system is rejected by Laclau and Mouffe. Although they believe that every identity and meaning have differential and relational character, they do not regard them fixed in a whole system of social since they do not believe that social represents a fully constituted space. Rather, drawing on Lacanian psychoanalysis, they postulate that the social will always be incomplete since every social totality is organized around an original lack (Laclau, 2000)<sup>37</sup>. The lack will always exist because there is no ultimate signifier which will fill out it and make society complete (Glynos, 2001).

According to Laclau (1990: 90), turning the relations of meanings and identities into a closed system, or into an “identifiable and intelligible object” is an essentialist move in the sense that it gives an essence to the totality emerged in this way. The totality becomes the foundation on which its parts are grounded. Against this essentialist vision that sees the social as the founding totality, Laclau asserts the “infinitude of the social” that refers to “the fact that any structural system is limited, that it is always surrounded by an ‘excess of meaning’ which it is unable to master and that, consequently, ‘society’ as a unitary and intelligible object which grounds its own partial processes is an impossibility” (Laclau, 1990: 90). Thus, society cannot be a foundation which will serve as the ultimate ground of all meanings and identities since it is not possible for any structural system to absorb all the meanings within itself.

As it has been explained by Laclau, the recognition of relational character of identities together with the openness of the social results in identifying the social with the infinite play of differences. In explaining this Laclau has recourse to the arguments of Derrida. As mentioned before, according to Derrida (1978: 280), there is no center, or “transcendental signified”, and this extends the play of signification infinitely. The abandonment of the idea of a center or a foundation leads to the abandonment of the possibility of fixing meanings and identities, and hence, to the infinite play of differences or infinite play of signifiers.

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<sup>36</sup> In a closed system the meaning of each element could be fixed relationally through its difference from the other elements. In such a system, it becomes very difficult to change the meanings of elements since the meanings of elements are fixed. Thus, there would be no room for politics that aim to change the meanings and identities, that is, there would be no room for hegemonic practices of articulation.

<sup>37</sup> In Lacan’s thought, this is the ‘lack in the symbolic Other’ (Glynos, 2001).



### **3.3.2.3 The Possibility of the [Temporary] Finitude of the Social**

Although it is not possible to fully fix meanings for once and all within a totally closed system, it is possible to fix them partially and temporarily within a relatively closed system. It would not be possible to establish any structural system, if it was not possible to partially fix the meanings. The social, therefore, as Laclau (1990: 91) puts it, “is not only the infinite play of differences” but also “the attempt to limit that play, to domesticate infinitude, to embrace it within the finitude of an order”. To block the continuous expansion of the play of differences, on the other hand, and thereby to establish a system which allows to the fixation of meanings, can be possible only through drawing boundaries or putting limits. Without limits there would be “an indefinite dispersion of differences whose absence of systematic limits would make any differential identity impossible” (Laclau, 1996a: 52).

The limits of a signifying system cannot be neutral limits because a neutral limit would make the two sides simply different from each other, and as such they would be the parts of the same system. The true limits of a system should be exclusionary because the system can be made possible only through the exclusion of a radical Other. In this sense, true limits are always antagonistic because “the actualization of what is beyond the limit of exclusion would involve the impossibility of what is this side of the limit” (Laclau, 1996a: 37). This means that the system constructed through exclusionary limits will always be threatened by the excluded. In other words, it would not be possible to fix meaning totally because of the existence of other meanings beyond the system. Thus, the relative closure of the social can never become absolute because it would be possible only through constituting an inside against an outside that is a negativity in the radical sense, and as such would always threaten the inside. The social is, then, a “relational space unable to constitute itself as such,” that is “a field dominated by the desire for a structure that was always finally absent” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 113).

It is the impossibility of fully fixing meanings and identities for once and all that opens the way for the hegemonic struggles. Put it differently, it is because any structuration is organized around an original lack that political articulation is made possible. The impossibility of the closure of a meaning system “unties the connection between signifier and signified”, and this leads to the proliferation of floating signifiers (Laclau, 1993: 435). Different political actors attempt to fix these floating signifiers imposing different meaning systems to the social field. When a political project becomes able to relatively

fix meanings within a specific context, it can be said that it establishes its hegemony within that field. Hegemony, then, simply refers to the ability of a political project to fix the meanings imposing its own definitions, or in other words, to fix “the relation between signifier and signified” (Laclau, 1993: 435). Although the full closure of the social will not be possible through hegemonic practices of articulation, a temporary closure is still possible, and this will be provided by drawing boundaries and thereby constructing social antagonisms. All the existing structural systems within which meanings and identities are partially fixed in a relational and differential way have been constructed through political struggles on behalf of the powerful.

It is worth emphasizing here that the incomplete character of society is not always recognized by social subjects. They usually experience, or misrecognize, it as complete and closed. In another way of saying it, social subjects usually posit society as a social totality, or in Lacanian terms, they misrecognize the lack in the symbolic Other (Glynos, 2001). As explained before, for Laclau, it is just through this misrecognition that ideology operates.

#### **3.3.2.4 The Characteristics of Social relations in a Constructed Social World**

As explained, from the perspective of discourse theory the social world involves not only what is objectively there but also something outside that objectivity which makes the objectivity possible. The outside is what the ‘objective’ excludes in its construction. The identity of that excluded is denied by the ‘objective’. In other words, the ‘objective’ is constituted on the basis of the denial of the identity of the excluded, the radical Other. Therefore, the constitution of the ‘objective’ becomes possible only with the impossibility of the constitution of the identity of the Other. Put in another way, the constitution of the Other, or the outside, would become the negation of the ‘objective’. Thus, the outside is inherently negative. It is a negativity that can lead to the dissolution of the ‘objective’ with its actualization, but it is at the same time a prerequisite for the constitution of the ‘objective’.

The objective, therefore, has a radically contingent nature due to its constitution by negativity. The concept by which Laclau and Mouffe account for the negativity, as we have seen, is antagonism. Antagonism is intrinsically negative, and as such, it both constitutes and threatens the objective. In fact, threatening the existence of objective, antagonism reveals the contingent nature of all objectivity. Any objectivity depends on contingent conditions in order to be constructed. This makes the relationship of objective

with the contingent conditions, then, absolutely necessary. Antagonism, thus, has two contradictory functions: it prevents the full constitution of the objective threatening it as a negativity on the one hand, and it constitutes that objective because the latter can not be constituted in another way on the other. For Laclau, contingency refers to the link between these two, preventing and constituting the objective. This contingency “introduces an element of *radical undecidability* into the structure of objectivity” (Laclau, 1990: 21).

Contingency, then, is one of the characteristics of social relations. Concerning the contingency and negativity, Laclau clarifies two points. One is that the notion of negativity is different than the one used in the dialectical sense. Laclau clearly differentiates the notion of negativity they use in their analysis from that of Hegel. As he states, the “Hegelian notion of negativity is that of a necessary negativity and as such was conceived as determinate negation. That is to say that the negative is a moment in the internal unfolding of the concept which is destined to be reabsorbed in an *Aufhebung*, or higher unity” (Laclau, 1990: 26). Such a dialectical negativity is not an outside in the sense Laclau refers because it is covered by the inside. A true outside, a negativity, cannot be dialecticized, that is, “cannot be recovered through any *Aufhebung*” (Laclau, 1990: 26). The other point is that the notion of contingency is not the negative reverse of the necessity but “the element of impurity which deforms and hinders its full constitution” (1990: 27). Thus, as Laclau explains:

...what we always find is a limited and given situation in which objectivity is *partially* constituted and also *partially* threatened; and in which the boundaries between the contingent and the necessary are constantly displaced. Moreover, this interplay of mutual subversion between the contingent and the necessary is a more primary ground, ontologically, than that of a pure objectivity or total contingency. To assert, as we have, the constitutive nature of antagonism does not therefore mean referring all objectivity back to a negativity that would replace the metaphysics of presence in its role as an absolute ground, since that negativity is only conceivable within such a framework. What it does mean is asserting that the moment of undecidability between the contingent and the necessary is *constitutive* and thus that antagonism is too” (1990: 27).

Any hegemonic act would become a radical construction in the sense that it would not be determined by the structure. That is, due to the undecidability of the structure, the decision for developing one of the possibilities of the structure cannot be determined by the structure. Although such a decision would be based on the structure, it would not be determined by it, and as such, it would be external to the structure, and therefore, contingent. The agents of that decision, on the other hand, would be constituted in

relation to that structure, that is, the agents would also be transformed “in so far as they actualize certain structural potentialities and reject others” (Laclau, 1990: 30).

A second characteristic of social relations is that they are always power relations. Whether the decision taken by the subject will lead to an objectivity depends on power relations. If different decisions are taken by different groups “the relationship between them will be one of antagonism and power” because there is “no ultimate rational ground exists for their opting either way” (Laclau, 1990: 31). It is in this sense Laclau claims that “all objectivity necessarily presupposes the repression of that which is excluded by its establishment” (1990: 31). Thus, constitution of meanings and identities is an act of power since they are constituted repressing that which threatens them. In order to understand the conditions of existence of a given social identity, then, we have to understand the power mechanisms that make it possible.

The third characteristic of social relations, as it is put by Laclau, is the primacy of the political over the social. The concept of the political as primary and all-subsuming was introduced by Carl Schmitt (Sartori, 1989; Gottfried, 1990). For Schmitt politics does not refer to a sphere “which stands by itself and can be conceived in itself” but, rather, “consists of the degree of intensity [Intensitätsgrad] at which other spheres, or better other antithesis (moral, economic, etc.) lose their identity and are politicized” (Sartori, 1989: 65)<sup>38</sup>. The political, therefore, does not refer to any sphere but to intensity that groups and regroups people as friends or enemies.

Similarly, for Laclau and Mouffe the political has a primacy in that it is the political that constructs the social. As explained by Laclau, the field of the ‘social’ consists of the sedimented forms of objectivity, whereas the field of the ‘political’ is constituted by the moment of antagonism where “the undecidable nature of the alternatives and their resolution through power relations becomes fully visible” (1990: 35). The political construction of the social, in fact, is mediated by a range of sedimented practices. Drawing on Husserl’s conceptualization, Laclau explains sedimentation as the moment where the original act of institution of the social is forgotten, and the instituted takes the

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<sup>38</sup> In Schmitt’s conceptualization political life is identified with friend-enemy groupings (Gottfried, 1990). In other words, friend-enemy distinction is the foundation of all political relationship. As he states, “the specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy” (Schmitt, 1976: 26). In this respect, different spheres of social life such as religious, moral, economic, and ethical can transform into “a political one if it is sufficiently strong to group human beings effectively according to friend and enemy” (Schmitt, 1976: 37).

form of mere objective presence. Recovery of the constitution of the sedimented practices, on the other hand, is called reactivation. Laclau reformulates reactivation as the rediscovery of the contingency of the social through the emergence of new antagonisms. Thus, the social refers to the sedimented forms of objectivity, and political to the reactivation of them. The distinction between them, as Laclau points out, is “ontologically constitutive of social relations” (1990: 35).

Finally, the fourth characteristic of social relations is that they have a radically historical nature. Their historicity arises from the “contingent nature of their conditions of existence” (Laclau, 1990: 36). Not only structures but also the beings of objects are historical since both of them are socially constructed. Therefore, we should focus on the historical construction of meanings in trying to understand them.

These arguments, the relational nature of meanings and identities, the infinitude of the social, the possibility of the finitude of the social, and the characterization of social relations by contingency, power, politics, and historicity, are central for the discourse theory. This centrality has made it necessary to examine them before examining the main concepts of the theory that are strictly linked to these arguments. The examination of these basic arguments has provided us an overall account of the discourse theory without going into details. As such it is, though necessary, not sufficient to comprehend the theory. It is through the main concepts put forward by the discourse theory that we can further investigate the theory and provide a detailed account of it. Therefore, the study now turns to elaborate the main concepts of the discourse theory in greater depth.

### **3.4 Main Theoretical Categories of Discourse Theory**

Laclau and Mouffe theorize ‘the social’ as a terrain of discursive articulations through the use of four main theoretical categories: discourse, antagonism, subject, and hegemony. Discourses can be defined as systems of signification constructed through hegemonic struggles. All hegemonic struggles involve the construction of antagonisms which refers to a relation established through excluding one party for the construction of the other. Subject refers, on the one hand, to subject positions insofar as there is a relative closure and stability of the social, and on the other hand, to agency who acts through identification to overcome the lack created by the absence of the structure. Finally, hegemony refers to the attempts of limiting the infinite play of differences through articulating a project of the social. Each of these concepts together with

associated ones, such as dislocation, articulation, identification, logic of equivalence and difference, myth, imaginary, empty signifiers, heterogeneity, name and so on will be defined and examined in turn.

### 3.4.1 Discourse

The term discourse is usually employed to refer only to what people say, or write, that is only linguistic elements. As it is employed by Laclau and Mouffe, discourse, like Wittgenstein's concept of language game<sup>39</sup>, includes both linguistic and nonlinguistic elements such as practices, rituals, and empirical objects. Thus, discourse involves not only what people say and write, but also what they do, what they believe, and what they think. In fact, all these become meaningful within a certain discourse. As Laclau (1993: 431) has put forward, "the very possibility of perception, thought, and action depends on the structuration of a certain meaningful field which pre-exists any factual immediacy". The structuration of a certain meaningful field is what discourse performs. Thus, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) define discourse as the structured totality that result from the articulatory practice. In this definition, *discourse* refers to a "differential and structured system of positions" or to a "systematic set of relations" constituted through both linguistic and nonlinguistic elements, and *articulatory practice* to "any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 105; Laclau and Mouffe, 1990: 100; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 105). Through articulation something new is created out of dispersed elements (Laclau, 1990). This moment of creation is radical in the sense that it does not entirely repeat something but it *creates* something. In this regard, articulation is "the primary ontological level of the constitution of the real" (Laclau, 1990: 184). *Elements* here refer to "any difference that is not discursively articulated". The differential positions within a discourse, on the other hand, are called *moments*. Because of the open character of the social, and thus meanings and identities, the "transition from elements to moments is never entirely fulfilled" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 105), and as a result there would always be floating signifiers in any social formation, which make the articulation possible. Through the articulatory practice some discursive points are privileged in the attempts of fixation of meanings. These privileged discursive points are

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<sup>39</sup> A language game involves not merely speech-acts or activities, that is, not only linguistic elements but also non-linguistic ones. In fact, both linguistic and non-linguistic elements become meaningful within a language game.

called *nodal points*<sup>40</sup>. Nodal points organize various elements that constitute a discursive formation, or a signifying chain (Howarth, 2000). The unity of a discourse, then, can only be provided through the construction of nodal points. They emerge as a result of the attempts of fixation of meanings within a discourse. But since the fixation is bound to be temporal, nodal points represent partially fixed discursive points.

As a structured totality, the term discourse is in some respect similar to more traditional concept of structure (Torfing, 1999). Both of them refer to meaning systems which affect social interaction. They differ from each other, however, in their determining power. While structures are regarded as guiding social interaction, discourse is seen as only informing them (Torfing, 1999). This divergence stems from the different totalizing capacities attributed to them. Structure is regarded as a fully constituted system that becomes the foundation on which meanings and identities are grounded. Although discourses also refer to structured totalities, they are, as explained, not closed structures in the sense of the traditional concept of the structure.

#### **3.4.1.1 Discourse and Field of Discursivity**

As it has been explained before, for Laclau and Mouffe the social is characterized by both an infinite play of differences and the attempts of limiting that infinite play. As it has also been mentioned, any discourse is constituted through the attempts of limiting the infinitude of the social. These attempts would never result in the complete fixation of all differences, therefore there would always be some meanings and identities that are not fixed, or in other words, a surplus of meaning to the established discourse. The terrain of this surplus of meaning is what Laclau and Mouffe has called the “field of discursivity”. According to Laclau and Mouffe, it is the existence of such an exterior, a surplus of meaning that makes the articulatory practice possible. If there is nothing exterior to the established discourses, if all elements are turned into moments, if all meanings are fixed in a discourse, there would be no room for an articulatory practice. Thus for the articulation practice the surplus is necessary because it is the surplus of the meaning, or the field of discursivity, that subverts the established discourses. The openness of the social also arises from that surplus because it constantly overflows every discourse (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). Thus, it is the existence of that field of discursivity that opens

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<sup>40</sup> The concept of nodal points is parallel to the Lacanian concept of anchoring point (point de caption). For Lacan, anchoring point is an operation through which “the signifier is associated with the signified in the chain of discourse” (Dor, 1997: 40). In other words, anchoring point “stops the sliding of signification” (Dor, 1997: 41).

up possibilities for challenging the established and hegemonic discourses through the constitution of new ones. As Laclau and Mouffe state, the discursive is “coterminous with the being of objects” and therefore it is not “an object among other objects (although, of course, concrete discourses are) but rather a theoretical *horizon*” of the constitution of the being of objects (1990: 105).

#### **3.4.1.2 The Extension of the Discursive**

Laclau and Mouffe do not make any distinction between discursive and non-discursive. For them, objects do not have meaning in themselves, they become meaningful only within a discourse. In other words, each object is constituted within a discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990). It is worth pointing that Laclau and Mouffe do not deny the physical existence of objects, but they contend that objects, lacking a meaning in themselves, get their meaning and constituted as an object only in a discourse. As they put forward, “objects are never given to us as mere existential entities; they are always given to us within discursive articulations” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990: 103). Thus, objects do not have being outside of a discursive context but only existence (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990). Depending upon the discourse within which it is constituted as an object, a physical entity can get quite different meanings. The “being (*esse*) of an object is historical and changing” although “the entity (*ens*) of that object is not” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990: 103). Thus, in contrast with those who see the discourse as only related with the mental as opposed to the material, Laclau and Mouffe emphasize the material character of discourse.

As we have seen discourse is constituted through articulatory practices. Since discourse does have a material character in Laclau and Mouffe’s conceptualization, the articulation practice “cannot consist of purely linguistic phenomena” but it must “pierce the entire material density of the multifarious institutions, rituals and practices through which a discursive formation is structured” (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 109).

#### **3.4.1.3 The Unity of Discourse**

Concerning the question of how a discursive formation becomes coherent in the absence of an underlying principle, Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 105) argue that the coherence of a discourse is given not in “the logical coherence of its elements, or in the a priori of a transcendental subject, or in a meaning-giving subject a la Husserl, or in the unity of an experience” but through a “regularity in dispersion”. Regularity in dispersion, introduced



by Foucault (1989), refers to the regular and dispersed relationship between statements of a discourse. For Foucault, there are differences, incompatible themes, series of gaps, and discontinuities behind the apparent unity of statements of a discourse. This is just because there is no essential principle that gives coherence to a discourse such as well-defined objects or definite normative statements (Foucault, 1989: 31-9). However, these differences, dispersions and discontinuities can have a regularity, that is, “an order in their successive appearance, correlations in their simultaneity, assignable positions in a common space, a reciprocal functioning, linked and hierarchized transformations” (Foucault, 1989: 37). It is this regularity in dispersion that gives coherence to a discourse. Thus, from the perspective of regularity in dispersion a discursive formation can be seen as “an ensemble of differential positions”, which is not determined by any essential principle, that “constitutes a configuration which in certain contexts of exteriority can be signified as a totality” (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 106).

#### **3.4.1.4 The Limits of Discourse**

Regularity in dispersion can provide the unity of a discourse but it cannot tell us where the play of signifiers ends in a discourse (Sayyid and Zac, 1998). The boundaries or limits of a discourse, which make a discourse distinct from the others, are also important in the organization of unity of discourses.

As we have seen, there is no foundation to serve as an ultimate ground of all meanings and identities, and the meanings and identities of objects and subjects are constructed relationally through their differences from all the others. If there were no limit, the play of differences would be infinite and it would not be possible to constitute any meaningful system. Therefore, putting limits is necessary to prevent the continuous play of differences and thereby to construct a system. In order to constitute it as a system, the limits of a discourse should radically separate it from the outside, in the sense that the actualization of one would negate the other. The construction of limits, therefore, is at the same time the construction of antagonisms, one of the central concepts of discourse theory, which will be elaborated in the following section.

#### **3.4.2 Antagonism**

Given the relational and differential character of all meanings, the constitution of a system of meanings requires to differentiate it from the others. However, it is not possible to establish the limits of a system only through differentiating it from the others

because the others from which the discourse is differentiated might remain in this case within the same system. Therefore, the limits should be constructed through excluding some meanings and identities from the system of meaning. These excluded ones should not be merely other differences but “something which poses a threat to (that it negates) all the differences” in the system of meanings (Laclau, 1996a: 52). Constructing limits to a discourse, thus, requires not other positive differences but constructing a negativity. The limits, which require the construction of negativity, are not ‘neutral limits’ in the sense of separating two sides which are simply different from one another. In this case, both sides would be parts of the same system and the limits between them would not be the limits of the system. The ‘true limits’ are established through the exclusion of something which, if actualized, would negate what is inside the limits. In Laclau’s words (1996a: 37), “the actualization of what is beyond the limit of exclusion would involve the impossibility of what is this side of the limit”. In other words, a true limit should be radically *heterogeneous* with the inside of a discourse (Laclau, 2005a; 2006).

Thus, a system of meaning will be constituted through the construction of an outside or more precisely through negativity. Negativity, as such, plays a central role in the conceptualization of the social in a non-objectivist way. The concept Laclau and Mouffe use for negativity is antagonism. Since antagonism is intrinsically negative an antagonistic relation does not refer to a relation between the two objectivities. It rather arises when it becomes not possible for these two different objects to constitute themselves fully, that is, when the presence of the one prevents the other from being fully constituted. In this relation both the antagonizing force and the force that is antagonized cannot experience their respective full presence, that is to say the identities of both parties are to some degree blocked. In Laclau and Mouffe’s words:

Insofar as there is antagonism, I cannot be a full presence of myself. But nor is the force that antagonizes me such a presence: its objective being is my non-being and, in this way, it is overflowed by a plurality of meanings which prevent its being fixed as full positivity (1985: 125).

This, according to Laclau and Mouffe, is the main difference between antagonism and contradiction and opposition. Contradiction and opposition refer to “objective relations” between conceptual objects and between real objects, respectively. As such, this relation is a definable and determinable relation. Antagonistic relation, however, refers to a relation of one with the Other, with a negativity. It is not a relation between two objectivities which are constructed within the same system of meaning, but a relation

between two parties of which one is constituted as a structured system in which the other cannot take place. The excluded meanings and identities cannot be included in the discursive system because it is their exclusion from the system that makes the constitution of that system possible. Thus, antagonism refers “to an exterior with no common measure with the interior, not to something emerging from the internal paradoxes or contradictions of the interior- it involves, in that sense, a negativity which is not dialectizable” (Laclau, 1999: 103). Since the constitution of the interior is based on the exclusion of the exterior, in other words the being of one depends on the non-being of the other, the relation in between two is an antagonistic relation. Concerning the place of emergence of antagonisms, Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 131) point out that “antagonism does not necessarily emerge at a single point”, there might be a number of antagonisms in the social since “any position in a system of differences, insofar as it is negated, can become the locus of an antagonism”.

Hence, antagonism involves the construction of an outside, an otherness, that, as being intrinsically negative, constitutes the objective. But as such, the outside is also the condition of impossibility of any social objectivity (Laclau, 1990). That is, antagonism both constitutes the objective and threatens that objective. It prevents the full constitution of the objective threatening it as a negativity on the one hand, and it constitutes that objective because the latter can not be constituted in another way, and should be constituted in relation with those which it is not, that is, with its negativity, on the other hand. The outside or “the antagonizing force”, then, has a dual role. As Laclau explains:

On the one hand, it ‘blocks’ the full constitution of the identity to which it is opposed and thus shows its contingency. On the other hand, given that this latter identity (like all identities) is merely relational and would therefore not be what it is outside the relationship with the force antagonizing it, the latter is also part of the conditions of existence of that identity (1990: 21).

Both constituting and preventing the full constitution of the identity of the inside, or an objectivity, antagonism becomes the limit of objectivity that means that “antagonism does not have an objective meaning, but is that which prevents the constitution of objectivity itself” (Laclau, 1990: 17). As such, there is a ‘constitutive outside’ in the conception of antagonism just because there is an outside, a radical otherness, which threatens the inside but at the same time constitutes the inside. The constitutive outside, then, is both the condition of possibility and condition of impossibility of any objectivity. In the construction of any objectivity, therefore, there will be a constitutive outside.

It should be underlined here that there has been some changes in the formulation of the category of antagonism. In its original formulation, as developed by Laclau and Mouffe in their collaborative work, antagonism was seen as equivalent to radical exclusion. Laclau later reformulated the concept of antagonism introducing the category of dislocation on the one hand, and giving up equalizing antagonism to radical exclusion on the other hand (Laclau, 1990; Laclau, 2004). Concerning the latter, Laclau (2004) argues that antagonism does not refer to a radical exclusion, but rather, refers to a dichotomization of a social space. Both sides of this dichotomous social space, that is, both sides of antagonistic relation become necessary to create a single space of representation. With regard to the former, on the other hand, Laclau, taking into consideration the criticisms of Slavoj Žižek, reformulated antagonism as a form of discursive inscription of dislocation. Dislocation, as such, becomes more primary than antagonism. Žižek contributed to the reformulation of antagonism by pointing out that the blockage of the full constitution of any identity does not stem from antagonism because every identity is always intrinsically blocked. That is to say that regardless of the emergence of antagonisms every identity is always already in itself blocked. However, with the emergence of an antagonism, the impossibility of achieving to a full identity is externalized. Thus, as Žižek (1990: 252-3) states “the negativity of the other which is preventing me from achieving my full identity with myself is just an externalization of my own auto-negativity, of my self-hindering”. The antagonistic force in this way embodies the blockage of the full constitution of an identity. It is in response to these arguments, Laclau reformulated the concept of antagonism as “a discursive response to the dislocation of the social order” (Torfing, 1999: 129). As it will be explained below, dislocations make the blockage of the identity apparent, and thereby prepare the ground for the construction of antagonism. Before detailing the concept of dislocation, however, the following section will focus on two logics, equivalence and difference, that play important roles in the construction of antagonistic relations.

#### **3.4.2.1 Logic of Equivalence and Logic of Difference**

As it has been explained so far, in the absence of any foundation that serves as the ultimate ground of all meanings, the meanings and identities are shaped through their differences from all the others. But since the play of differences is infinite, the constitution of any discourse requires a relative closure through the establishment of its limits which will posit what is beyond it, that is, the excluded elements from the

discourse. Constituted as such, two logics operate within a discourse: the logic of difference and the logic of equivalence. While the moments of a discourse are different from one another, they are at the same time equivalent in the sense that they all oppose to the excluded elements. Put differently, a chain of equivalence is established with the constitution of a discourse between different elements through positing all these elements against the excluded, that is, the common enemy.

The logic of equivalence operates dissolving the specificity of each position in a structural system through the formation of a relation of equivalence between them against something external. In this way equivalence “creates a second meaning which, though parasitic on the first, subverts it: the differences cancel one other out insofar as they are used to express something underlying them all” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 127). The differential identities that turn into equivalent ones express the negation of the discursive system in question. Thus, the dissolution of differential identities through their inscription in a chain of equivalence against a common enemy, annuls their positivity and introduces a negativity (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). It should be stressed, however, that this negative identity can only be represented through the equivalence between its differential positions. This means that the relation of equivalence can only be constructed between differential positions. This shows us that identities are constructed not only through logic of equivalence but also through logic of difference.

The logic of equivalence and the logic of difference are two opposite logics and as such they structure political space in quite different ways. Although both logics usually prevail together in a social formation, one can become more dominant than the other. If the logic of equivalence becomes dominant in the structuration of the social, there will emerge only two differential positions which will be strictly in opposition to one another, that is, one will be the negative reverse of the other. The only relation between the elements of the two systems will be that of opposition. This is to say that when logic of equivalence becomes dominant, the political space will be largely structured around a particular social antagonism. This does not mean that there will be only one particular antagonism. There will be some other antagonisms but they will not be as influential in dividing the political space as the dominant antagonism. The others, rather, will refer to the dominant one and, thereby, political space will become divided into two antagonistic camps.

On the other hand, if the logic of difference becomes dominant the differential positions will proliferate. The logic of difference operates through breaking the systems of equivalences. That is to say that through differential absorption of demands, it segregates them from their chain of equivalence and transforms them into “objective differences between the system” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 130). The logic of difference, however, usually prevails with the logic of equivalence. As Laclau (1996a: 49) states:

Only in a situation in which all groups were different from each other, and in which none of them wanted to be anything other than what they are, would the pure logic of difference exclusively govern the relations between groups. In all other scenarios the logic of difference will be interrupted by a logic of equivalence and equality.

According to Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 131) *popular* struggles divide the political space into two antagonistic camps. By contrast, *democratic* struggles, such as the so-called new social movements, do not divide the society into two camps. A democratic struggle emerges “within a *relatively* sutured political space formed by a multiplicity of practices that do not exhaust the referential and empirical reality of the agents forming part of them” (1985: 132). These spaces are autonomous spaces in the sense that they are relatively closed spaces. Here, there is no correspondence between a ‘political space’ and ‘society’ as an empirical referent. In popular struggles, however, “the gap between political space and society as an empirical referent” is bridged by a political logic (1985: 133). Thus, the logic of equivalence simplifies the political space by dividing it into two camps, whereas the logic of difference proliferates antagonisms through multiple forms of democratic struggles.

Thus far, the study has focused upon how a discourse is constituted through the construction of antagonisms but not so much when and under what conditions antagonisms emerge. Elaborating the concept of dislocation, the following section will address these questions. In fact, the concept of dislocation has a central importance not only in understanding the category of antagonism but also the conception of the subject in the discourse theory. Therefore, first dislocation and its relation with antagonism will be dealt with, and then the emergence of subject as a result of dislocation will be handled.

### 3.4.2.2 Dislocation

The concept of dislocation is defined by Laclau (1990: 50) as the “*disruption* of a structure by forces operating *outside* it”. Structural dislocation is constitutive in the sense that it paves the way for the construction of new discourses and within it new meanings and identities. This is because dislocation is “an experience more primary than antagonism”. As briefly mentioned above, antagonism emerges as “a discursive response” to the dislocation of a structural system (Torfing, 1999: 129). That is, antagonism is “a discursive inscription of dislocation” (Laclau, 1999: 96).

When dislocations take place history becomes less repetitive because the existing structural systems cannot provide a stable and meaningful framework for social reproduction. This has three important effects in terms of opening up possibilities for the constitution of new and different meaning systems through historical action (Laclau, 1990). First, it leads to a higher awareness of historicity of being of objects. As the structural dislocation takes place, the discursive sequences that organize and construct that structure begin to change. This makes the constitutive contingency of these discourses, and thus the historicity of being of objects, more apparent. Second, the role of the subject increases as a result of dislocation. When structures become dislocated, there would be more space for the action of the subject since there would arise a need for the reconstitution of structures, and this would lead to an increase in the role subject takes. The third effect of dislocation is an unevenness in power relations. As a response to dislocation, different power centers would be constructed by antagonistic forces in an attempt to recompose the structure (Laclau, 1990).

Laclau (1990: 41-4) identifies three dimensions of the relationship of dislocation: it is the form of temporality, possibility and freedom. Temporality refers to the temporalization of spaces. In establishing hegemony of a system its temporality is eliminated. In other words, the spatialization of a system is realized through eliminating its temporality. In this way, time is hegemonized by space. With dislocation, however, the spaces become temporalized. This does not mean that time hegemonizes the space, it cannot hegemonize anything because “it is a pure effect of dislocation” (Laclau, 1990: 42). For a structural dislocation, temporality should be radical, that is, the event that disrupts the structure should be essentially exterior to the structure (Laclau, 1990). Otherwise it can only be an internal moment of the structure, and as such it can not lead to a structural dislocation.

Possibility, on the other hand, refers to the opening possibilities for rearticulation of elements that are freed from the coercive force of the structures. As the determining capacity of structures weakens, many possibilities for rearticulation are opened up. Dislocation is, then, “the primary ontological level of constitution of the social” (Laclau, 1990: 44). The ‘possibilities’ that are open up with dislocation refer to authentic possibilities because in dislocation “there is no *telos* which governs change” (Laclau, 1990: 42). That is, in spite of providing new possibilities for the constitution of a new structural system, structural dislocation cannot be the reference of the transformation. There is no common measure between the dislocated structure and possibilities of action because the possibilities are opened up outside it. However, this does not mean that structural dislocation refers to a total absence of structuration in which everything becomes possible. On the contrary, there will always be a relative structuration. Thus, the “situation of dislocation is that of a lack which involves a structural reference” (Laclau, 1990: 43).

Freedom, the third dimension of the relationship of dislocation, refers to the absence of determination for subjects. As a result of dislocation, the structure that determines the subject becomes no longer able to constitute itself because it is dislocated by an outside. Accordingly, it also fails to constitute the subject. This structural indetermination leads to the emergence of a lack in the subject. As it will be given later in more details, in order to eliminate that lack the subject attempts to determine itself through the acts of identification. Thus, subjects are “condemned to be subjects by the very fact of dislocation” (Laclau, 1990: 50).

Hence, dislocation of structures opens up new possibilities for reconstructing the social world. The construction of a new social world also involves the construction of “social agents who transform themselves and forge new identities as a result” (Laclau, 1990: 40). Since a dislocated structure “does not have in itself the conditions for its possible future re-articulation”, hegemonic struggles will take place to resolve its crisis. Through the hegemonic struggles different myths will be introduced for the restructuring of the social and the constitution of the identity of the subject. In what follows, first the constitution of the subject together with the construction of myth and imaginaries will be explained, and then the concept of hegemony, which entails the structuration of the social through imposing a particular meaning system, will be elaborated.



### 3.4.3 Subject and Identity

In discourse theory subject is used in two senses. In one sense, it refers to the subject positions within a discourse and in the other sense, it refers to “subjects of historical transformations” (Laclau, 1990: 59). In any discursive structure, there are certain subject positions whose identities are constituted, like the identity of any element, in relation to others within that structure. Thus, being in a discourse means for the subject to be given an identity.

From the perspective of discourse theory, the subject is seen neither as “origin and basis of social relations”, nor as “an agent both rational and transparent to itself”, nor as unified and homogeneous (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 115). In opposition to all these, Laclau and Mouffe argue that subject cannot be the origin of meanings because subject positions are discursively constructed. Moreover, the subject positions within a discursive structure take the open character of discourses, that is to say that they are not totally fixed. As it is stated by Laclau and Mouffe:

The category of the subject is penetrated by the same ambiguous, incomplete and polysemical character which overdetermination assigns to every discursive identity. For this reason, the moment of closure of a discursive totality, which is not given at the ‘objective’ level of that totality, cannot be established at the level of a ‘meaning-giving subject’, since the subjectivity of the agent is penetrated by the same precariousness and absence of suture apparent at the any other point of the discursive totality of which it is a part (1985: 121).

However, it is not possible to understand the category of the subject only focusing on the subject positions within discourses due to dislocations of discursive structures. As long as a structure is not dislocated it organizes the social field and determines the subject positions. But it becomes unable to determine the subject when it cannot manage to constitute itself, that is, when it is dislocated. This forces the subject to construct itself through the acts of identification. Thus, as Laclau put it, “the location of the subject is that of dislocation” (1990: 41). As a result of dislocations which lead to the disruption of social orders and together with them subject positions, subject emerges as the subject of a lack of being and attempts to reconstruct both the social world and itself. Dislocation does not mean that the subject who was oppressed by the structure becomes free with its dislocation. As Laclau puts it:

I am simply *thrown up* in my condition as a subject because I have not achieved constitution as an object. The freedom thus won in relation to the structure is therefore a traumatic fact initially: I am *condemned* to be free, not because I have

no structural identity as the existentialist asserts, but because I have a *failed* structural identity. This means that the subject is partially self-determined. However, as this self-determination is not the expression of what the subject *already* is but the result of its lack of being instead, self-determination can only proceed through processes of *identification* (Laclau, 1990: 44).

In conceptualizing the construction of the subject Laclau employs the Lacanian theory according to which there is a lack at the root of any identity which is attempted to be overcome through identifying with something (Laclau, 1994). Here the lack refers to the subject, whereas identity refers to objectivity or structure. The relation between the two is established through the mechanisms of identification (Laclau and Zac, 1994).

The subject is constructed as part of the hegemonic strategies in the process of the constitution of new structures. Laclau (1990: 61-4) identifies four dimensions of the relationship between subject and structure. The first dimension is that “any subject is a mythical subject”. Subject emerges as a mythical subject, or in other words, subject emerges within a myth that can be defined as new discursive spaces that are formed in hegemonic struggles to replace the dislocated structures. As pointed out by Laclau, myth “bears no relation of continuity with the dominant ‘structural objectivity’” (Laclau, 1990: 61). It is this discontinuity with the dominant structural forms that gives a mythical character to the new spaces which are formed as a principle for the rearticulation of the elements of the dislocated structure. Thus, myth is constitutive of social spaces, or what amounts to the same thing, it constitutes the subject and being of objects. In fact, myth is both constitutive of the subject and is constituted by subject. For the subject, it proposes the “forms of identification”, through which the subject is given “its only discursive presence possible” (Laclau, 1990: 63). If a myth becomes successful in constituting a new objectivity rearticulating the dislocated elements, that is to say that if it becomes successful in hegemonizing the social field, subject becomes reabsorbed by the new structure and turns into subject positions within a relatively stable structure.

The second dimension is that the “subject is constitutively metaphor” (Laclau, 1990: 61). The mythical space has a metaphorical nature in the sense that it represents something which is different from its content. As it has pointed out above, mythical space attempts to substitute the dominant structure. In this attempt, it does not only propose a new order but also, perhaps more importantly, it represents a fullness which is absent in the dominant order. In other words, it emerges “as a metaphor on a ground dominated by this peculiar absence/presence dialectic” (Laclau, 1990: 63). This is also the space of the subject. The subject not only identifies with the identities proposed by the myth but also,

being lack in the dislocated structure, identifies with fullness represented by the myth. Due to latter, the subject emerges as the metaphor of an absent fullness. Identification, thus, “presupposes the constitutive split of all social identity, between the *content* which provides the surface of identification and the *function* of identification as such- the latter being independent of any content and linked to the former only in a contingent way” (Laclau and Zac, 1994: 35). Here the place of function is empty, that is it is not “necessarily linked to any particular content”, therefore, it can be actualized through many different forms of contents (Laclau and Zac, 1994: 36).

The third dimension of the relationship between subject and structure is that the “subject’s forms of identification function as surfaces of inscription” (Laclau, 1990: 63). When myth is socially accepted, it will represent many possible forms of dislocation functioning as a surface of inscription for many dislocations and social demands. This is as an outcome of its metaphorical nature. That is, not necessarily with its content but as the space of representation of an unachieved fullness, the myth will compensate many unsatisfied demands and frustrations.

The last dimension of the relationship between structure and subject is that the “incomplete character of the mythical surfaces of inscription is the condition of possibility for the constitution of social imaginaries” (Laclau, 1990: 63). Myths will always be incomplete in the sense that their content will constantly be reconstituted through particularities. This incompleteness leads to an asymmetry between the surface of inscription and what is inscribed on it, which, in turn, will make the relation between the surface of inscription and what is inscribed on it unstable. This asymmetric relation can be shaped in two opposite ways. One is that the surface of inscription is completely hegemonized by what is inscribed on them, and the other is that the moment of inscription of a fullness becomes dominant. In the former situation, “the moment of inscription is eliminated in favor of the literality of what is inscribed” but in the latter, the moment of representation of a fullness becomes “the unlimited horizon of inscription of *any* social demand and *any* possible dislocation” (Laclau, 1990: 64). In this way myth turns into an imaginary. The imaginary is defined by Laclau as a horizon which is not “one among other objects but an absolute limit which structures a field of intelligibility and is thus the condition of possibility for the emergence of any object” (Laclau, 1990: 64).

It should be noted that although myths are constituted by subjects, subjects will never be “in the position of the absolute chooser” in the constitution process (Laclau, 1990: 27). They will face with a situation in which objectivity will be “partially constituted and also partially threatened” (Laclau, 1990: 27). Therefore, there will be an undecidability in the existing structure. The decision to develop one of the possibilities of the structure will be external to the existing structures because the existing structures, although make it possible, will not determine it. The agent of the decision, however, will not be external to the structure but rather will be constituted in relation to it. But on the other hand, the agent will not be entirely internal to the structure either, because “the structure itself is undecidable and cannot be entirely repetitive, since the decisions based upon it but not determined by it, transform and subvert it constantly” (Laclau, 1990: 30). Thus, subject, although not external to the structure, becomes partially autonomous from the structure “to the extent that it constitutes the *locus* of a decision not determined by it” and this means that “the subject is nothing but this distance between the undecidable structure and the decision” (Laclau, 1990: 30). Thus, the passage between undecidability and decision, which is realized through the act of the subject, is the moment of the subject.

Having explained the constitution of the subject in the process of the constitution of hegemony, the study turns to explain the concept of hegemony. In fact, the constitution of hegemony and the constitution of the subject refer to one and the same process. Therefore, separation of them is an artificial operation. But for analytical purposes it is at the same time a necessary operation.

#### **3.4.4 Hegemony**

In conceptualizing hegemony Laclau and Mouffe extensively draw on Gramsci's conceptualization of hegemony. The concept of hegemony in Gramsci's thought refers to the “universalization of the demands of a particular group” (Laclau, 1990: 64). Laclau and Mouffe reformulate that concept through eliminating the essentialist assumptions underlying Gramsci's conceptualization. They also radicalize some other concepts of Gramsci, such as organic crisis, historical bloc, and war of position. They define ‘organic crisis’ as a “conjuncture where there is a generalized weakening of the relational system defining the identities of a given social or political space, and where, as a result there is a proliferation of floating elements” (1985: 136). As such organic crisis occurs as a result of dislocations. Historical bloc refers to a “social and political space relatively unified

through the instituting of nodal points and the constitution of tendentially relational identities” (1985: 136). The historical bloc will refer to a hegemonic formation if considered from “the point of view of the antagonistic terrain in which it is constituted” (1985: 136). War of position, on the other hand, becomes significant insofar as the hegemonic formation implies a phenomenon of frontiers. Moreover, Laclau and Mouffe eliminate some of the assumptions of Gramsci such as the singleness of political space and the constitution of hegemonic subjects only on the plane of classes. For Laclau and Mouffe, there might be more than one political space in a society as the emergence of democratic struggles imply. As mentioned, democratic struggles take place in different political spaces in a society, whereas the popular struggles divide one political space into two opposed fields. The emergence of these struggles also implies that subject is constituted not only through class struggles but also through other forms of struggles.

As we have seen, the ‘fullness’, that is, the full and permanent constitution of a society, is an impossibility due to the impossibility of closing any structural system. Although impossible, however, it is also necessary to achieve a relative fullness in the constitution of a structural system. Because of this necessity, the fullness will always be represented by a particular. In other words, through representing the fullness, a particular will impose itself to the social field. This is what Laclau and Mouffe call ‘hegemony’ (Laclau, 1999)<sup>41</sup>.

The openness of the social is a prerequisite for the emergence of hegemonic practices. This is because there should be floating signifiers to articulate in order to hegemonize a field. If structures were closed systems in which all moments are fixed, there would be no floating signifier and accordingly there would be no room for articulatory practices. “The general field of the emergence of hegemony” state Laclau and Mouffe “is that of articulatory practices, that is, a field where the ‘elements’ have not crystallized into ‘moments’” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 134). It is the impossibility of the closure of a meaning system that “unties the connection between signifier and signified”, and this leads to the proliferation of floating signifiers (Laclau, 1993: 435). In addition to openness of the social system, Laclau and Mouffe point out the necessity of two further conditions of hegemonic articulation: existence of antagonistic forces, and the instability of the political frontiers which separate them. The field in which the hegemonic practice

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<sup>41</sup> In this process through which a particular fills the lack and in this way represents the fullness, the subject emerges as both the subject of the lack, and the subject of the particularity that takes up the task of incarnating that impossible fullness or universality.

emerges should also be full of antagonisms because not only the articulatory moment but also “a confrontation with antagonistic articulatory practices” is necessary to speak of hegemony. Moreover, the frontiers between the antagonistic forces should be unstable. As it is put forward by Laclau and Mouffe, “only the presence of a vast area of floating elements and the possibility of their articulation to opposite camps-which implies a constant redefinition of the latter- is what constitutes the terrain permitting us to define a practice as hegemonic” (1985: 136). The articulation of floating elements by opposite camps, on the other hand, becomes possible not only through antagonism but also through the logic of equivalence. Both sides of the antagonistic relation are constituted in themselves through the logic of equivalence. This is because both sides are heterogeneous and therefore can form a unity in themselves only through their opposition to the other side.

As noted, due to the impossibility of the closure of any system which structure meanings, the connection between signifier and signified is not totally fixed, and therefore, they are open to changes. When structural dislocations take place, it becomes not possible even to partially fix that connection, and this leads to the proliferation of floating signifiers. Dislocation, therefore, is a prerequisite for the emergence of hegemonic articulation. When a dominant structural space is dislocated, new discursive spaces are proposed which, as noted before, are called myth. It should be pointed out here that there is no necessary relation between the dislocation and the discursive space constituted as its form of representation (Laclau, 1990: 65). That is, the mythical space that aims to introduce a new order is not linked to the dislocated structure.

The emergence of a mythical space further increases the destructuring effects of the dominant system. In order to appear as a pure positivity and spatiality mythical space will present the dominant structure as a “non-space, a non-place where a set of dislocations are added together”, and in order to present itself as a space, as a fully realized objectivity, it will present dislocations as equivalent which originate from a transcendent point (Laclau, 1990: 62). Here, we see how antagonism and the logic of equivalence enter the stage in constituting the mythical space. The construction of a pure spatiality, which refers to a “coexistence within a structure that establishes the positive nature of all its terms”, will be possible only through exclusions (Laclau, 1990: 69). The mythical space appears as the “realization of the principle of pure spatiality” through presenting the ‘excluded’ as the anti-space, that is as both non-spatial and as the negation of the space (Laclau, 1990: 69). On the other hand, the differences between dislocations

are eliminated through putting them in a chain of equivalence. In this way, all dislocations are presented as originating from a non-place, a “transcendent point”, as opposed to the “*objective* immanence of the mythical space” (Laclau, 1990: 62).

When the dominant structural order is dislocated, not only one but different mythical spaces are offered by different political actors. These actors engage in a power struggle to hegemonize the social field through transforming their mythical spaces into imaginary horizons. Thus, different mythical spaces compete for turning into social imaginaries. A mythical space can become a social imaginary to the extent that it achieves a social acceptance. Achieving a social acceptance and thus transforming into an imaginary, on the other hand, will be possible for a myth insofar as the literality of what is inscribed to it is eliminated in favor of the moment of representation of the very form of fullness. In other words, the mythical space will become a social imaginary if its literal content can be metaphorized. This can be realized if mythical space is not strictly linked to a specific dislocation. In this case, it will be possible to add other dislocations and social demands to the mythical space, and the metaphorical moment of representation of fullness will become autonomous from the literality of original dislocation. It is in this way a mythical space is transformed into an imaginary horizon. This point is highly critical in understanding the logic of hegemony, and therefore needs further clarification.

A mythical space is constituted both through proposing a new order with the aim of replacing the existing one, and as a critique of the lack of structuration in the existing system (Laclau, 1990: 62). More precisely, in addition to its ontic content, a myth also attempts to symbolize the very principle of structurality. It is particularly through the latter that a mythical space attempt to hegemonize the social field because in opposition to the lack of structurality in the dominant structural discourse, the mythical space proposes a ‘fullness’ representing the very principle of structurality. This is so because often the concrete content of a discourse is less important than its function of representation of a fullness, or an order. As Laclau states, the “discourse of a ‘new order’ is often accepted by several sectors, not because they particularly like its content but because it is the discourse of *an* order, of something that is presented as a credible alternative to a crisis and a generalized dislocation” (1990: 66). This does not mean, however, that any discourse will be socially accepted. For the acceptance, a discourse should be credible in terms of the basic principles characterizing a group.

As to the very critical question of how a myth or an imaginary represents an absent fullness, Laclau introduces the concept of *empty signifiers*<sup>42</sup> (Laclau, 1996a). As it has been mentioned above, the mythical space turns into social imaginary only on the condition of the metaphorization of its literal content. This will be possible if the mythical space metaphorically transfers the function of the fullness to its literal content. In this case, the literal content of the mythical space will become the embodiment of the function of fullness. In other words, a particular signifier also becomes the signifier of an absent fullness because the very form of fullness would be represented by it. Since the concrete content of this space of representation is a particular social order, this particular order will be imposed to the social field. However, as being the space of the very form of the fullness at the same time, any social demand, any dislocation will refer to it. In this way, a particular “assumes the representation of an incommensurable totality” (Laclau, 2005a: 70). It is precisely this relation through which a particular content becomes the signifier of the absent fullness is what Laclau call hegemonic relationship (1996a). The representation of fullness by one particular is not structurally determined. In this sense, it is a *radical investment*. As Laclau (2006: 110) puts it, “[i]t is ‘radical’ because it fully comes from outside and it is ‘investment’-almost in a financial sense-because you endow one structural element with a value which does not derive from its location within the structure”.

On the other hand, a particular can represent an impossible fullness only through the production of empty signifiers. That is, the signifier of the absent fullness must be empty. As it is explained by Laclau (2005a), an empty signifier does not refer to a signifier without a signified. That is, emptiness does not refer to the absence of signified, rather, it means that an emptiness, a void, is signified by an empty signifier. Since a particular signifier also becomes the signifier of the fullness that is absent and therefore irrepresentable, it turns into empty signifier. Through representing an incommensurable totality, it transforms itself in the way of emptying from its particular content (Laclau, 2006). That is, its particularism is subordinated to the function of signifying the totality. Thus, what empty signifiers represent is “not a being which has not been actually realized but one which is constitutively unreachable” (1996a: 39). The production of empty signifiers plays a crucial role for hegemony because “any system of signification

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<sup>42</sup> As Laclau stated, the concepts ‘empty signifier’ and ‘nodal point’ “have exactly the same referent”. The only distinction is that “‘nodal points’ makes allusion to the articulating function, while its empty character points in the direction of universal signification” (Laclau, 2004: 322).



is structured around an empty place resulting from the impossibility of producing an object which, none the less, is required by the systematicity of the system” (1996a: 40).

As mentioned, a number of unfulfilled demands within a social configuration can identify with a discourse not because of its particular content but because of its representation of fullness. Therefore, empty signifier becomes the signifier of all social demands that are inscribed to a discursive space. As clarified by Laclau (2005a; 2006), the relation that an empty signifier establishes with the instances it covers is not of a conceptual nature but a *name*. This means that an empty signifier can unite heterogeneous demands only through the retroactive affect of naming. This is because the demands are heterogeneous and do not share any positive feature which precede the act of naming.

In sum, there are four dimensions of hegemonic relation (Laclau, 2000: 54-58). The first is that hegemony is constituted through the unevenness of power, that is, the ability of a sector to make its own particular aims compatible with the functioning of the community. The second dimension is that the particularity of a sector assumes a function of universal representation. That is, a particular represents something different from and something beyond itself. In Laclau’s (1990: 57) words, “the sectoral aims of a group” operates “as the name for a universality transcending them”, and in this way the dichotomy between universality and particularity, the ontological dimension and the ontic content, is superseded. The third dimension is that the representation of the universal by a particular can only be possible through the production of empty signifiers. Finally, the fourth dimension is that the terrain where hegemony expands “is that of the generalization of the relations of representation as condition of the constitution of a social order” (Laclau, 2000: 57).

So far, this chapter has focused on the elaboration of discourse theory. As the foregoing account indicated, discourse theory provides a broad framework for the analysis of the political struggles, or more precisely for the constitution of any social formation by means of the political. It is non-objectivist and comprehensive in that it takes into account both structural conditions and agency-related factors without falling into essentialism and eclecticism, and without giving a priority to one over the other. Although it has not been developed specifically for examining social movements, it can be employed in examining different forms of political struggles, including not only ‘new social movements’ but also ethnic and nationalist mobilizations, revolutions, and so on,

that attempt to restructure the social, be it an entire social space or minor social spaces. As it has been given above, those struggles that aim at recomposing the entire social space are popular struggles that emerge around a popular type of antagonism, whereas those struggles that try to restructure minor social spaces are democratic struggles that are shaped around democratic antagonisms. The popular antagonism consists of one dominant antagonism to which many others refer. As such, it divides the entire social space into two as friends and enemies. Democratic antagonisms, on the other hand, refer to different struggles that operate in minor social spaces dividing not the entire social space but only these minor social spaces between two opposing sides. The contemporary social movements, or ‘new social movements’, refer to the latter for they are formed around democratic antagonisms that transform minor social spaces into antagonistic battlegrounds (Torfing, 1999).

However, although discourse theory provides a non-objectivist and a comprehensive framework for the analysis of both popular and democratic political struggles, it has a metatheoretical character and this makes it very difficult to apply it to empirical studies in an unmediated way (Torfing, 1999). Its focus is more on the constituent dimensions of the social than on the actualized articulatory practices. In other words, it is less concerned with examining the different practices of existing politics, be it conventional or unconventional, than providing a general theory of the constitution of the social by the political. Thus, as Howarth (2004: 263) points out employing Heidegger’s vocabulary, Laclau’s theory “functions in large part on the ontological, rather than on the ontical plane”<sup>43</sup>.

Mainly due to its ontological character discourse theory lacks some conceptual tools which are important in informing an ontical research on an actualized social movement. Although it provides the analytical tools for the analysis of political mobilizations, it does not specify the specific mechanisms of mobilization. For instance, it does not offer any concept to account for the ways through which the constructed meanings and identities are disseminated by organic intellectuals or the leadership of movements, or it does not consider some specific factors that facilitate or constrain mobilization of people,

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<sup>43</sup> As it is explained by Heidegger (1962: 31) ontological inquiry is more primordial than ontical inquiry because it is “concerned primarily with *Being*” while ontical inquiry “is concerned primarily with entities and the facts about them”. As such, ontologies provide the foundations of the ontical inquiries, and therefore, are prior to the ontical inquiries. Following Heidegger, Howarth (2004: 266) states that ontological refers to “the implicit assumptions presupposed by any inquiry into specific sorts of phenomena” and the ontical refers to “the research into specific sorts of phenomena themselves”.

such as pre-existing structures and formal or informal organizations. Similarly, it does not refer to the ways through which movements attempt to achieve their ends. This study, therefore, will attempt to supplement discourse theory with the insights from social movement theory, which, as noted before, has been developed on the basis of ontical research and therefore has much to offer to an ontical research. Thus, although it provides a better framework to start with, the discourse theory should be informed by the insights of social movement approaches for the analysis of social movements. It is to this task, the study will turn in the next chapter. Articulating the insights of social movement approaches within the broad framework of discourse theory, the conceptual framework of the study for the analysis of the Bergama movement will be developed.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DEVELOPING A NEW FRAMEWORK: THE INTEGRATION OF THE INSIGHTS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY INTO THE DISCOURSE THEORY**

This chapter aims at developing the conceptual framework of the study for the analysis of the Bergama movement by means of resituating the valuable insights offered by social movement approaches within the context of discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe. To this end, the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe will be taken as the main analytical perspective and the main framework of the study and the insights of social movement approaches will be integrated into that framework. Put it differently, some concepts developed by social movement scholars will be articulated within the parameters of the discursive ontology. In fact, as it will be indicated in this chapter, the framework of Laclau and Mouffe connects with some of the important themes that movement approaches, particularly the constructionist ones, have raised. However, the study will not draw on these themes as they exist, but rather, employing them within the discourse-theoretical framework, it will radicalize them in line with the insights the discourse theory provides. In other words, the insights of social movement approaches will be reformulated when necessary, according to the requirements of a discursive ontology.

In employing the various insights social movement literature provides, it will also be kept in mind that almost all of the concepts in the social movement literature have been developed by movement scholars through the examination of the movements that emerged in Western contexts. Although they may have some ‘family resemblances’, social movements that emerge in different contexts cannot be considered as following the same processes and displaying the same characteristics. This is so because the emergence of political struggles has historical and contingent conditions of possibility and therefore “it is necessary to explain in each case the reasons for their emergence and the different modulations they may adopt” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 152). Even if movements were to follow the same paths employing the same strategies and tactics, they would still display considerable differences because the articulation of the strategies

and tactics would be unique to each movement. This requires being cautious in applying the same concepts to different movements, that is, not taking them rigidly as they developed but rather in a way to account for variations in each case.

In addition to deploying and reformulating the insights of social movement theory, the sophisticated concepts of discourse theory will also be tried to be operationalized in this chapter in constituting the framework of the study. This task will be accommodated largely drawing on the arguments of Laclau that are presented in his most recent book *On Populist Reason* (2005a). In fact, the book, in which Laclau elaborates his conceptualization of political struggles through empirical examples, will not only guide the operationalization of the categories of discourse theory but also help in the task of the incorporation of social movement concepts into the framework of discourse theory<sup>44</sup>.

#### **4.1. Conceptualizing Social Movements within Discourse Analytical Framework**

Before incorporating the insights of social movement theory into the discourse theory, this section will first reiterate the main themes of discourse theory employing them around the category of ‘social movements’. In this way, it will constitute the ground that will inform this study’s reading of and drawing on the insights of social movement approaches. It will begin by giving the distinction that Laclau and Mouffe make between ‘politics’ and ‘political’ which is very important in terms of indicating how the concept of social movement from discourse analytical perspective differs from the concept of social movement developed within the social movement theory.

From the perspective of Laclau and Mouffe, there is an important distinction between politics and political. While the former refers to institutionalized forms of politics, the latter refers to constitution of social structures. In Laclau and Mouffe’s words, political refers to the “practice of creation, reproduction and transformation of the social relations”, and as such, unlike the politics, it “cannot be located at a determinate level of the social, as the problem of the political is the problem of the institution of the social, that is, of the definition and articulation of social relations in a field criss-crossed with

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<sup>44</sup> Although the arguments in this book are on populist mobilizations, they might equally apply to more restricted mobilizations as well. In fact, as Laclau (2005a) himself points out all political intervention is populist to the extent they produce some kind of equivalence between different demands. Those that produce an extended equivalential chain unifying a number of social demands would be more populist than those that produce a narrower equivalential chain.

antagonisms” (1985: 153). Thus, as it has been put forth by Mouffe (2005: 8), borrowing the vocabulary of Heidegger, politics refers to the ontic level, whereas political refers to the ontological level.

Following Laclau and Mouffe, this study argues that social movements have a *political* nature, and as such play a *constitutive* role. They emerge as collective agents of change through proposing new discursive spaces and thereby challenging the existing institutional orders. In other words, they engage in a hegemonic battle to restructure a social space through the discourse they constitute. The discourse of movements, which is constituted by drawing new frontiers, involves new meanings and new forms of identification for subjects. It is important to note here that the construction of the discourse of a movement is a *radical* construction, and as such, it is highly different than what is considered as construction in the social movement literature. In constructing new discourses, movements do not totally draw on existing structures, as it is implicitly assumed by the constructionist social movement approaches, but actualize some possibilities which are not actualized before. It is precisely this constitutive role that gives social movements their political character.

Unlike the mainstream social movement approaches, then, which tend to categorize social movements as cultural, political and so on according to their target of change, all social movements, be they target political institutions or not, are regarded as political struggles in this study. This is to say that not only those movements which have demands at the level of parties and the state, but all movements are political. This does not mean that all struggles take place in the terrain of institutional politics, but rather those that take place in other terrains are also political. The emphasis on the political character of social movements, on the other hand, does not result in a failure to consider their ‘cultural’ role. In fact, all social movements are also cultural struggles in the sense that they attempt to construct new meanings and identities. As Laclau (1990: 189) puts it:

The field of cultural struggles has a fundamental role in the construction of political identities. Hegemony is not a type of articulation limited to the field of politics in its narrow sense, but it involves the construction of a new culture-and that affects all the levels where human beings shape their identity and their relations with the world.

Hence, social movements emerge as political subjects to contest the existing social logics and to constitute new ones along the lines of the discourse they introduce. It should be noted here that the discourse of a movement is not something different from the

movement. That is, contrary to what is assumed in social movement studies it does not refer to the discourse of an already constituted group, and as such it is not the expression of the unity of a previously given group. Rather, it is through the constitution of a discourse that a movement comes into being. In this sense, it is the movement itself. It constitutes the unity of different actors in a movement, and as such it constitutes the movement. Moreover, the discourses of movements do not only consist of what they say but also include what they do, that is, the actions they engage in, the organizational forms they develop, the symbols of movements, the ritual practices, and so on. Although movements might employ some of the existing action forms, symbols, and rituals they articulate them in a new way, and for this reason all these components acquire new meanings in the discourse of movements.

As mentioned, social movements come into being to restructure a social space, either an entire social space or minor social spaces, around new meanings and identities. It is the *open and indeterminate* character of the social that makes it possible for social movements to structure, or restructure, a social space. It is in fact, the open character of the social that makes the emergence of social movements possible at all. If a social system were a totality which is closed and complete, there would be no room for social movements because in such a system the meanings of all elements would be fixed, and as such, it would be impossible to change them. Hence, only on the premise of the open, or incomplete nature of the social can social movements be seen as truly constitutive. The social, as such, always bears other meanings and possibilities than the existing structural systems, and movements emerge to actualize some of these possibilities.

In this line of thought, all the existing structures are envisaged as the outcomes of previous political struggles. The existing social structures, therefore, are nothing other than “the *sedimentation* of the political” (Laclau, 1990: 160). With the moment of the “sedimentation of the political”, however, the radically constructed, and therefore contingent, nature of the social becomes invisible. The field of the social, as the ‘objectivity’, governs social relations as it is structured. It is only after the structuring capacity of the social is diminished that new political struggles emerge to restructure the social. Thus, the emergence of a social movement, as a political subject, requires the failure of existing structural arrangements as its precondition.

This has a very important implication concerning the nature of social movements: it is not the existing social structures that give birth to social movements but rather the failure

of these structures that paves the way for the possible emergence of social movements. As such, in contrast with what is assumed in social movement theory, movements cannot be envisaged as the 'internal moments' of existing structural arrangements. They, rather, refer to a 'new agency' that comes into being to reconstitute the structures that fail to provide a meaningful framework. It is precisely in this sense that social movements have a constitutive role, and therefore, should be considered as having a political character. It is this constitutive character of social movements that distinguishes them from institutionalized forms of politics, and it is also this constitutive character that places them not at the ontic but at the ontological level.

Having briefly laid the foundations of the conceptual framework, the study now turns to constitute the framework in more details. This task will be accommodated through elaborating the meaning of main analytical categories of discourse theory for social movements on the one hand, and through articulating the insights of social movement theory within the parameters of discourse theory on the other hand. It will be started by outlining the defining features of social movements, and proceeded by conceptualizing the emergence of movements specifically focusing on the structural conditions that prepare the ground for the emergence of movements. Then, after conceptualizing the expansion of movements, the chapter will finally focus on the consequences and outcomes of movements.

#### **4.1.2. The Defining Characteristics of Social Movements**

It is not possible to develop a general definition of social movements that would explain all aspects of them because the variations in the possible forms that actual movements might take preclude such an attempt at the outset. However, as the central analytical category of the study, it is also necessary for analytical clarity to demarcate it. In what follows, the main defining characteristics of social movements will be given through radicalizing the insights of social movement theory by means of drawing on discourse theory.

Although there is no consensus in the social movements literature on the issue of the definition of social movements, several social movement scholars regard social movements as the efforts of relatively powerless groups, those who lack conventional political resources or formal representation within the political system, to advance their demands (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Tilly, 1978; McAdam, 1982; Jenkins and



Klandermans, 1995; Tarrow, 1998; della Porta and Diani, 1999). In other words, some movement scholars believe that some social groups who have either limited or no access to formal decision-making mechanisms, or institutional political channels, engage in collective action or social movements to voice their demands. As such, these scholars take ‘social groups’ as their starting point in the analysis of social movements, that is, as the basic unit of analysis of social movements. Accordingly, as Laclau (2005a) underlines, though not referring to these scholars specifically, they regard social movements as the mobilization of *already* constituted groups. In this way, however, these scholars turn social movements to an “expression (the epiphenomenon) of a social reality different from itself” (Laclau, 2005a: 72).

Moreover, although these scholars rightly point out that there is an exclusion that forms the basis of social movements, they, nevertheless, envisage exclusion as the exclusion of some social groups from the formal decision-making processes. In other words, mainly because of their confinement within objectivist ontology, they equate exclusion not with the exclusion of the demands of some groups from the existing hegemonic systems, but with these groups’ lack of access to existing political channels in a social configuration. As such, movements, they believe, can succeed when backed by elites, that is, powerful allies, who have access to formal decision-making mechanisms.

To reiterate, in the conception of these scholars, social movements are seen as the mobilization of already constituted social groups to voice their demands, which lacking access to existing political channels have no other course to express themselves. In this way, these scholars, however, locate social movements within existing hegemonic systems and fail to see the radicalism of exclusion that prepares the ground for the mobilizations. They assume that the demands of these social groups can be satisfied within the existing hegemonic system without changing that system. In other words, they assume that social movements attempt to seize power within the prevailing institutional system without attempting to transform the system.

Following Laclau’s arguments (2005a), this study argues that social movements do not refer to the mobilizations of already constituted social groups. Therefore, instead of taking groups as the basic unit of analysis of social movements, it takes, as Laclau suggests, the category of *social demands* as the smallest unit of analysis<sup>45</sup>. It envisages

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<sup>45</sup> As it is pointed out by Laclau (2005b: 35), there are two meanings of the word ‘demand’ in English: one is the meaning of *request* and the other is the meaning of *imposing* a request. It is

social movements as coming into being through the articulation of some social demands. Put differently, the unity of a social movement does not come from the unity of social group but from the articulation of demands that are not accommodated by the existing hegemonic systems. The articulation, however, as Laclau states, “does not correspond to a stable and positive configuration which could be grasped as a unified whole: on the contrary, since it is in the nature of all demands to present claims to a certain established order, it is in a peculiar relation with that order, being both inside and outside it” (2005a: ix).

Hence, because of the inability of the existing systems to absorb some social demands, social movements, which come into being through the articulation of these demands, cannot be considered as internal moments of these systems. Therefore, on the contrary to the claims of social movement scholars, social movements do not attempt to seize power within existing systems but attempt to restructure them, that is, they emerge to constitute new structures that would satisfy the demands they articulate. In Blumer’s (1955: 99) words, they emerge because of the “dissatisfaction with the current form of life” and attempt to “establish a new order of life” <sup>46</sup>. The scope of the restructuration that movements aim to realize might be narrow if movements articulate a few social demands. But if movements articulate a large number of demands, the existing system is more radically challenged by them, and the scope of restructuration they aim becomes much wider.

Since social movements emerge articulating some social demands which are negated by the existing system, there is a radical antagonistic dimension inherent in any social movement. That is to say, an antagonistic relation is established between movements and those in power through the articulation of some social demands against the existing system which cannot satisfy these demands. It is in fact through the construction of that antagonistic relation that social movements come into being. The antagonistic dimension which is extremely important for the emergence of movements from the perspective of Laclau and Mouffe is crucially missing in many social movement approaches. Although some movement scholars (Melucci, 1996, della Porta and Diani, 1999; Touraine, 2002) emphasize the conflict as the necessary component of social movements, due to the

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particularly to the second meaning that the use of the term ‘demand’ refers in this study since only the second meaning refers to the existence of some unfulfilled demands in a social configuration.

<sup>46</sup> In Blumer’s conception, too, social movements emerge developing a ‘new order of life’ to replace the existing ones, however, Blumer in no sense regards this as a radical construction.

objectivist vision they adopt, they tend to consider conflict as a positive relation between two parties, that is, as a contradiction or opposition which, as it has been explained before, is highly different from the concept of antagonism.

As it is explained by Laclau (2005a: 72-83), social demands first emerge in an isolated way. If different social demands are articulated within a discourse in an equivalential way, so as to form a broader social subjectivity, they are called ‘popular demands’. But if a social demand remains isolated from other demands, if it does not enter into any equivalential relation with the other demands, it is called a ‘democratic demand’<sup>47</sup>. A social demand remains isolated insofar as it is accommodated by the existing system. In other words, if a social demand is absorbed within an expanding hegemonic formation it remains in its particularity and its only relation with other particularities becomes a relation of differences. This is so because when a social demand is inscribed into the existing system, it becomes a satisfied, a fulfilled, demand and as such it does not enter into an equivalential relation with other demands. However, if a social demand cannot be

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<sup>47</sup> It is extremely important to note that with the term democratic demand Laclau does not refer to those demands around which ‘democratic struggles’ take shape. As it has been mentioned before, Laclau and Mouffe distinguish between democratic struggles and popular struggles. A democratic struggle emerges within a relatively autonomized political space which does not “coincide with the empirically given social formation” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 132). In other words, they emerge “within a *relatively* sutured political space formed by a multiplicity of practices that do not exhaust the referential and empirical reality of the agents forming part of them” (1985: 132). These spaces are autonomous in the sense that they are relatively closed spaces within the wider social formation. Democratic struggles emerge in these relatively autonomized political spaces around the antagonisms that divide these spaces into two camps. In popular struggles, however, “the gap between political space and society as an empirical referent” is bridged by a political logic (1985: 133).

It is the emergence of different antagonisms that makes the emergence of both democratic and popular forms of struggles possible. As we have seen before, with regard to the place of emergence of antagonisms, Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 131) point out that “antagonism does not necessarily emerge at a single point”, there might be a number of antagonisms in the social since they because “any position in a system of differences, insofar as it is negated, can become the locus of an antagonism”. When the society as a wider political space is structured around a particular social antagonism, the other antagonisms will refer to it and will not be as influential in dividing the political space as the dominant antagonism. Thus, the political space will become divided into two antagonistic camps. By contrast, those antagonisms, democratic antagonisms, which emerge in relatively autonomized narrower political spaces do not divide the society into two camps.

Thus, although Laclau’s employment of the term ‘democratic’ to denote both the isolated demands and the struggles that emerge in relatively autonomous political spaces around democratic antagonisms is confusing, it is nevertheless clear from the arguments he developed with Mouffe in their collaborative work (1985: 131-133) that democratic antagonisms do not refer to positive relations established among different elements in a system of relations, whereas democratic demands definitely refer to such positive relations. What Laclau and Mouffe termed as ‘democratic struggles’, therefore, do not refer to the mobilizations around one democratic demand.

accommodated within the existing hegemonic formation, it may enter into an equivalential relation with some or all other unsatisfied demands against the existing system, and in this way poses a challenge to the hegemonic formation. Put it in a different way, democratic demands might turn into popular ones insofar as they are not fulfilled within the existing social system, entering into an equivalential relation with the other unsatisfied demands in their opposition against the hegemonic formation. That is, they no longer remain in their particularity but become equivalents in the sense that they are not met by the hegemonic formation. Thus, the ground of the equivalential relationship becomes the common opposition of different particular demands to the power that negates them (Laclau, 2006). With the emergence of an equivalential chain of unfulfilled demands, the people who have these demands is constituted as a social subject on the one hand, and an internal frontier is formed between the existing system and the people who have these unsatisfied demands on the other. This frontier is antagonistic for it constitutes the people through radically separating them from the hegemonic power that is unresponsive to the demands of the people.

As Laclau (2005a) points out, the equivalence does not eliminate the differences between social demands. On the contrary, differences continue to operate within equivalence. At the initial phase of the mobilization of the people, the equivalence between their demands creates only “a feeling of vague solidarity”, however, at the higher levels of mobilization the relations between different demands can be consolidated “both through the expansion of equivalential chains and through their symbolic unification” (Laclau, 2005a: 74). The expansion of equivalential chain refers to the inclusion of some other unfulfilled demands to the chain, whereas the symbolic unification refers to the crystallization of equivalential relations in a certain discursive identity.

Due to their articulation of different particular social demands, social movements do not refer to homogeneous subjects (Melucci, 1996; Tilly, 1999). Rather, they consist of “clusters of performances” (Tilly, 1999) of informal and complex networks of different groups or actors (Melucci, 1996; della Porta and Diani, 1999; Rucht and Neidhardt, 2002). As Melucci states, “what is empirically referred to as a movement, and for convenience of observation and description is treated as an essential unity, in reality embodies a whole range of social processes, actors and forms of action” (1995a: 111). There might be individuals, informal groups, legal or illegal organizations, including political parties, trade unions, national or international nongovernmental organizations,

and underground organizations among the actors of a movement (della Porta and Diani, 1999; Diani, 2000).

Concerning the question of what brings different individuals, groups, and organizations together in a movement, social movement scholars, emphasizing the importance of different factors, provide different answers. They refer to 'interests' (McCarthy and Zald, 1977); 'collective identity' (Melucci, 1996; Rucht and Neidhardt, 2002); and 'shared beliefs and solidarity' (della Porta and Diani, 1999). Although all of these factors are very important in the constitution of social movements as collective actors, none of them can alone answer the question. Moreover, a collective identity or a strong solidarity cannot be constituted at the initial phase of mobilization. Rather, as noted above, different groups of people, who have unsatisfied demands in a given structural configuration, initially come together if their different particular demands are articulated in an equivalential way against the existing system (Laclau, 2005a). But as mobilization reaches a higher level, different particular demands of these groups are "unified into a stable system of signification" (Laclau, 2005a: 74). This is to say that different groups are unified around a collective identity and around shared meanings and beliefs only at the higher level of mobilization.

As it has been emphasized by all social movement scholars, in order to expand mobilization and to advance their causes, social movements usually, although not exclusively, engage in unconventional forms of political action, such as the use of different forms of protests and violence. In fact, one of the most important differences of social movements from conventional parliamentary and electoral politics lies in their engagement in unconventional political action (Tarrow, 1998) which can be defined as "the attempt to circumvent the routines of elections and lobbying" whether by marching, occupying, or bombing (Calhoun, 2000). As Melucci (1996) points out, through the use of unconventional or non-institutionalized political participation social movements extend beyond the institutional boundaries of a political system, and in this way threaten to disregard and violate the system of rules in a given political system. Non-institutionalized forms of action, however, are not the only way for movements to voice their causes. They may also engage in more conventional forms of action such as lobbying, organizing press conferences, meetings, appearing on mass media, initiating a litigation process, and so on. They might employ a mix of non-institutionalized and institutionalized forms of action (Maheu, 1995).

Hence, social movements emerge as a new political subject in and through the constitution of a discourse that, articulating a plurality of social demands, aims at restructuring the existing institutional orders. The following section will detail the constitution of social movements. It will pay a special attention not only to movement-related factors but also to structures that condition the formation of social movements.

#### **4.1.2. The Constitution of Social Movements**

As mentioned, the constitution of a social movement involves complex processes through which different particular social groups and actors who have different social demands, positions, and aspirations come together in their opposition to the power that prevents the satisfaction of their demands. In the analysis of movements, therefore, instead of conceiving collective actors as already constituted groups, we should try to understand their constitution (Melucci, 1995a; 1995b; 1996). This is to say that the empirical unity of a social movement should not be taken as a starting point but should be seen as a result which should be explained.

The central task from the perspective of discourse-theoretical framework is to identify the discursive conditions that lead to the emergence of social movements. To do so, we must, first of all, focus on understanding the logics of existing structural arrangements. Although structures never directly generate movements, they nevertheless prepare the ground for the emergence of antagonisms and for the emergence of social movements around these antagonisms. Moreover, they also have some influences on the forms movements take. Any examination of the constitution of social movements, therefore, should start from the existing structures.

In the light of these considerations, the following section will first focus on the ways through which ‘structural conditions’ open up possibilities for the emergence of movements, and on the ways through which they influence the discourse of movements. Then, dividing it into two as ‘the early phase of mobilization’ and ‘the later phase of mobilization’, it will focus on the ‘mobilization’ process through which a movement is constituted and begins to take action.

##### **4.1.2.1 The Structural Conditions of Mobilization**

As it has been mentioned, ‘social demands’, which are not satisfied in a given social space, lie at the base of political mobilizations. The existence of some unfulfilled

demands in any structural configuration means that the latter is not able to accommodate these demands without at the same time radically altering itself. This is to say that if there emerges some social demands in a social system that pose a threat to the way that system is structured, it would be impossible for that system to absorb these demands. The system, then, would simply ignore or repress these demands. The existence of social demands in any structural configuration, therefore, “presupposes some kind of exclusion or deprivation” (Laclau, 2005a:125). Although many social movement scholars point out the existence of deprivation and grievances at the base of demands that are articulated by social movements (Blumer, 1955; Smelser, 1962; della Porta and Diani, 1999; Rucht and Neidhardt, 2002), they, nevertheless, tend to view them as directly rising out of the existing systems. From the discourse-theoretical perspective, they are rather explained through the failure of the existing structures.

As it has been explained before, Laclau has introduced the category of ‘dislocation’ to account for the failure of the structural systems. Dislocation simply refers to the crisis of a structural order due to its disruption by forces that operate outside that structural order (Laclau, 1990). Being outside to the structural system, the events that lead to the dislocation of the system cannot be represented within that system, and this creates the crisis of the system. As a result of dislocation, the prevalent structural system destabilizes, and as such fails to provide a meaningful framework for the people. This might lead people to experience a range of dislocations in their routine daily practices, expectations, and even identities. It is precisely out of this crisis situation that new social demands emerge and start their process of articulation.

In addition to leading to the emergence of new social demands, dislocation also paves the way for the emergence of political subjects, including social movements, through opening up new possibilities for action. Creating a higher awareness of the contingency and historicity of the existing structures on the one hand, and expanding the field of decisions on the other, it increases the role of subjects. Thus, the concept of dislocation does not merely capture the inability or failure of structures to provide meaningful and stable frameworks for the subjects, but also explains why subjects turn into political agents, which is totally missing in social movement theory<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>48</sup> For both Blumer and Smelser, as we have seen before, social movements emerge when existing structural systems do not meet the expectations and aspirations of the people. However, as we have also seen, Blumer tends to explain the emergence of social movements essentializing the subject, whereas Smelser essentializing the structures.

Hence, the emergence of political struggles requires dislocation of existing structures as their precondition. However, although dislocation lies at the base of any struggle, it does not directly generate them. This is because the emergence of new social demands and new possibilities for political action as a result of dislocation create a structural potential which should be translated into collective action through the efforts of political subjects if a social movement is to emerge (McAdam, 1982; McAdam et al., 1996b; McAdam et al., 2001; Kurzman, 2004). Furthermore, dislocation cannot determine the forms of responses given to it since it does not contain any necessary meaning in itself, and therefore, can be interpreted in many different ways. Similarly, the restructuration of the dislocated structure can be realized in many different ways through the rearticulation of dislocated elements. It might be stated, using the language of the social movement theory, that dislocation opens up political opportunities in the sense that it makes it possible to rearrange the dislocated structure. The range of opportunities, on the other hand, will vary depending on the extension of dislocation. In any case, however, the act of restructuration will never be an act of total structuration. Although it opens up new possibilities, a dislocated structure does not make everything possible. On the contrary, there will always be some limits on the possible, and therefore, there will always be a relative structuration in the dislocated system. As Laclau (1990: 43) states, “a temporalization of spaces or a widening of the field of the possible” always “takes place within a *determinate* situation”.

Among the factors that impose limits on the possible, particularly “structural and institutional conditions” and “the given distribution of resources” are important (Torfing, 1999: 153). The former refers to the institutional forms of the state and/or economy, whereas the latter refers to the authoritative and allocative resources of social and political actors (Torfing, 1999). As it has been explained before, while the political process approach in the social movement literature put much emphasis on the institutional political system in the analysis of social movements, the resource mobilization approach focuses upon various forms of resources that facilitate the emergence and development of movements. In addition, as it is asserted by the proponents of both resource mobilization and political process approaches, availability of ‘mobilizing structures’ or ‘movement networks’ is an important factor affecting the likelihood of the emergence of movements. Mobilizing structures refer to those “collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action”, such as organizations and informal associational networks



that link individuals and groups (McAdam et al., 1996b: 3). Here organizations refer to already existent formal organizations, whereas informal associational networks to already “established lines of interaction” (McAdam, 1982: 44) between participants of movements that include “various grassroots settings” such as neighborhood and work (McAdam et al., 1996b: 3), and also personal contacts of activists (della Porta and Diani, 1999). The availability of mobilizing structures or networks is important in the emergence of movements because they “might act as the infrastructural basis of social movements” (Rucht and Neidhardt, 2002: 13) promoting “the circulation of essential resources for action (information, expertise, material resources) as well as of broader systems of meaning”, and thereby contributing both “to creating the preconditions for mobilization” and “to providing the proper setting for the elaboration of specific world-views” (Diani, 2000: 161). Movement networks, however, should not be seen as consisting of only those that are existent before the emergence of movements. Although these networks are valuable for the emergence of movements, after their emergence movements can also create new networks through their own efforts (Jasper, 1997; della Porta and Diani, 1999). In fact, it becomes a necessity for movements to produce new networks and to create an organizational structure in order to sustain collective action (McAdam et al., 1996b).

In addition to institutional conditions, availability of resources to insurgents, and mobilizing structures, the responses and reactions of the state to an emergent movement, and also the opposition of antagonistic forces (Torfing, 1999) are important factors that impose certain limitations to the possibilities for a social movement. However, as it will be explained later in the study, they carry out their activities for or against movements only after movements emerge, and therefore, they exert influence more on the later development of a movement than on its emergence.

From a discourse-theoretical perspective, in accounting for all these structural conditions that influence the emergence and form of social movements, we cannot begin from objective conditions because they are subject to attribution. This is, in fact, recently emphasized by some social movement scholars as well. While the earlier social movement studies, particularly those that are conducted from resource mobilization and political process perspectives, tend to focus on ‘objective’ conditions in accounting for structural factors, recent studies begin to emphasize the necessity of focusing not on objective conditions but on the perception, interpretation, and appropriation of them by movement actors (see, for instance, Jasper, 1997; Goodwin and Jasper, 1999; McAdam,

2001; McAdam et al., 2001; Kurzman, 2004). Thus, what is important in the examination of the structural conditions is not to list objective conditions but to understand how a movement emerges through imputing meanings to them. This requires, first of all, understanding the logics of the existing structures and how they enter into a crisis. As it has been explained, a social movement emerges on the basis of problems that cannot be solved within the existing structures due to the crisis situation in that structure. In the following part, the study will focus on how movements emerge through the articulation of different social demands and thereby constitution of a new space of representation.

#### **4.1.2.2. The Initial Phase of a Political Mobilization**

After the existing symbolic orders are dislocated, which leads to a range of problems and difficulties for the social groups experiencing that dislocation, social movements might emerge, in an embryonic form, constituting a new discursive ‘space of representation’ by means of imputing meaning to the experience of dislocation, as well as offering solutions to the problems and difficulties of the people. In other words, social movements emerge through constituting a ‘myth’ as a principle for the rearticulation or recomposition of the elements of the dislocated structure. As a new space of representation, myth “bears no relation of continuity with the dominant ‘structural objectivity’” (Laclau, 1990: 61), and it is this discontinuity with the dislocated structural forms that gives a ‘mythical’ character to the new discursive spaces.

It is very important to note here that with the constitution of a myth, the difficulties and problems of social groups are translated into ‘social demands’ since a myth, as a surface of inscription, does not passively convey what is inscribed in it, but rather actively constitutes it. This is to say that social demands are not preexisting as “self-transparent discourses” but rather constituted only through the process of their articulation through the intervention of myths. As Laclau (2005a: 127) remarks, “no demand is fully a demand without *some* kind of inscription”. It is, therefore, through the emergence of discursive spaces, or mythical spaces, dislocations are transformed into demands<sup>49</sup> (Laclau, 1990).

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<sup>49</sup> Although the concept of myth looks similar to what some social movement scholars call ‘collective action frames’ that “help to render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organize experience and guide action” (Benford and Snow, 2000: 614) and related concepts such as “diagnostic framing” which involves problem identification and attributions and “prognostic framing” which refers to strategies of movements to solve the problem, it is highly different from the concept of ‘frame’ in that myth refers to a radical construction of a new

Thus, it is through the constitution of a mythical space in response to dislocatory experiences that a social group or some social groups start a process of mobilization. In the constitution of a myth 'strategically placed agents' (Howarth, 2004: 262) such as 'organic intellectuals' play crucial roles<sup>50</sup>. As being 'organic'<sup>51</sup> intellectuals of the people who experience the dislocation, they introduce a principle of intelligibility into the situation which helps people to make sense of the dislocatory events, and to substantiate their efforts for changing the existing situation. However, it should be noted that although organic intellectuals play important roles in the constitution of the discourse of a movement, they cannot govern the whole process as they wish, rather they try to establish a leadership in the emerging hegemonic projects (Torfing, 1999).

It is highly important in the formation of a movement to fashion its discourse in a way to produce collective action. More specifically, the discourse of the embryonic social movement should underline the necessity of collective action as a solution to the problems people experience. It is crucially important for the emergence of social movements to offer 'collective action' as part of the solution because people can be mobilized only if they feel "optimistic that, acting, collectively, they can redress the problem" (McAdam et al., 1996b: 5). This is to say that the problems should be formulated in a way that they are seen as subject to solution only through collective action (McAdam, 1982; Snow et al., 1986; della Porta and Diani, 1999)<sup>52</sup>.

In the emergence of a myth as a surface of inscription of different demands, what Laclau and Mouffe (1985) call 'logic of difference' and 'logic of equivalence' come into play since social demands of different social groups that are articulated within a discourse have both a differential relation and an equivalential relation. They have a differential

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discursive space while frame does not. The problem in framing approaches, as mentioned before, is that they treat the discourse or frames of movements as something epiphenomenal.

<sup>50</sup> In fact not only in the constitution of myth but in the whole process of the hegemonic struggle organic intellectuals can play crucial roles taking the leadership of the movement. In spite of having such a central importance in the formation of movements, leadership is in fact one of the neglected and understudied subjects in the social movements literature (Aminzade et al., 2001).

<sup>51</sup> The concept of 'organic intellectuals' was introduced by Gramsci (1989) to refer to intellectuals of different groups who are created by each social group, and therefore have a direct link, an organic tie, to the group they belong. As such, intellectuals represent the interest of the social group which creates them. More precisely, they work for establishing the hegemony of the group to which they belong.

<sup>52</sup> This is explained through different concepts in social movement literature such as 'cognitive liberation' (McAdam, 1982) and 'motivational framing' (Benford and Snow, 2000).

relation because different particular demands are inscribed into the mythical space, but they also have an equivalential relation because they are equivalentially articulated against the discursive formation that fails to accommodate them. Thus, while the differential relation pertains to differences between the positive features of the particular demands, the equivalential relation does not arise out of some positive features but stems from the fact that all particular demands remain unfulfilled within the prevailing structural order. It is only through the equivalential relation that the unity of heterogeneous demands is provided. Thus, with the concept of the logic of equivalence, discourse theory captures how a plurality of particular demands of different social groups is held together in a social movement. Although the equivalential relation between different particular demands weakens the differential character of social demands, it does not lead to the dissolution of all their differences. As Laclau (2005a: 79) states “difference continues to operate within equivalence, both as its ground and in a relation of tension with it”.

The equivalential articulation of different demands, as explained before, becomes possible only through drawing a boundary between different unfulfilled demands and the system that fails to accommodate these demands. The myth or the discourse of the movement, in effect, is constituted only through establishing its limits because from the anti-essentialist perspective of the discourse theory, it is only through the discursive production of those beyond the political frontiers that a discursive space is constituted. As we have seen before, the relation between the inside of the discourse and the outside is an antagonistic relation because the outside always poses a threat to the inside. Those that take place beyond the political frontiers of the discourse of movements are constructed as ‘enemies’ because the being of ‘us’, i.e., the being of the movement actors, depends on the non-being of ‘them’. It is precisely for this reason that ‘we’ and ‘they’ cannot take place together within the same system. As it has been mentioned before, an antagonistic relation does not refer to an objective relation, and in this way it differs from both contradiction and opposition. Although, the importance of the creation of a ‘we’ and ‘they’ in the construction of collective identities is also emphasized by some movement scholars (Gamson, 1992; Melucci, 1996; della Porta and Diani, 1999), they, nonetheless, conceive the relation between them as an objective relation. For the discourse theory, however, it is not possible to have an objective relation between them because the being of ‘we’ is possible only with the non-being of ‘they’.

The construction of the discourse of a movement through the equivalential articulation of a plurality of particular social demands is a radical construction since it is not determined by the existing structures. This means that the meanings and forms of identification provided by the discourse of a movement do not arise out of objective conditions. Similarly, those that are constructed as the 'others' of a discourse do not refer to any pre-existing categories or empirically given groups, but are rather constructed in the discourse of movements. It should be added, however, that even such a radical construction is not a total restructuring. Although the discourse of a movement as a whole represents a break with the dominant structural system, it nonetheless would have some components of the existing structures. This is so because there would always be a relative structuration in the dislocated system. For this reason, the discourse of a movement cannot be seen as a total creation. It entails both continuity and discontinuity with the existing structures. It has continuities because it articulates the elements within the prevailing system that lost their fixity due to dislocation, but it also has discontinuities because it articulates these floating elements in a new way.

The existing structures can influence the emergence of movements in different ways. For one thing, they provide ideological raw materials. The existing values, symbols, and discourses can be used by movements as surfaces of inscription for the new dislocations and antagonisms (Laclau, 1990: 79- 80). In this regard, the discourses, symbols, organizational experiences, and action repertoires of previous political struggles can be useful for new movements (Melucci, 1996). Second, as mentioned, institutionalized politics can influence the emergence and the form of movements in a number of ways. Although its influence can change in different contexts, it is nevertheless possible to point out some possible ways of its influence. One among the others is the 'relative openness or closure of the political system' (McAdam, 1996a; Tarrow, 1998) to protests or pressures from social movements in general, or put in Mouffe's (2005) terms, the extent to which 'agonistic legitimate channels' for the expression of dissent are institutionalized in a system. As explained by Mouffe (2000; 2005), to the extent an institutional political system transforms potential antagonisms in social relations into 'agonism', regarding the opponents not as enemies to be destroyed but as legitimate adversaries, it is less likely that dissent takes violent forms. This is because in an agonistic relation the conflicting parties recognize the legitimacy of each other, while in an antagonistic relation the two sides do not share any common ground. Thus, the structure of institutional political system influences both the forms movements take and

the strategies and tactics movements adopt. The openness of the system to social movements in fact highly depends on the social demands movements articulate. A political system may well be open for those movements that form a narrow equivalential chain by articulating some minor demands, but it would be closed for those movements that form an extended equivalential chain by articulating a plurality of social demands. This is because while the former does not pose a challenge to the whole system, the latter demands a major change in the system. In addition to the openness of the system to dissenting voices, a number of institutional factors would be influential on social movements particularly on the strategies and tactics they adopt, such as the territorial decentralization of the state power, functional dispersal of state power between legislature, executive and judiciary, and the extent of state power as compared to the power of political parties, the media, interest groups, and so on (della Porta and Diani, 1999).

Furthermore, as emphasized by the proponents of resource mobilization theory, the resources at the disposal of a movement play very important roles in the struggle social movements engage in. They are particularly important for the dissemination of meanings constructed by movements. In fact, most of the resources of movements are constituted through their discourse (Moaddel, 1992) because it makes possible to form alliances and to mobilize people. It is also important in this respect, what some movement scholars (Tarrow, 1998; della Porta and Diani, 1999) argue with regard to the protests that movements engage in. They put emphasis on 'protests' as a valuable resource of movements since the use of protest can be an efficient way for social movements both to voice their claims against authorities and to attract the attention of the public. Sometimes, particularly when the institutional channels are totally closed, it can be the only way for social movements to voice their demands. As della Porta and Diani (1999: 168) notes quoting Michael Lipsky (1965) "protest is a political resource of the powerless" because it is "the main and often the only recourse that ordinary people possess against better-equipped opponents" (Tarrow 1998: 3).

On the other hand, the attempts of different forces to restructure the dislocated structures would also pose limitations on a social movement. The emergence of a social movement will not be the only response given to the dislocation of a structural order. Since there is no necessary relation between a dislocation and the principle of reading of that dislocation, it can be interpreted in many different ways. Therefore, proposing different myths around different particular meanings and subjectivities, different forces might

attempt to recompose the dislocated structure. Apart from their content, the most important difference between the discourse of a movement and others would be the emphasis the former put on the necessity of collective action for the solution of problems. Thus, an emergent movement might have to compete with other attempts that propose different meaning structures for reconstituting the dislocated structure.

More importantly, the emergent movement engages in a hegemonic battle with various antagonistic forces. The hegemonic attempts of the antagonistic forces would pose certain limits to the hegemonic practices of the movement. This makes it necessary in the analysis of social movements not to focus only on movement actors but also to take into account the antagonistic forces against which the movement engage in a hegemonic battle. In this way, in fact, it would also be possible to overcome the preoccupation of social movement theory with the ‘movements’, and its related ignorance of the other parties to a struggle. In social movement studies, the analytic attention is usually focused on social movements, largely disregarding the hegemonic attempts of the political opponents<sup>53</sup>. However, social movements engage in a power struggle with antagonistic forces to hegemonize a social field through shaping it along the lines of the discourse that they constitute. In other words, the hegemonic struggle takes place between rival parties, that is, anti-system mobilizations on the one side and the opposite movement on the other side (Laclau, 2006). Here, the opposite movement pertains to the reaction of those in power to antagonistic mobilizations (Laclau, 2006). As Laclau (2005a: 113) puts it, the general politics of the opposite movement would be “to de-mobilize the underdog”. To this end, it would attempt to prevent the formation of an equivalence between various interests and demands of different social groups. The struggle of movement actors for hegemony, therefore, will always be limited by the opposition of antagonistic forces.

As to the question of how different myths, or antagonistic forces, would compete to hegemonize a social field, it might be argued that to the extent the competing myths provide a surface of inscription for different demands, in other words to the extent they provide answers and solutions to the dislocations experienced by people, they become successful in interpellating subjects. As it has been explained in the preceding chapter, dislocation of structures, which refers to the disruption of not only structures but together

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<sup>53</sup> Some studies in social movements field also point out the lack of attention in movement analysis to the opponent parties and underline the necessity of interactive analysis so as to eliminate that lack (see Melucci 1996; McAdam et al., 2001).

with them the subject positions internal to those structures, forces the subject to reconstruct both the social world and together with it her/himself through the acts of identification. The disruption of subject positions leads to the emergence of a subject as the subject of a lack of being. In order to overcome this situation, subject needs to identify with something that provides it an imaginary fullness and a symbolic coherence. That is, subject identifies with one of the emerging discourses that, offering a new system of meaning and new identities for the subject, provide solutions to the crisis of the structure.

Thus, the social acceptance, or success, of emerging discourses depends on their ability of presenting identification forms for subjects through representing many possible forms of dislocation. However, as Laclau (1990) points out, sometimes, particularly when there is no other option, the mere availability of a myth is sufficient for the acceptance. In such a situation, the new discourse is accepted not because of its content but just because it represents an alternative to the dislocated structure. But usually something more than the mere availability of a discourse is required. When this is the case, besides availability, a myth has to have credibility, that is, its proposals should not clash “with the basic principles informing the organization of the group” (Laclau, 1990: 66). Here, in fact, the extension and depth of dislocation is important. If it is deep, that is, if the whole organization of the group is dislocated, then there will be more freedom in the constitution of the myth.

It should be added that mobilizing passions and affects is crucial in increasing the appeal of a discursive space for the subjects (Melucci, 1996; Jasper, 1997; Laclau, 2005a; Mouffe, 2005; Stavrakakis, 2005), which is completely ignored by rationalist social movement approaches. As Laclau (2005a) postulates, there is an ‘affective’ component, or *jouissance*<sup>54</sup> (enjoyment), in every discursive or hegemonic formation because hegemony involves the affective investment in a partial object that represents for the subject the fullness that is missing, or the absence of it becomes apparent for the subject through the dislocation. In other words, collective forms of identification provide the subject with a form of enjoyment that is organized by a myth through constituting itself as the one that represent fullness. It also involves the simultaneous construction of the ‘other’, the antagonist, as the one that poses a threat to the enjoyment of the subjects

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<sup>54</sup> The concept of ‘*jouissance*’ has been introduced by Lacan (Stavrakakis, 2005).



because it threatens to achieve the fullness that the myth offers. So, the lack of enjoyment is always attributed to the presence of the Other (Mouffe, 2005).

Through identifying with modes of subjectivities offered by a myth, subject both constitutes itself and constitutes the myth she/he identifies with. As Laclau (1990: 61) postulates “any subject is a mythical subject” since subject emerges within a myth which she/he identifies with. If myth becomes successful in constituting a new objectivity, that is to say that if it becomes successful in hegemonizing the social field, subject becomes reabsorbed by the new structure and turns into subject positions within a relatively stable structure. In a fully structured social space, therefore, there is no place for the subject, there are only subject positions determined by the structure. Thus, myth is constitutive of social spaces, that is, it constitutes the subject and being of objects. For the subject, it proposes the “forms of identification”, through which the subject is given “its only discursive presence possible” (Laclau, 1990: 63). It is only through the acts or decisions of the subjects can a myth be turned into a social structure to replace the dislocated one. The implication of this for social movements is that a social movement is not constituted only by a few leaders. That is, it is not that a few leaders form a social movement and then try to attract others to the movement to expand their support base, as it is assumed by some social movement approaches such as ‘resource mobilization’ and ‘framing’ approaches. Rather, a social movement is fully constituted by the decisions and acts of all those who identify with the emerging discourse of movements.

The construction of a myth, thus, is the first step in the process of construction of a discourse by movements. In this initial phase of mobilization a movement is “amorphous, poorly organized, and without form” (Blumer, 1955: 199) since only a “vague feeling of solidarity” develops among those whose demands are equivalentially articulated in the emerging discourse (Laclau, 2005a: 74). For the consolidation of the equivalential relations between different social demands, a movement should take further steps, such as the “expansion of the equivalential chain” and “their symbolic unification” (Laclau, 2005a: 74). Only through taking these steps can a movement reach higher levels of mobilization. The following section will focus on how a movement can further mobilization through these steps.

#### **4.1.2.3. The Later Phase of Mobilization: The Consolidation of Social Movements**

As its emergence, the later development of a movement is also affected by a number of factors including both structural and agency related factors. After its initial emergence a

movement attempts to expand mobilization and thereby widen itself through the articulation of some other demands into its discourse. In other words, it attempts to transform into an 'imaginary horizon', and function as a surface on which a great number of different demands can be inscribed. In addition to articulating some other social demands, movements engage in a range of conventional or unconventional actions both to increase their public appearance and thereby to widen their support base, and to voice their claims to the authorities.

However, as mentioned, a movement would not be the only actor that attempts to hegemonize the social field. On the contrary, the responses and reactions of various antagonistic forces would be an important factor affecting the struggle of a movement. Moreover, the responses and reactions of various state agencies would be influential on movements. It should be stressed that the state need not necessarily be an antagonistic force, though in many cases it is among them. Particularly those struggles that take place in minor social spaces might not directly target the state. But be an antagonistic force or not, states necessarily involve in struggles that social movements engage in. This is so because the state is at least responsible to maintain the whole social order which at times challenged even by those social movements that operate in minor social spaces especially through disruptive and violent protest actions that movements engage in.

After its initial emergence, the most important challenge that a social movement is confronted is how its emergent discourse, myth, can be transformed into an imaginary horizon that would structure a social space. A myth, as we have seen, emerges through providing a principle of reading for an experience of dislocation. However, in order to expand and thereby become an imaginary horizon, it must further act as a surface of inscription for some other social demands, too. This requires that a myth should not be strongly tied to the dislocatory experience of a particular group (Laclau, 1990). If it remains strictly linked to a specific dislocation, it cannot act as a surface of inscription for other dislocations and demands. As it has been explained in the preceding chapter, a myth incorporates different demands not only through proposing a new order but also through representing a possible order. That is, a myth performs two functions simultaneously: offering concrete solutions to a crisis situation, and representing, metaphorically, the possibility of achieving *an order*. The second function is critical because it is through that function a myth incorporates many social demands. This means that different dislocations and demands are added to a mythical space not merely because of the solutions it offers for the problems that a specific dislocation creates but also

because it represents a social order. If a myth emerges as strictly linked to a specific dislocation, it fails to represent a possible order, and thereby also fails to incorporate other social demands that do not relate to this specific dislocation. But if it somehow distances itself from the literality of original dislocation, it can also represent some other dislocations and demands. Thus, the equivalential chain, consisted through the articulation of different social demands, can be extended insofar as the literality of original dislocation is not dominant.

However, a discourse cannot be constituted only through the equivalential articulation of different particular social demands. As Laclau (2005a: 93) states, “equivalential relations would not go beyond a vague feeling of solidarity if they did not crystallize in a certain discursive identity which no longer represents democratic demands *as* equivalent, but the equivalential relation as such”. Thus, although equivalential articulation of different demands provide the infrastructure, it is not sufficient for the constitution of a social movement. The plurality of links constituted through the equivalential articulation should be turned into a singularity through the constitution of a collective identity. Only with the constitution of a collective identity can a social movement be fully constituted. More precisely, it is only after the constitution of a collective identity that people engage in collective action (Gamson, 1992; Melucci, 1995b) because it is through the collective identity, or the common language, “a network of *active relationships*” (Melucci, 1996) between different actors are constituted. The forms of organizations, leadership, action forms are all developed within that common language, that is, within the discourse of the movement.

The constitution of a collective identity, on the other hand, requires the condensation of particular demands around some signifiers which represent the equivalential chain as a totality. That is, one particular demand within the equivalential chain acquires a centrality through embodying the totality of the demands. In this way, the totality is represented by one particular differential element. It is only through this hegemonic operation the differential demands that have equivalential links are crystallized around a common denominator, and it is only through that moment of crystallization that a movement as a collective agent comes into being. In this way, as stated by Laclau (2005a: 93):

[w]hat was simply a mediation between demands now acquires a consistency of its own. Although the link was originally ancillary to the demands, it now reacts over

them and, through an inversion of the relationships, starts behaving as their ground.

The particular demand that represents the totality becomes internally split because it, on the one hand, is a particular demand, but on the other hand, represents the totality, that is, “signify something quite different from itself” (Laclau, 2005a: 95). This is also true for the other particularities in the totality, they refer both to their particularities and to what the totality as a whole signifies. As Laclau (2005a) points out this situation creates a tension and therefore has some important consequences for political struggles: if a demand is a weak one, it will be more dependent for its formulation on the equivalential articulation, but on the contrary if it is strong, it will be less dependent on the articulation of others. When a demand is less dependent on the other demands, this may eventually result in the disintegration of the equivalential chain.

Thus, the particular demand that represents the totality turns into a signifier of the whole, and in this way, a collective identity is formed around this central signifier. This signifier will dispossess itself from its original particularistic content as the chain of equivalence that it represents expands. This is because its particularism will be subordinated to its second function of signifying the equivalential chain as a totality (Laclau, 2005a: 99). As a result, the collective identity will function as an ‘empty signifier’. With the production of empty signifiers multiplicity of heterogeneous demands will be unified in an equivalential chain. As it is stressed by Laclau (2005a: 96), it is highly important “not to confuse *emptiness* with *abstraction*”. The empty signifier, or the particular element that signifies the totality, does not refer to any abstract common feature that is shared by all the particular links in the equivalential chain (Laclau, 2005a). As we have seen, an equivalential relation does not refer to the positive features of particular demands but only to the fact that they are all unfulfilled. Signifying the whole equivalential chain, the empty signifier in fact signifies the fullness which is absent due to the unfulfilled character of all demands. It is precisely for this reason that this particular signifier is ‘empty’ in the strictest sense of the term.

On the other hand, although the particularity of different demands are maintained in the equivalential chain, when the chain as a whole develops a logic of its own that can result in the “sacrifice or betrayal of the aims of individual links” as well (Laclau, 2005a: 139). Moreover, a demand cannot be integrated into an equivalential chain if it clashes with the other particularities in the chain. In that case, equivalential chain becomes opposed not only to the antagonistic force but also to some others that cannot be included into the

space of representation. The opposition of the two to the equivalential chain, however, is different because the opposition of the antagonistic force, as a negativity, makes the existence of the equivalential chain possible, whereas the opposition of those who do not have any access to the space of representation does not shape the identity of the inside. The latter refers to simply leaving something aside (Laclau, 2005a).

As it has been mentioned before there will always be a competition between different myths, or more precisely between different hegemonic projects. The same demands a movement articulates might also be articulated by rival hegemonic projects which propose alternative equivalential chains to that of the movement. The rival parties, in fact, attempt to interrupt the equivalential chain of the movement through including the same demands to their equivalential chain. As a result of this, “the *same* democratic demands receive the structural pressure of rival hegemonic projects” and this leads to an indetermination in their meaning (Laclau, 2005a: 131). These signifiers refer to what Laclau (2005a: 131) calls “floating signifiers” just because their meaning is not fixed in an equivalential chain but indeterminate between alternative equivalential chains.

Both the hegemonic efforts of the rival parties and the attempts of movements to expand their discourses will lead to destabilization and displacement of the political frontiers instituted in the discourse of movements. This is so because both with the rival parties’ interruption of the equivalential chain, and with the incorporation of some new demands into the equivalential chain, a new totality, a new space of representation, will be constituted through the construction of a new frontier. Thus, the boundaries of a discourse and its equivalential components permanently fluctuate. In other words, hegemonic strategies of social movements are constantly reformulated both to expand mobilization and to compete with rival hegemonic projects. In fact, not only antagonistic forces but the whole outside of social movements might be influential on their hegemonic strategies since social movements strategically interact not only with antagonistic forces but also with a variety of other actors. As della Porta and Diani (1999: 207) state, social movements enter into relations with other actors on “both specific issues and the more general one of the right of protest”. That is, they can form coalitions with other actors not merely on the issues they advance but on the issue of ‘civil rights’ (della Porta and Diani, 1999: 208).

Concerning the formation of coalitions and alliances it should be noted that unlike social movement theory, discourse theory does not regard allies as the outsiders. Almost all

social movement approaches conceive alliances and coalitions as constructed for getting the support of the outsider but powerful groups. In contrast, from the perspective of discourse theory, they are insiders because the construction of alliances does not entail establishing alliance between given interests but rather entails the modification of the identity of forces that engage in alliance. As we have seen, both the 'logic of difference' and 'logic of equivalence' categories enable us to account for the construction of alliances and coalitions between different social actors since they indicate how different particular demands can be inscribed into a common discourse. The conception of social movement theory on coalitions and alliances can be employed only in accounting for short term coalitions and alliances that can be established between social movements and other actors on specific issues at an instrumental level.

Moreover, as mentioned, the responses and reactions of the state considerably affect the strategies of a movement. Concerning the role of the state in a political struggle it must be stated at the outset that the role of the state changes depending on the struggle in question. The reaction of the state might be harsh if a movement aims at a major political change. In fact, being far from a monolithic entity, the role of the state in a political struggle might be ambivalent. This is to say that different state agencies may give different responses to a struggle. As a result, state may become simultaneously target, supporter, and antagonist for social movements (Jenkins and Klandermans, 1995). Put it differently, a social movement might simultaneously work with and oppose the state. In any case, however, social movements come into contact with the state because, for maintaining public order the state reacts to the protests activities of movements through its apparatus of the social control, and thereby limits the resources for collective action (Tilly 1978; Tilly, 1990; Jenkins and Klandermans, 1995; della Porta 1995; della Porta 1996; Melucci, 1996). As della Porta (1995: 56-7) emphasizes, the way that the state tries to control protest is influenced both by some institutional factors "such as police organization, the nature of the judiciary, law codes, and constitutional rights" and through the interactions between protestors and the police, that is, movement and the state. Besides policing the protests, states can directly "launch countermovements", tacitly help to the formation of some countermovements, or support already constituted ones in order to control and curb the movements that challenge state power (Garner, 1996: 397).

After their emergence, social movements engage in a number conventional and unconventional form of action with the aim of both increasing their public visibility and

thereby increasing their support, and voicing their claims to the authorities. As mentioned before, the actions movements deploy are part of their discourse. Or more precisely, actions of movements, like subjects and objects, are also shaped in and through their discourses. As Laclau remarks (1990: 185), “[t]he primary and constitutive character of the discursive is.....the condition of any practice”. Therefore, the examination of the practices of movements requires considering the discourse that give rise to it. This means that the practices of a social movement do not refer to a different level of analysis from its discourse. This is quite the contrary to the usual practice of examining social movements that are conducted from the perspective of social movement theory which make a distinction between ‘frames’ or ‘discourses’ and ‘actions’ of movements.

The actions movements engage in are very important because it is through these actions they try to send several messages to different audiences in the field of the struggle, such as opponents, news media, the greater public, and state agencies. With regard to opponents, movements attempt to convey the message that they are highly determined and powerful enough, even more powerful than opponents, to effect changes they want. As to the news media, they seek for a sympathetic media coverage that would, in turn, might increase public awareness, sympathy and support. As McAdam (1996b) points out, the media can become a key vehicle for movements in mobilizing the support of the greater public and in influencing authorities through that support. Concerning state agencies, on the other hand, movements hope not only to change policies but also to limit the control options of state actors and thereby to avoid repression (Goodwin and Jasper, 2003).

All the actions of movements possess a strategic dimension because they involve “a choice of means and interlocutors, as well as the calculation of the effects on the public and the costs and benefits of the action” (Melucci, 1996: 379). According to Tilly (2004: 4), through the actions they take protestors attempt to display ‘worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment’ through different ways. Movements can display worthiness through “sober demeanor; neat clothing; presence of clergy; dignitaries, and mothers with children”, unity through “matching badges, headbands, banners, or costumes; marching in ranks; singing and chanting”, numbers through “headcounts, signatures on petitions, messages from constituents, filling streets”, and commitment through “braving bad weather; visible participation by the old and handicapped; resistance to repression; ostentatious sacrifice, subscription, and/or benefaction”.

Movements might engage in conventional as well as unconventional or noninstitutionalized forms of collective actions. Conventional collective action refers to those forms of collective action that are legalized such as strikes and legal demonstrations. They are highly used by movements because of the low risks they carry (Tarrow, 1998). Unconventional actions, on the other hand, refer to both disruptive direct action and violent action. The former includes “marches, demonstrations, petitions, sit-ins, picket lines, boycotts, wildcat strikes, refusal to pay taxes, draft evasions, acts of civil disobedience, and other such phenomena of noninstitutional confrontation with authorities” (Melucci, 1996: 378). The difference of disruptive forms of action from the violent action is that they are not violent but pose a threat of violence. They are considered as the “strongest weapon of social movements” for they “give weak actors leverage against powerful opponents” (Tarrow, 1998: 98). The difference of direct action from normal political action is that it “involves to some extent a transgression of the rules of the political game and of social norms” (Melucci, 1996: 378). Its logic is explained by Tarrow (1998: 96) in the following way:

First, it is the concrete performance of a movement’s determination. By sitting, standing, or moving together aggressively in public space, demonstrators signal their identity and reinforce their solidarity. At the same time, disruption obstructs the routine activities of opponents, bystanders, or authorities and forces them to attend to protestors’ demands. Finally, disruption broadens the circle of conflict. By blocking traffic or interrupting public business, protestors inconvenience bystanders, pose a risk to law and order, and draw authorities into a private conflict.

Although the ‘repertoire of action’ in a society at a given time determines, to a great extent, the forms of actions a movement might employ (Tilly, 1978), movements can also be innovative in their actions making some modifications on them (McAdam, 1982). In any way, however, movements articulate them in a new way, and therefore, they, be it innovative or not acquire new meanings in the discourse of movements.

Having explained the later phase of the mobilization of movements, the study now turns to focus on the consequences and impacts of the social movements, which is, as it has been pointed out by movement scholars (Burstein et al., 1995; Kriesi et al. 1995; Giugni, 1998, 1999; Tarrow, 1999; Tilly, 1999; Cress and Snow, 2000), one of the underdeveloped areas in the social movement literature.



#### 4.1.2.4. The Consequences of Movements

From the discourse-theoretical perspective in accounting for the consequences of social movements we must focus on the whole process of the hegemonic struggle considering both agency-related factors which include not only the discourses of movements but also those of the antagonistic forces, and the structural factors, which prepare the ground for the emergence of political actors, and also inform the discourses constituted by these actors. This process can produce the intended outcomes of movements as well as some other consequences that are not intended by movements.

This is quite different from what some social movement approaches postulate as important in the analysis of the consequences of movements. Particularly, the early social movement studies on the impact, or consequences, of social movements fail to consider the broader picture and focus only on some variables that would supposedly bring success to movements. The number of variables they have identified varies from movements' goals, organizations, resources, strategies (Piven and Cloward, 1977; Gamson, 1990) to the political environment (Goldstone, 1980; Kitschelt, 1986)<sup>55</sup>. The shortcomings of the early studies have been pointed out by several recent studies (Guigni, 1998; Amenta and Young, 1999; Guigni, 1999; Cress and Snow, 2000). One primary difficulty in the early studies is that they focus either on structural or agency-related factors. The effects of movements, however, are the products of both of these factors (Tarrow, 1999; Giugni, 1999). Second, in their account of agency-related factors, they consider only the strategies of movements that are in fact highly influenced by the strategies of the other parties to the struggle. In other words, they fail to consider the interactions between different actors involved in the struggle that are influential on the consequences of the movements (Burstein et al., 1995; Tilly, 1999). Third, they attempt to determine the extent to which movements produce their intended outcomes, in other words, the degree of the success of movements. Movements, however, do not produce only intended outcomes but also unintended ones (Amenta and Young, 1999; Giugni, 1999; Tilly, 1999). The effect of the unintended outcomes might even be greater than the

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<sup>55</sup> Although none of these authors exclusively focused either on organizational or on environmental factors, they nevertheless, prioritized one over the other. For instance, both Gamson (1990) and Piven and Cloward (1977) acknowledged the importance of the environmental factors over the movement success, but they primarily dealt with the effects of some organizational variables such as the use of disruptive forms of action.

effect of their intended outcomes (Tilly, 1999). Finally, and most importantly, they search for general causes for movement success or failure (Giugni, 1999), such as the effectiveness of some forms of action or the role of some other organizational variables (Piven and Cloward, 1977; Gamson, 1990), and the role of political opportunity structures (Kitschelt, 1986). In fact, the role all these factors play in producing outcomes change depending on the specific cases in question. Instead of attempting to identify some general factors independent from time and space, therefore, we should focus on historical and contingent conditions that shape not only the emergence and development of movements but also the outcomes they produce.

Social movements can produce a number of effects both on the broad structures and on the lives of their participants. This is true even if they cannot attain their ultimate ends. Although the specific outcomes and consequences of movements change from case to case, we, nevertheless, can outline some possible broad consequences of movements. The consequences movements produce depend on the extent to which they become hegemonic in a social space. Here, it is extremely important whether they aim to structure a minor social space or broader social spaces, that is, whether their degree of populism is low or high. In the case of the former even if they become hegemonic, their influence will be limited with the minor social space in which they operate, but on the contrary, in the case of the latter when they become hegemonic they will transform the whole society.

As to the question of to what extent a movement can become hegemonic, drawing on the arguments of Laclau (2005a:175-199), some possibilities will be noted. If movements emerge in a largely structured system, that is, where dislocation is minimal, the possibility of constituting equivalential chains will be highly limited. As a result, movements will not be able to expand themselves and will have only a marginal position. In this case either the dominant system articulates the few unfulfilled demands that the movement articulates in a way to neutralize and to make them absorbable within the existing system, and thereby to prevent the formation of opposition to the system, or these demands remain unfulfilled in the existing system<sup>56</sup>. If, on the other hand,

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<sup>56</sup> The neutralization and absorption of the unfulfilled demands of some groups by the dominant system refers to what Gramsci called transformism (Mouffe, 1979). Distinguishing between an expansive form of hegemony and transformism, Gramsci argues that the latter involves the integration of the masses through “a system of absorption and neutralization of their interests in such a way as to prevent them from opposing those of the hegemonic class”, whereas the former

movements emerge in a less, but still structured system, where dislocation influences relatively more people, the movement's ability of forming equivalential chains, and establishing its hegemony, will be higher. However, movement here will be in an ambiguous position for it will try to subvert the system while at the same time being, to some degree, integrated into it. But, if movements emerge in a system in which dislocation is very deep, and therefore, it is in need of total restructuration, the possibility of reconstructing it by movements will be the highest, that is, the possibility of establishing hegemony for movements will be very high.

All these, however, refer to the possible structural potentials. Whether these potentials can be actualized, and to what extent they can be actualized, as it has been explained in this chapter so far, depends on the historical and contingent conditions that influence the movements themselves and the struggle between them and various antagonistic forces.

The theoretical framework outlined so far will inform this study's reading of the Bergama movement to which the following part of the study is devoted. As it has been attempted to indicate in this chapter, there are certain merits of the discourse theory over the mainstream social movement approaches, and therefore it has much to offer to movement analysis. The value of them for movement analysis, in fact, will be clearer in the following part of the study through the analysis of the Bergama movement.

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consists in "the creation of an active, direct consensus resulting from the genuine adoption of interests of the popular classes by the hegemonic class" (Mouffe, 1979: 182).

## CHAPTER 5

### PUTTING THE NEW FRAMEWORK INTO THE PRACTICE: THE ANALYSIS OF THE ‘BERGAMA MOVEMENT’

In the 1990s, Turkey experienced the mobilizations of some social groups through the protest campaigns against the operations of the gold-mining multinational companies. While some of these campaigns, like the one against ‘Preussag’ in Küçükdere-Havran district in Balıkesir province, remained largely local, resembling more of NIMBY-type politics<sup>57</sup>, and achieved its ultimate end within a short time, the one that was waged against the mining activities of ‘Eurogold’ company in Bergama town of İzmir province has gone beyond a local opposition to a mining company, gained a national, and even international, popularity, support and importance, and could not achieve its ultimate end. A number of different social groups, who have different positions, demands, hopes, and aspirations, have been involved in the Bergama protest movement either thoroughly identifying with the ‘anti-goldmining discourse’ the movement constructed, or providing short-term support to the movement. Besides being one of the most, if not the most, peaceful protest movements, the Bergama movement has also become one of the longest-running movements in Turkey since emerging in the early 1990s and continuing to the present.

This chapter is designed as an introductory chapter to the analysis of the Bergama movement. It will first provide a critical assessment of the existing studies on Bergama movement. Then, it will highlight the methodological considerations of the study by means of giving the data collection techniques that were employed in collecting data on Bergama movement on the one hand, and clarifying the method that will be used in analyzing the empirical data on the other hand. In elaborating the way through which the empirical data will be analyzed, the design of the study concerning the analysis of the Bergama movement will also be outlined.

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<sup>57</sup> NIMBY, which is an acronym of ‘Not In My Back Yard’, type of struggles refers to those struggles in which local residents of an area oppose a development concerning their local area. It is a very specific struggle in that its participants do not oppose similar developments in other areas.

### **5.1. A Review of the Existing Studies on Bergama Movement**

Bergama movement has been studied by different authors from different perspectives (see, Öncü and Koçan, 2001; Arsel, 2003; Çoban, 2004; Arsel, 2005a) Notwithstanding their invaluable insights, the existing studies on Bergama movement have some difficulties in providing a satisfactory account of the movement concerning particularly the emergence of the movement, the constituents of the movement, and the overall character the movement has taken. In their attempt to explain the emergence of the movement, these studies heavily rely on ‘objective conditions’, reducing the emergence of the movement to some ‘objectively existing’ conditions. Accordingly, they regard either the operation of the gold mine in Bergama, or some incidents that the activities of Eurogold in the site caused such as the pollution of local water supplies during the exploratory drilling, or the clearing of the mine site by the company by cutting thousands of trees, as directly precipitated the emergence of the movement. In this way, they consider the mining project as having an inherent meaning in itself and as such inherently a problem for the residents of the area. Another weakness in these studies pertains to their account of the constituents of the movement. Prioritizing some singular elements of the movement, they tend to view the movement as emerged and developed around specific demands of a social group in the local context. More specifically, the peasants of the Bergama area are seen in these studies as the only constituents of the movement, and the demands of the peasants are the only demands voiced by the movement. Due to their almost exclusive focus on the peasants as the only constituents of the Bergama movement, they fail to see that the movement in fact emerged and developed through the constitution and articulation of the demands of some other groups. As it will be indicated later, although the Bergama movement is popularly known as the movement of the Bergama peasants, it in fact expressed not only the demands of the peasants but also some other groups, such as environmentalists, professionals, and politicians. Besides, a number of actors established short-term alliances with the Bergama protestors. The Bergama movement, therefore, cannot be understood focusing only on peasants, although they have been the most visible actors of the movement. This point is critical in grasping Bergama case because it explains both the differences of Bergama movement from NIMBY-type of politics, and why Bergama movement has gone beyond a purely particular struggle.

Arguing that there is ‘symbiotic relationship’ between environment and community, on the one hand, and between state and capital, on the other, Çoban (2004) argues that

Bergama movement can be seen as a challenge to the latter. Although he is right in considering the Bergama movement as a challenge to the politics of the state, his contention of the existence of two symbioses, and his related account of the emergence of the movement is problematic. With his argument of the existence of two symbioses, he supposes that there is an essential relationship between environment and community, and between state and capital. As such, he argues that states, ignoring the demands of communities, always back corporations, and communities immediately start a resistance whenever they perceive a threat to environment because the environmental threat is also conceived by them as a threat to community's way of life. Both of these arguments are problematic because the existence of alleged symbioses is, in fact, related with existing structural arrangements. This is to say that they are subject to construction and reconstruction, and therefore, they are not always existent. The relation between state and capital, for instance, is peculiar to capitalist social formations, and as such, it cannot be claimed that states always necessarily support corporations. Similarly, it cannot be claimed that communities necessarily resist environmental degradation, or that they perceive operations of companies as a direct threat to environment. As it will be indicated in the next chapter, the resistance of community in Bergama case did not directly emerge because Bergama peasants did not directly conceive the mining project as a threat to environment and to their way of life. Rather, mining project was constituted as a threat both to environment and to community in and through the resistance discourse. Moreover, due to his lack of attention to the other social groups, Çoban's account of the Bergama movement does not tell us anything about the involvement of other groups to Bergama movement, such as environmentalists, professionals, academics, and politicians.

Unlike Çoban, Arsel (2003; 2005a) argues that different demands are articulated within the discourse of the Bergama movement, such as environmental demand, and demands for political reform, better rules and regulations, and accountability. However, like Çoban, he predominantly focuses on peasants, and regards all these demands as constructed by peasants. Moreover, despite his emphasis on the articulation of different demands by the Bergama movement, he argues that the movement mainly employed the discourse of 'environmental risk'. As such, he claims that the Bergama movement posed an 'environmental critique' to the 'development policies' of the Turkish state. Surely it cannot be denied that Bergama movement posed an environmental critique, but both the claim that the movement is characterized by an 'environmental critique', and the

contention that this critique is directed to the ‘development’ policies of the Turkish state are questionable. As it will be revealed in this study, environmental critique and related demands are not the only ones articulated by the Bergama movement. Moreover, such a critique is directed not to the ‘development’ policies of the Turkish state in itself, but to the shape these policies have taken in the last two decades under the influence of neo-liberal principles. On the other hand, although Arsel (2005a) states that he does not see the emergence of the movement as an inevitable response to structural conditions, he nevertheless fails to provide a satisfactory account of the emergence of the movement. In fact, in explaining the mobilization of the peasants, he relies on the pollution of local water supplies caused by exploratory drilling, the damages in the houses of peasants caused by explosions within the mining site, and the cutting of trees in the mining site by the company, considering them as the direct causes of the opposition of the peasants to the mining company (Arsel, 2005a: 267). In addition, he mentions the failure of the company to communicate with the local people, and the importance of the leadership of a local politician, as the two important factors in the emergence of the movement. However, besides still relying on objective conditions in explaining the emergence of the movement, there is a lack of empirical validity in some of these claims. The peasants had decided to oppose to the mining project well before the mining company cut the trees in the mining site. As it will be explained in the following chapters in more details, the clearance of the mining site just triggered them to engage in direct action against the mining project.

Similarly, analyzing the case from an objectivist perspective, Öncü and Koçan (2001) believe that the Bergama movement emerged as a direct response of the peasants to the activities of the mining company in the Bergama area. On the basis of the legal struggle that Bergama protestors started in 1994, Öncü and Koçan (2001: 38) argue that Bergama movement ‘is primarily a mobilization for exercising civil and political rights granted in the Constitution’. In other words, they consider it as ‘a democratic citizenship movement’ for the effective use of constitutional rights. Although Öncü and Koçan (2001) raise some important points concerning the movement, such as the influence of the broader logic of market on the movement, they, like Çoban and Arsel, prioritize some elements in the Bergama movement to the neglect of others. Largely focusing on Bergama peasants and the legal actions of the movement actors, they ignore not only the other constituents of the movement but also the other forms of actions adopted by the movement actors.

The discursive analysis of the Bergama movement will go beyond the limits marking the existing studies on the Bergama movement. Unlike the above-mentioned studies on Bergama movement, the discursive analysis of the movement does not rely on ‘objective conditions’ to explain its emergence. Moreover, besides taking into account all the actors involved in the movement, and all the demands articulated in the discourse of the movement, it also considers the opponents of the movement and their discourse, and thereby provides a more comprehensive account of the ‘hegemonic struggle’ between these parties. Highlighting the methodology of the study, the following section will make it clearer how a discursive analysis of the Bergama movement would differ from these studies that rely on more conventional perspectives.

## **5. 2. Methodology of the Study**

Before giving the methodological considerations of this study, it should be stated that discourse theory criticizes and rejects conventional perception of ‘method’ and the assumptions on the grounds of which they are developed. From the discourse-theoretical perspective, method is not conceived as a neutral tool for the objective investigation of social phenomena nor is it seen as “a procedure for testing theoretical claims” (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005: 98). Accordingly, the researcher is not seen as a neutral outsider, but as always anchored in some discourses. Therefore, it is an impossibility to produce a research that is not affected by the researcher’s choices and preferences.

The rejection of traditional approaches, however, does not mean that discourse theory disregards methodological considerations concerning the data collection and analysis that are important for any social research (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005). With regard to the former, discourse analysis in fact does not much differ from other approaches. Therefore, a discourse analyst can employ different available data collection techniques as long as they generate data that serve to her/his research interests. However, as to the analysis of the data, discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe highly differs from the other research approaches, including even the other types of discourse analysis (Hansen and Sorensen, 2005). In what follows, first the data collection techniques that are employed in this study will be given, and then, the issue of analysis of data from discourse-theoretical perspective will be handled.



### 5.2.1. The Collection of Empirical Data

The analysis of the Bergama movement within the framework of the discourse theory requires the collection of qualitative data using qualitative data collection methods. Therefore, the empirical data of the study was collected using documents, observation, and in-depth interviews. In addition to these primary sources of data, a number of secondary sources were also used.

Data collection process was started with an extensive reading of the secondary sources and some documents, followed by interviews in the field (July 2004), and an observation conducted in the field (May 2005), and finalized by an extensive reading of nine national newspapers, and two local newspapers, and some other documents. The secondary sources used in the initial phase of the research were two books, *Biz Toprağı Bilirik* by Üstün Reinhart (2003), and *Alman vakıfları: Bergama dosyası* by Necip Hablemitoğlu (2003), an unpublished academic thesis on the issue, “Spill over effect of environmental consciousness: The Bergama environmental movement in Turkey” (Gezgör, 2001), and a number of articles.

The documentary sources of the study include newspaper reports on Bergama movement, the documents of the mining company, the documents of the protesters, and the documents concerning the litigation process. The newspaper reports consist of the news on Bergama movement that appeared on eight national daily newspapers between 1990 and 2005, *Milliyet*, *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Zaman*, *Yeni Yüzyıl*, *Türkiye* and *Radikal*, and two local newspapers, *Gazete Ege* and *Yeni Asır*. The newspaper reports that appeared between 1990 and 1999 were taken from the personal archive of Sefa Taşkın, the mayor of Bergama from 1989 to 1999. Those that appeared between 1999 and 2005 were obtained through the search of the on-line issues of the same newspapers, except *Yeni Yüzyıl* and *Gazete Ege*. In addition to these newspapers the news that appeared in *Turkish Daily News* between 1996 and 2005 were also searched through the on-line issues of the newspaper. The documents of the mining company include newspaper ads of the company, 9 issues of a bulletin, *Ovacık bulletin*, published by the company between March 2000 and March 2003, and all the documents that take place in the website of the company, [www.ovacik-altin.com](http://www.ovacik-altin.com). The documents of the protesters, on the other hand, include the documents in the websites of the protesters, [www.geocites.com/siyanurlealtin](http://www.geocites.com/siyanurlealtin), the books and articles written by some of the protesters, *Ağzımı Hayır’a Açtığım Anılarım* by Senih Özay (2006), *Siyanürcü Ahtapot*

by Sefa Taşkın (1998), and a number of article by Arif Ali Cangı, and Noyan Özkan, the reports that are prepared by the protesters on goldmining and its impact on environment, namely *Bergama-Ovacık altın işletmesi girişimi konusunda TUBITAK- YDABCAG uzmanlar komisyonu raporu eleştirisi* prepared by TMMOB (2003); and *Türk Tabipler Birliği Bergama Raporu* (2001), the bulletins of professional organizations, the documents on Bergama issue in the websites of professional organizations, and the reports of a number of panels, symposium, and seminars on the issue. In addition to these documents, the documents concerning the legal cases between the protesters and various state agencies, and the case that brought to the European Court of Human Rights were also examined.

The interviews, which were conducted in the field by the author of the study on a field visit between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of July in 2004 and on 7<sup>th</sup> of May 2005, were semi-structured, in-depth interviews. In the selection of the sample of the interviewees among the protesters<sup>58</sup>, the particular attention was given to the representativeness of those who were interviewed. Employing the strategy of ‘judgement sampling’ (McIntyre, 2005), the most active organic intellectuals and the most active peasants from the most active villages were chosen to interview. As a non-probability sampling, the judgement sampling, also called purposive sampling, rests on the judgement of the researcher, and ‘makes sense when the researcher has a great deal of knowledge about the population of interest’ (McIntyre, 2005: 105). The readings made by the researcher before selecting the sample were of great help in identifying the most representative organic intellectuals. The selection of the peasant protesters, on the other hand, was based on the judgements of the organic intellectuals. While some of these interviews, those with the organic intellectuals of the movement, were conducted one-by-one, some others, those with the peasants, were conducted with a focus group. The interviewed organic intellectuals were *Sefa Taşkın*, *Senih Özay*, *Arif Ali Cangı*, *Ahmet Soysal*, and *Oktay Konyar*. Except the interview with Oktay Konyar, which was conducted in a cafe, all the interviews with the organic intellectuals took place in their offices. The focus group interviews were conducted in *Çamköy*, *Tepeköy*, and *Narlıca* with peasants from these villages. While the peasants from *Çamköy* consisted of female protesters, peasants from *Tepeköy* and *Narlıca* composed of male protesters. The interviews with the peasants were conducted in village public coffee houses. In the interviews, the respondents were asked to tell the

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<sup>58</sup> In spite of the repeated attempts of the author of the study, the company authorities postponed the interview dates several times that it became not possible to interview with them.

whole Bergama story from the beginning to end. The researcher intervened into the story-telling particularly to understand why the protesters had engaged in this struggle, to what and to whom they had been opposing, how they had defined those that they oppose, what they had been expecting from this struggle, and what they had thought about the consequences of the struggle. In addition, some specific questions were directed to organic intellectuals concerning the special contribution of each of them to the movement, such as questions about ‘direct action’ to Oktay Konyar, about legal struggle and litigation process to Senih Özay and Arif Ali Cangı, and about the emergence of the movement to Sefa Taşkın. All the interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the interviewed.

The observation, on the other hand, is conducted by the author in the field. It consisted of an observation of a protest event, that is, a meeting of the protesters and a march to the mining site, that took place in Çamköy village on 7<sup>th</sup> of May 2005 with the participation of some professional groups, environmentalists, local politicians, and peasants. The protest event was video-recorded with the permission of the protesters.

### **5.2.2. A Discursive Reading of the Bergama Movement**

The analysis of the data collected on Bergama movement will be conducted through the use of discourse analytical tools. The discourse analysis, however, that will be applied to the Bergama movement from the perspective of the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe differs from other forms of discourse analysis offered by other discourse analytical perspectives<sup>59</sup>. While it is seen as a mere method for data analysis by some discursive approaches, for the discourse theory it is not just a method but a theoretical

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<sup>59</sup> Other conceptions of discourse and discourse analysis include ‘social linguistic analysis’, ‘archaeological and genealogical analysis’, ‘discursive psychology’, and ‘critical discourse analysis’. Social linguistic analysis, includes literary analysis, rhetoretical analysis, and micro discourse analysis, focuses on individual texts and aims at providing insights into “its organization and construction” and also understanding “how texts work to organize and construct other phenomena” through a close reading of the text (Phillips and Hardy, 2002: 22). Archeological and genealogical analysis, put forward by Foucault, concerned with understanding the conditions of possibility of knowledge, that is, the rules that determine the emergence of particular discourses at particular times, and discourses as determined by and constitutive of power relations, respectively. Discursive psychology focuses on “the ways in which people’s selves, thoughts and emotions are formed and transformed through social interaction” and their social consequences (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002: 7). Finally, critical discourse analysis, developed by Norman Fairclough, stresses the role of discourse in the construction of the social world particularly focusing on the role of discursive activity, which is just one among other social practices, in constituting and sustaining unequal power relations (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002; Phillips and Hardy, 2002).

and methodological whole (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). In other words, discourse theory does not consist only of some theoretical concepts but also offers a methodology for the analysis of social phenomena. As it has been detailed in the preceding two chapters, discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe has been developed on the grounds of an anti-essentialist ontology and anti-foundationalist epistemology. These meta-theoretical assumptions underpin not only the theoretical concepts of discourse theory but also its methodological precepts.

As explained before, in contrast with those who use the term discourse as a synonym of text, or speech, discourse-theoretical perspective sees it as co-extensive with the social. That is, the social is conceptualized by the discourse theory as a discursive construction. From the perspective of the discourse theory, therefore, ‘discourse analysis’ is concerned with understanding the processes of the construction of a discourse, that is, the constitution of the social. It tries to understand the ways in which the social is constituted through hegemonic practices of articulation, which partially fix meanings and identities inscribing them in a differential system of a certain discourse. Thus, the main concern of discourse analysis from the perspective of the discourse theory is not what people say and write but the processes of the construction of the social through the political, i.e., hegemony.

In conducting discourse analysis from the discourse-theoretical perspective, it is important to distinguish between social and political logics (Howarth, 2005). Social logics refer to “historically specific systems of sedimented practice”, whereas political logics refer to “special kinds of practice that *constitute* and *contest* these social logics” (Howarth, 2005: 323). Although, discourse analysis mainly focuses on political logic, it also concerns with understanding social logic. Adopting an anti-essentialist and anti-foundationalist stance, discourse analysis relies neither on ‘objective structural conditions’ nor on ‘subjective practices’ in its attempt to explain political logics. Rather, it starts with examining social logics, which, failing to confer stable meanings and identities, force the subject to take actions, and thereby provide the ‘conditions of possibility’ for the constitution of new discourses.

In analyzing the political institution of the social, discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe focuses on the ways through which a discourse is constituted. More precisely, it tries to understand the constitution of boundaries of a discourse and those elements that are placed beyond these boundaries, or what amounts to the same, the construction of social

antagonisms. In this sense, that is, in its focus on the limits of a discourse, discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe can be seen as a deconstructive approach. This is because ‘deconstruction’ is a practice of reading which aims at showing the limits of a text through identifying the impossible points of closure in the text (Howarth, 1998). Through a deconstructive reading, then, it becomes possible to understand the constitution of a hegemonic formation since it reveals the mechanisms through which it is built. In Laclau’s words:

As ‘hegemony’ is a theory of the decision taken in an undecidable terrain, and ‘deconstruction’ is a theory of the ‘undecidables’ -supplementarity, re-marking, iteration, etc. – one can say that deconstruction provides the ontological tools making it possible to grasp the working of hegemonic logics. It is in this precise sense that ours can be considered a deconstructive approach (Laclau, 1999: 99).

Bearing all these points in mind, the main objective of the analysis of the data collected on Bergama movement will be to understand the hegemonic struggle that the protesters engaged in through the construction of the protest discourse, which as noted before, is called in this study anti-goldmining discourse. In other words, this study will try to understand the ‘political logic’ of the Bergama movement that challenges and contests the existing social logics in the Turkish context. To this end, the analysis will start with a brief examination of the logics of the existing structures in the Turkish context. That is, it will first center on the ‘structural conditions’ that provide the ‘conditions of possibility’ of the Bergama movement. In line with its non-objectivist stance, however, the study will not consider structures as directly leading to the emergence of the movement, but rather it will attempt to indicate how the failure of existing structures in fulfilling some social demands led to the dislocations and thereby made the conditions propitious for the emergence of the Bergama movement.

Then, it will be focused upon the ‘mobilization’ process, that is, the emergence and development of the Bergama movement through the constitution of the anti-goldmining discourse as a particular response to the structural conditions. In other words, the political logic of the Bergama movement will be scrutinized particularly focusing on the establishment of antagonisms. In the examination of the hegemonic battle that the Bergama movement engaged in, the rival party, or parties, will also be taken into account. In other words, although the analytic attention will be mainly focused on the constitution of anti-mining discourse and formation of an anti-mining bloc, the constitution of a pro-mining discourse and formation of a pro-mining bloc will also be considered.

Having explained the ways through which the empirical data collected, and highlighted the method of the analysis of the study, the study can now turn to the analysis of the empirical data. As mentioned, it will start with the examination of the structural conditions that provide the conditions of possibility for the emergence of the Bergama movement.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **UNDERSTANDING THE CONDITIONS OF POSSIBILITY OF THE BERGAMA MOVEMENT: THE LIBERALIZATION OF THE TURKISH ECONOMY THROUGH AUTHORITARIAN POLITICS**

The Bergama movement emerged in the period which was marked by the increasing hegemony of neo-liberalism in Turkey. The economic liberalization, however, was not being accompanied by political liberalization. On the contrary, an ‘authoritarian’ style of governing society that was considerably intolerant to the expression of dissent prevailed. Both the increasing hegemony of neo-liberalism and the structure of the Turkish state and Turkish politics have been highly influential on the constitution of the Bergama movement and on the hegemonic battle that it engaged in. This is not to say that these structures provided some ‘positive’ and ‘objective’ causes for the emergence of the movement, but rather their particular logic prepared the ground for the emergence of the movement through prioritizing some interests on the basis of excluding some other interests and some social demands. The Bergama movement emerged through the constitution of an anti-goldmining discourse which, as it will be explained in the following chapters, in addition to opposing the specific gold mine in Bergama area, articulated some social demands against the rise of neo-liberalism, against the authoritarian structure of the Turkish state, and against the current structure of the Turkish politics. Put differently, the anti-mining discourse articulated some interests and some social demands that were excluded within the prevailing logic of the Turkish socio-political and economic structure. Therefore, unraveling the patterns of meaning that structure economy and state-society relations in Turkey, the examination of the logic of these broader structures will make possible a full account of the particular logic of the Bergama movement. Moreover, it will be possible with this examination to situate the movement within the broader socio-political context in which it emerged, unfolded, and weakened, and thereby, to grasp its particular meaning within the Turkish context. The examination of these broader structures is also necessary to come to a deeper understanding of the role that the mining company and the Turkish state played in the

Bergama struggle since they became highly influential in informing the responses and reactions of the gold-mining company to the Bergama movement, and the position that the Turkish state took in the hegemonic battle between the Bergama movement and the mining company.

The first section of this chapter will provide an account of the structure of the Turkish state and Turkish politics with a particular focus on the attitude of the Turkish state towards the expression of political opposition. After providing a very brief account of the historical background, it will particularly focus upon the structuring of the Turkish state and Turkish politics after 1980. Then, the second section will examine the structuring of the Turkish economy along the lines of the neo-liberal ideology since 1980. In both sections, without providing a detailed and comprehensive account of these structures, the study will highlight their particular logic with the aim of revealing how they leave some social demands outside of these structures, which would play one of the most critical roles in the emergence and consolidation of the Bergama movement.

### **6.1. The Structure of the Turkish State and Turkish Politics**

In the state-society relations, the Turkish state has always had a privilege over the society, though in different degrees. Since the very inception of the Turkish republic, the Turkish state has adopted an authoritarian style of governing society, instituting a relation of subordination between the state and society<sup>60</sup>. Although there have been

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<sup>60</sup> The state has been authoritarian in the sense of governing the society not through the popular participation but through the top-down imposition of decisions taken at the center according to the priorities of the limited number of state elites, most of whom are not subject to democratic accountability. It should be noted that what is referred to in this study with the authoritarian character of the state or authoritarian tradition of the state is to some extent different than those studies that argue that a 'strong state' that is 'isolated and autonomous vis-à-vis civil society', inherited from the Ottoman past, has existed in Turkey (Heper, 1992: 187). This view suggests an equal distance of the Turkish state to all social groups. However, although the Turkish state has been considerably aloof from the society, its relations with different social groups have been much more complicated than suggested by this view. While it has been highly repressive for some social groups throughout its history, such as Kurdish groups, Alevi people, and left-wing groups, it at times formed alliances with some other social groups, such as Turkish nationalists, Sunni groups, and commercial or industrial bourgeoisie. The Turkish state and the so-called civil society forces, therefore, are not always and essentially separate from each other. But it should also be noted that unlike those studies that assume a 'necessary' dependence of the state to different forms of bourgeoisie in all different periods of the Republic (Savran, 1987; Boratav, 2003; Öncü, 2003; Aydın, 2005a), the state is not envisaged in this study as necessarily and essentially the instrument of the interests of the bourgeoisie. Although the Turkish state has formed coalitions with both commercial and industrial bourgeoisie in different periods, and although it has increasingly been serving to the interests of the latter, this does not explain all the dimensions of



periods of democratic opening, besides being limited, all of them were followed by the tightening of the control of the state over the society. This is so because it has been the foremost aim of the state elites initially to create a strong state (Zurcher, 1999), and the ‘required’ society for this state, which would be a unified society without having any internal difference or cleavage, and later to protect it from the alleged ‘internal’ and ‘external’ enemies. While the emphasis on the unity of the society dispelled pluralism and toleration for differences, the goal of creating a strong state paved the way for the authoritarian rule leading to the prioritizing of the state over the society. Accordingly, the involvement of people in the politics has not been desired by the state elites and most of the decisions have been taken at the centre and imposed upon the society. Regarding and positioning themselves as the guardians, and even the ‘real’ owners of the state, state elites have tried to protect the state from those social demands that they considered as ‘threats’ both to their powers and to the state. Although the definition of ‘threat’ of the Turkish state has changed at different times, it can be said that it has been broad enough to cover many social demands. As such, the Turkish state elites have always had a deep suspicion about the politics. This is true not only for the non-institutionalized forms of politics but at times also for the institutionalized politics. However, while its intolerance to the non-institutionalized forms of politics has usually been expressed in a more direct and repressive manner through the use of force of the army and police, its intolerance to the institutionalized forms of politics has been expressed in different ways at different periods, at times through very direct forms, like military interventions, and at times structuring the socio-political space in a way to impose restrictions on political parties and to increase the control over them through delegating authority in some critical matters to state institutions. It should also be noted here, however, that it has not only been the bureaucratic state elites, but also the political elites who also adopted an authoritarian attitude to differing degrees.

Due to its authoritarian structure, the Turkish state has generally dealt with ‘opposition’ and ‘oppositional groups’, even including some oppositional political parties, in a more or less harsh manner. Conceiving oppositional groups as ‘enemies to be destroyed’, it has usually established an *antagonistic relation* with them (Mouffe, 2000), which is evident in its naming of the oppositional groups as ‘those who betray the country’, or as ‘those

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state-society relations in Turkey at different periods, because the state, despite all its close relations with the bourgeoisie, also maintained an autonomy from it.

who attempt to divide the country’<sup>61</sup>. In other words, the existence of opponents has usually been regarded as illegitimate. As a result, put it in the terms of Mouffe (2005: 21), it can be said that ‘agonistic legitimate channels for dissenting voices’ have been to a great extent non-existent in the Turkish socio-political structure, or in the terms of social movement scholars, the *institutional political structure* in Turkey has been *closed* to protests or pressures from social movements in general (Tarrow, 1998; McAdam, 1996a). It can also be said that due to the lack of the legitimate political channels for the expression of dissent, the relation between the Turkish state and the oppositional groups has almost always become an antagonistic relation.

Broadly speaking, the relation of subordination between the Turkish state and the society, more precisely the domination of the state over the society, was initially constituted during the early period of the Turkish republic that covers the years from 1923 to 1950, and institutionalized with the 1961 and 1982 constitutions prepared after the military coups that followed two periods of limited democratic opening, one in the 1950s and the other in the 1960s and 1970s. The early period of the Turkish republic was characterized by the efforts of the founders of the republic to restructure the Turkish social space not through the social demands and interests of different social groups but through the top-down imposition of the state ideology which was constituted at the center with the aim of creating a modern and secular nation-state (Toprak, 1987; Ahmad, 1993; Ahmad, 1996). Determined to transform the society along the lines of the state ideology, the founders of the new regime silenced all oppositional voices, be it grassroots groups or political parties, through oppressive, and even military, measures in the years between 1923 and 1950 (Tunçay, 1983; Ahmad, 1993; Zurcher, 1999; Ersel et. al., 2002a; Zurcher, 2003). Although the early period was followed by a more ‘democratic’ period in which a popularly elected political party came in power, this limited democratic opening was first followed by the anti-democratic measures of the elected party and then by the intervention of the state elites in the politics through a military coup (Ahmad, 1996; Ahmad, 2002; Ersel et. al. 2002b). Ironically, the military coup delivered the most liberal constitution of the country, the 1961 constitution, in terms of widening civil and political rights and liberties, which opened a space for the expression

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<sup>61</sup> According to Mardin (2000), the tradition of intolerance to opposition that exist in the Turkish political culture, and also the tradition of regarding and labeling opponents as ‘traitors’, dates back to the last years of the Ottoman Empire. It first started with the *İttihat ve Terakki Fırkası* that attempted to repress the first oppositional party in the country alleging its members as the ‘traitors’.

of different forms of grievances through non-institutionalized forms of politics by the various segments of the Turkish society, such as students, workers, Kurdish groups, and so on (Toprak, 1995). The response of the Turkish state to the rise of non-institutionalized politics, which increasingly took a radical and militant form, became two more military coups, one in 1971 and the other in 1980. While the 1971 coup introduced some constitutional amendments to restrict political and civil liberties and thereby to suppress political mobilizations, particularly the leftist ones, the 1980 coup replaced the 1961 constitution with a new and more authoritarian constitution with the aim of restructuring the socio-political space (Ersel et al., 2002c). Due to its importance in terms of structuring the Turkish socio-political context after 1980 to date, the 1980 military coup needs further elaboration.

It was mainly the challenge posed by the mobilization of the leftist groups to the then existing system and power relations, that is, to the relations of economic subordination, the relations of subordination between the state and society, and so on, that prepared the environment for the intervention of the military in 1980. More specifically, the increasing power of workers' organizations, the heightening of class conflict, the radicalism and the militancy of the student movements, the mobilization of Kurdish groups, and the war-like situation in the country due to the armed clash between some rightist and leftist groups were all regarded by the Turkish state, particularly the military, as a direct threat to the very existence of the state, and to the alleged national unity of the Turkish society (Savran, 2002; Yalman, 2002). As a result, as stated in 'The Number One Declaration of the National Security Committee', the Turkish army intervened into the political life with the aim of preventing anarchy, protecting the indivisibility of the country, restoring the national unity and re-establishing the state authority (Tanör, 1995).

In the three years following the coup, the military attempted to re-structure the state and the political institutions with the aim of preventing the politicization of the people. As mentioned, a more authoritarian constitution was introduced in 1982 by the military to replace the 1961 constitution that had granted more civil and political rights. Prepared with a motive to prevent the political mobilization and organization of individuals, and thereby to strengthen the state against the individuals, the new constitution ascribed a priority to the state and national interests of the Turkish society over the individual rights and freedoms (Tanör, 1995). Accordingly, it brought many restrictions and limitations to civil and political rights and liberties, such as restrictions on meetings, staging

demonstrations, and establishing associations (Tanör, 1990; 2000). The new authoritarian regime, established as such, was presented and legitimized by the military and the following civilian government as bringing the 'law and order' back to the country, implying that it was largely disappeared before the 1980 coup due to the political mobilizations of the masses (Yalman, 2002).

The actors of the 1980 coup aimed to protect the state by means of reestablishing its authority over different groups that they considered as posing a 'threat' against the existence of the state, such as university students, academics, working class, Kurdish people, and so on. They introduced a number of measures for controlling these groups, such as establishing the Higher Education Council, increasing the power of National Security Council, and restricting the use of language other than Turkish, and so on. With the delegation of considerable authority to these institutions, not only the form of state-society relations but also the structure of the state itself was changed by the military. Within the state structure, the power of the executive and the power of bureaucratic apparatuses were considerably increased against the power of the parliament and judiciary. Moreover, the two parts of the executive, government and president, were not directly held responsible against the voters. But perhaps more importantly, the power of the military within the state structure was considerably increased and institutionalized with the 1980 coup. As such, the military acquired almost an autonomous position and a permanent power and authority in the political life, and therefore, even after the civilian governments took the power, the military maintained supervising the political process (Tanör, 1995).

This, however, is not all about the 1980 coup because the military aimed at restructuring not only political system but also economic system. One of the principal concerns of the military was to provide the necessary environment for the implementation of the structural adjustment program in the economic realm, which was adopted nine months before the coup with the aim of liberalizing the Turkish economy. To this end, the military, using its force and authority, took a number of measures. It particularly aimed at suppressing workers' movement and decreasing the power of the working class, which would be one of the most suffering segments of the Turkish society from the new economic system. Accordingly, the military closed down labor unions, banned strikes, and froze the wages. Thus, establishing an authoritarian and oppressive political regime for the implementation of the structural adjustment program, the 1980 intervention of the

military largely served to the interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie (Boratav, 1995; Öngen, 2002; Savran, 2002; Yalman, 2002; Boratav, 2003).

Although the political mobilization of the people and opposition to the system in general attempted to be weakened or eliminated with the 1980 coup, the second half of the 1980s and 1990s experienced the mobilization of Islamist groups and the mobilization of Kurdish people. Particularly with the mobilization of the Kurdish people, the Turkish state was confronted with one of the most powerful oppositions in its history. This is because the leading organization of the Kurdish insurgent groups, the PKK, was initially aiming the secession of the Kurdish regions from Turkey (İmset, 1992; Gunter 1997). Therefore, although both forms of mobilizations were regarded by the state authorities as fundamental threats to the Turkish state, it was particularly against the mobilization of the Kurdish people that the Turkish state took a number of harsh measures. The 'guerilla war' that the Kurdish insurgents started in 1984 was countered by the Turkish state with the use of the military power. Consequently, an armed struggle between the PKK and Turkish military forces was started in the southeast region of the country. The armed struggle between the PKK and the Turkish military produced a number of negative effects not only for the Kurdish population but for the whole country. In its attempt to control the PKK, Turkish state introduced a number of additional measures to the use of the military power, such as the introduction of 'state of emergency' in the southeastern provinces of Turkey, the creation of 'village guards', the forced evacuation of villages in the region, and limitations on civil rights and liberties through the enactment of an anti-terror law (Gürbey, 1996). While limitations on civil rights and liberties affected the whole country, the other measures were largely directed against the Kurdish people. Although Kurdish insurgents later changed their demands reformulating them around ethnic and human rights issues, the intolerant attitude of the state against Kurdish opposition did not much change.

Thus, during the late 1980s and the early 1990s, when the armed struggle between Kurdish insurgents and the Turkish military was intensified, the state governed society almost solely on the basis of the security concerns. But, since the second half of the 1990s the state has taken some steps for the democratization of the country, making some constitutional reforms. However, given the declared aim of Turkey to be member of the European Union, most of these steps have been taken by the enforcement of the

institutions of the European Union<sup>62</sup>. Therefore, the reforms were made in a centralized way not through the demands of different social groups, but mostly with the pressure of the European Union. Even this limited form of democratization has not been progressing smoothly; rather it has been difficult because it has been facing with strong resistance and opposition of some bureaucratic and particularly military elite within the state. Despite the existence of some elements within the state that are more reform-oriented, the bureaucratic and military elite are more prone to preserving the status-quo, and therefore, they have been effectively slowing down the pace of the reforms through resisting both the introduction and the implementation of the reforms.

Although the associational life has proliferated and enlarged in the 1990s as a result of the promotion of the civil society in line with the general trend in the world, they exert an influence on the Turkish state to the extent that their demands are in line with the priorities of the system. Thus, the proliferation of associations, or the development of civil society, did not mean in the Turkish context in the 1990s that different social groups had the opportunity of expressing their demands, or they had the opportunity of participating to decision-making processes. As Cizre-Sakallıoğlu and Yeldan (2000: 493) put it, “while the impulse of the ‘civil society’ to engage in public life to express its grievances has grown, the insulation of the state from popular pressures has grown even further”. In fact, “[a]part from elections, the ability of societal actors to evoke governmental responsiveness or accountability is virtually nil”, and therefore, “Turkey’s political class” usually “operates ‘in defiance’ of widespread public demands” (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu and Yeldan, 2000: 494).

Hence, the Turkish socio-political context in the 1990s and early 2000s, within which Bergama movement emerged, was characterized by the domination of the state over the society. In spite of some changes for the democratization of the country, neither the authoritarian character of the state has considerably changed nor, in line with this, legitimate channels for the expression of different social demands have been established.

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<sup>62</sup> In order to meet the Copenhagen political criteria for the EU membership, the Turkish state has made some constitutional and a series of legislative changes. After 1999, two constitutional reforms (in 2001 and 2004), and eight legislative reform packages (between February 2002 and 2004) were adopted by the Turkish parliament (European Commission, 2004). As a result, state security courts have been abolished, a number of human rights programs for training police and gendarmerie have been organized, some measures to reduce the influence of the military in Turkish politics have been taken, and some amendments in the Penal Code, Anti-Terror Law, Press Law, and Law on Associations were adopted.

Having examined the institution of a relation of subordination between the state and society in the Turkish context, the study now turns to examine another relation of subordination that has been instituted since the 1980 through restructuring the Turkish economy according to the dictates of neo-liberal ideology.

## **6.2. Neo-Liberal Transformation of the Turkish Economy**

As noted above, Bergama movement emerged in the period which was marked by the increasing hegemony of the neo-liberalism both in Turkey and the world. The emergence of the movement and the form it has taken, on the one hand, and the responses and reactions of the company and the Turkish state to this resistance movement, on the other hand, cannot be grasped without considering the logic of the broader neo-liberal order and the related phenomenon of globalization for a number of reasons. For one thing, the Bergama protest movement emerged through constructing, articulating, and voicing some social demands that were not satisfied within the existing structural system shaped through the increasing hegemony of neo-liberal ideology. In its opposition to the ‘mining project’ of a multinational company, which was an outcome of the liberalization policies of the Turkish state followed in the economic realm since the early 1980s, the Bergama movement, in fact, constituted a specific response to the *dislocations* that liberalization and globalization and changing power relations created in the local context. Secondly, as it will be explained in the following chapter, Bergama movement extended the particular struggle of local residents to a more broad-based struggle that attempted to challenge not only foreign investment and environmental policies of the Turkish state but also the broader neo-liberal logic that shapes these policies. Thirdly, the responses and the reactions of the company and the Turkish state were largely shaped by the logic of the neo-liberalism. Finally, the power relations constituted through the increasing hegemony of the neo-liberalism significantly affected the shape and the consequences of the struggle.

Hence, in order to understand the emergence, development, and the consequences of the Bergama movement, in addition to the structure of the Turkish state and Turkish politics, we also need to consider the neo-liberal transformation in the Turkish economy. The primary concern of this section, therefore, is to map out the broad changes in the Turkish economy occurred since the 1980. With this account, it is aimed at indicating the logic of the new structures that are constituted through these changes, as well as how the logic of

the new structures shape the foreign investment and environmental policies of the Turkish state in a certain way. Before, however, delineating the changes in the Turkish economy, the meaning of ‘economic development’ in Turkish social structure will be given because it has been highly effective in legitimizing the economic changes in the country.

‘Economic development’ has been among the ultimate ends of the Turkish republic since its very foundation because it has been envisaged as a very crucial part of the modernization process, and as an important means of progress of the country in ‘catching-up’ with the so-called developed Western world (Eralp, 1990; Aydın, 2005b). Conceived as such, it has become one of the unquestionable aims of the Turkish state, and therefore, not an area of struggle but a ‘national endeavor’, a common goal which it would be considered ‘unpatriotic to question’ (Eralp 1990: 253). Although the form of economic development has been subject to debates at times, and also became the main concern of the political mobilizations of the left-wing groups in the 1960s and 1970s, the connection between economic development and progress has not been questioned and contested (Arsel, 2005b). Beginning from the 1980, the primacy given to the economy has furthered in an unprecedented way. Not only economy but also ‘market’ has become enormously important in state policies (Özkazanç, 2005) because the conception pertaining to the realization of the economic development has considerably changed with the rise of neo-liberal ideology. Therefore, even the form of economic development has not very much become an issue of debate since that date due to the increasing hegemony of the neo-liberalism. In fact, it is through the primacy of the economic development that the neo-liberal transformation of the economy has largely been legitimized by the state and governmental authorities.

During the 1980s and 1990s, not only Turkey but most of the ‘developing’ countries adopted a ‘structural adjustment program’ to transform their national economic structure in line with the changing configurations of the world capitalism. According to the dictates of the structural adjustment program, these countries left behind ‘import substitution industrialization’, liberalized their economies, and privatized their public enterprises (Chudnovsky and Lopez, 1999). As an important part of liberalization policies, the regulations and restrictions on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) have been removed or minimized because FDI has been conceived as “the driving force in the integration of developing countries into the globalization process that characterizes the world economy” (Chudnovsky and Lopez, 1999: 2). It has also been supposed that in



addition to integrating into the world economy, foreign direct investment would have some important effects on the recipient country, such as influencing the production, employment, income, prices, exports, imports, economic growth, balance of payments, and the general welfare of the host country (Erdal and Tatoğlu, 2002). Considered as such, many developing countries adopted FDI- based development strategies (Narula and Dunning, 2000). Accordingly, a fierce competition has taken place among developing countries in recent years for attracting foreign direct investment flows into them (TÜSİAD and YASED report, 2004). In rendering themselves attractive for foreign direct investments, developing countries usually provide low-cost investment opportunities to the foreign investors, which include ‘a stable political structure’, ‘viable labor conditions’ such as cheap and trained labor and absence of unionism, ‘reasonable infrastructure’, ‘lower tax rates’, and ‘indifference to environment’ (Miyoshi, 1995: 63). As a result, the flows of inward FDI to developing countries have risen to 37 per cent of global inflows in 1997 from 17 per cent in 1990 (Chudnovsky and Lopez, 1999; OECD, 2002).

As for many other ‘developing’ countries the integration with the world economy has become the main target of Turkey in the last two decades (Balkan and Savran, 2002). To this end, it made a shift in its economic policies in the 1980s to transform its national economic structure in line with the requirements of the neo-liberal economic order. As was also the case with many other developing countries (Chudnovsky and Lopez, 1999), the process of transformation has been directed both by the internal forces and external forces, such as IMF and World Bank. However, unlike the most of the developing countries, the liberalization policies in Turkey did not result in high FDI inflows as expected.

In the 1960s and 1970s, when Turkish economy was characterized by the import-substitution strategy, Turkey remained a relatively closed economy, and the industrial base was built mainly by the public investment and private investment without a significant presence of foreign investments (Balasubramanyam, 1996). After going into a crisis at the end of 1970s, due to the crisis of capital accumulation and the general economic crisis in the capitalist world economy (Savran, 2002), Turkey left the centrally-planned and regulated import substitution industrialization and adopted a stabilization policy imposed by IMF. The policy was based on the export-led growth model containing such measures as suppression of wages, a balanced budget, social spending cuts, tight money, deregulation, devaluation, and liberalized trade and foreign

investment policy (Öniş, 1986; Boratav et al., 2000). With these changes, the ‘market’ and ‘market forces’, foremost among them being foreign capital, have gained an unprecedented importance for the state.

The new economic policies were tried to be legitimized as the only way to overcome the economic crisis that Turkey experienced in the second half of the 1970s in particular, and for the long desired but not realized economic development of the country in general. However, the real transformation from a heavily protected and state-led economy to a free market one, was largely realized through the force of the military that, as mentioned, came to power in September 1980 by a coup d’etat, shortly after the structural adjustment program was initiated in January 1980 (Balkan and Savran, 2002). It was through the force of the military that the new institutional framework required for the new economic policies were set up. Among others, one of the principal concerns of the military was to provide the necessary environment for the implementation of the structural adjustment program, and therefore, it was welcomed by the Turkish bourgeoisie. In the period characterized by import substitution policies, the participation of the working class to the politics had been possible through trade unions. Moreover, social well-being of the various segments of the population had been relatively better due to the ‘populist’ policies followed in that period (Boratav, 2003). The military forcefully suppressed the reaction of these groups against the adverse effects of neo-liberalism (Boratav, 2003), particularly on “employment, wages, social services and the level of unionization” (Balkan and Savran, 2002: xix). In fact, as explained before, not only the economic system but also the state and society relations were restructured by the military rule, which effectively prevented the emergence of the opposition to new economic system even after the civilians have taken the power.

Although initially imposed upon the Turkish society by the force of the military, the neo-liberal ideology, as is the case with most of the countries, has become increasingly hegemonic within the last two decades<sup>63</sup>. While some ‘nationalist’ circles has regarded the opening of the Turkish economy to international capital as a threat to the national independence of the country, and the leftist oriented circles as a new form of colonialism

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<sup>63</sup> In fact, it remains as an open question whether the neo-liberal ideology has become hegemonic in the Turkish social context in the 1980s in the sense of articulating the interests and demands of different social groups and thereby winning the ‘consent’ of them. While some authors believe that the hegemony of the neo-liberal ideology was established by the civilian government which came into power after the withdrawal of the military government in early 1980s (see, Yalman, 2002), some others argue that the hegemonic attack of that government collapsed due to its failure of incorporating the interests of various different social groups (see, Tünay, 1993).

and imperialism, the reactions have been rather weak, and a strong opposition did not develop.

### **6.2.1. Foreign Direct Investment and Environmental Policies**

The liberalization policies have also been followed by successive governments that came to power after the military rule, conceiving and presenting them as having no alternative, and therefore the inevitable path that Turkey should follow in order to achieve a real economic development (Eralp, 1990; Yalman, 2002; Boratav, 2003). As part of the liberalization policies, foreign investments have been encouraged, starting with the 1980s. With the changes made in the foreign investment legislation, Turkey has attempted to become an attractive site for the investment of multinational or foreign companies. Just like the other developing countries, Turkey also expected to balance savings and investments, create employment opportunities, transfer technology, increase productivity and export capacity, and to reduce balance of payments difficulties by attracting foreign direct investments into the country (Tonak, 2000). In short, foreign investments have been regarded as the primary actors of the new form of economic development that Turkey has adopted.

However, in spite of the liberalization policies adopted and related encouragements, foreign investments did not increase in Turkey in the 1980s and 1990s as expected (Tonak, 2000). Although there was an increase towards the end of the 1980s, the overall inflow of foreign direct investment has not been realized as desired. As a percentage of 1985 GDP of Turkey, the foreign direct investment was 0.8 percent and this ratio increased only to 1.1 percent in 1989 (Balasubramanyam, 1996; Öniş, 1994). The FDI inflow to Turkey can be seen as even worse in the 1990s because while global FDI flows to developing countries increased remarkably in these years (Erdal and Tatoğlu, 2002), it remained static in Turkey, just keeping the level it reached at the end of 1980s (Loewendahl and Ertugal-Loewendhal, 2001). Thus, although the share of developing countries in global FDI flows considerably increased between 1984 and 1997, reaching 41% of global FDI flows in 1997 (OECD, 2002), inward FDI flows to Turkey did not follow the same trend. As a result, Turkey, although seen as having some competitive advantages<sup>64</sup> over its competitors in the region<sup>65</sup>, has had a poor performance in

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<sup>64</sup> The large market due to the rapidly growing population, high quality labor force, and strategic location are usually identified as the main competitive advantages of Turkey for attracting foreign

attracting foreign direct investment. In fact, it has performed worse than not only its competitors in the region but almost every developing country that attempted to attract foreign direct investments (Loewendahl and Ertugal-Loewendhal, 2001; Ögütçü, 2002)<sup>66</sup>. The poor performance of the country in attracting FDI has led the governmental authorities to continuously improve the investment climate for foreign investors. Repeatedly stressing that Turkey needs to avoid taking measures that would ‘frighten foreign capital’ (*yabancı sermayeyi ürkütmek*) and prevent its entry into the country, the Turkish governments have continued to encourage foreign investments since the 1980s. In addition to the earlier ones, the Turkish government has made a number of legal changes in order to further improve the investment climate for foreign investors since 2002.

Giving the utmost importance and priority to the economic development, the Turkish state has not become effective in coping with the environmental problems created by economic development (Aydın, 2005b). The issue of environmental protection, which had been a neglected issue in terms of public policies and attention until 1980s (Dura, 1981), came on the agenda of the Turkish state in the early 1980s not only to solve environmental problems but also to give a response to the increasing international pressures (Adaman and Arsel, 2005). Since then, some progress has been realized in the field of environmental legislation, such as the enactment of an environmental law in 1983, the formulation of environmental policies and strategies and their inclusion into the five-year development plans, and the establishment of the Ministry of Environment (Küskü and Zarkada-Fraser, 2004). Nevertheless, it can hardly be said that the environmental law introduced important measures for the protection of the environment because it is stated in the law that environment would be protected to the extent protection does not adversely affect economic development of the country (Somersan,

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direct investments (Tatoğlu and Glaister, 2000; Loewendahl and Ertugal-Loewendhal, 2001; Erdal and Tatoğlu, 2002; TÜSİAD and YASED Report, 2004).

<sup>65</sup> The competitors of Turkey in the region, those countries that have geographical proximity and comparable size of economies, are Eastern European countries, North African countries, Russia and CIS, and Greece (Loewendahl and Ertugal-Loewendhal, 2001).

<sup>66</sup> The main reason for the low FDI inflow is seen as the political and economical instabilities, such as high inflation, exchange rate instability and human rights concerns, and the uncertainty they create in investment climate (Erdal and Tatoğlu, 2002; Ögütçü, 2002; Loewendahl and Ertugal-Loewendhal, 2001).

1993). Moreover, the state has largely maintained its ignorant attitude towards environmentally harmful industrial and agricultural activities (Adaman and Arsel, 2005). The existing regulations, therefore, have not been enforced effectively by the state agencies.

Having broadly mapped out the Turkish socio-political and economic structures, the study will start with the following chapter the analysis of the the Bergama movement. The account of the broader structures that shaped the Turkish sociopolitical space will shed considerable light to this analysis. This is so because Bergama movement emerged under the specific conditions of the Turkish sociopolitical space forming a particular response to the patterns of meanings that structure this space. As it will be attempted to indicate in the following chapter, although the Bergama movement emerged as a particular response to the mining project of Eurogold, which was a specific outcome of the changes in the Turkish economic realm, it constituted a discourse not only against the operation of the gold mine in Bergama but also against the foreign direct investment and environmental policies of the Turkish state, as well as against the broader neo-liberal logic that shape these policies. Moreover, in its consolidation phase and weakening phase, which will be the subject matter of the Chapter 8 and Chapter 9, the movement began articulating a discourse against the authoritarian structure of the Turkish state and against the undemocratic structure of the Turkish politics.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **THE EMERGENCE OF THE BERGAMA MOVEMENT AS A PARTICULAR RESPONSE TO DISLOCATIONS (1990- April 1996)**

The early five years of the 1990s witnessed the initial formation of the protest movement in Bergama through the constitution of a 'resistance discourse' against the gold-mining project of the multinational gold-mining company Eurogold. The mobilizations against the gold-mining project started with the activities of a few organic intellectuals, mainly the then mayor of Bergama and a few local politicians, and expanded with the involvement of the Bergama peasants, some environmentalist groups, some academics, and some professional groups. Even in this initial phase, the movement attracted the attention of the media, effectively pressurized the state elites, and forced the mining company to make some changes in its initial mining project.

As against those studies that regard the emergence of the Bergama movement as a direct and immediate response of the Bergama peasants to the gold-mining project, it will be argued in this chapter that the emergence of the Bergama movement was not a structural necessity. One of the main contention of this chapter is that the Bergama movement emerged through the constitution of a new 'discursive space' that, articulating the 'structural conditions', i.e., the gold-mining project, the investment of the multinational company, economic changes, and so on in a particular way, provided new meanings and identities for the constituents of the movement. Put differently, the movement emerged proposing a specific discursive articulation of the gold-mining project. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the discursive construction of the gold-mining project in order to grasp the emergence of the Bergama movement.

Although the existing structures did not generate Bergama movement, they still had some important effects on the movement. As explained in Chapter 4, from discourse-theoretical perspective, it is the failure of prevailing structures to provide meaningful frameworks, and thereby, to fulfill some social demands, not their generative or determining capacities, which are regarded as important in the emergence of social movements. More precisely, the failure of existing structures, that is, their 'dislocation',

opens up new spaces for the constitution of new discourses and through which the emergence of social movements. Thus, social demands, which are not satisfied in a given social space, lie at the base of political mobilizations for it is through the articulation of different social demands that social movements come into being. It should be, however, noted that the failure of the existing structures does not necessitate the emergence of social movements, either. They just provide the ‘conditions of possibility’ of the emergence of the movement through the constitution of a new discourse. That is, they provide a structural potential which should be translated into collective action through the efforts of political subjects if a social movement is to emerge.

Contrary to those arguments put in the existing studies on Bergama movement (Öncü and Korcan, 2001; Arsel, 2003; Çoban, 2004; Arsel, 2005a) which suggest that the main actors of the Bergama movement have been the Bergama peasants, it is argued in this study that the Bergama movement has been a heterogeneous composite of different social groups. Through a specific discursive articulation of the gold-mining project, Bergama movement proposed a new principle of reading which became able to suture the dislocations experienced by different groups. Put differently, experiencing dislocation due to the failure of existing structures to satisfy their demands, different groups identified with the Bergama movement around different social demands, with the aim of reconstituting the existing structures and in this way reconstituting themselves. In fact, it was through the identification of different groups that the movement came into being because these groups translated the existing structural potential into collective action through their identification with the emerging anti-mining discourse.

In this chapter, the emergence of the Bergama movement through the construction of an anti-mining discourse will be analysed. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section briefly outlines the gold-mining project of Eurogold. The aim of the second section is to unravel the specific ‘conditions of possibility’ of the emergence of the Bergama movement. To this end, it, on the one hand, endeavors to indicate how the structuration of national social space in a certain way had led to the dislocation of some social groups that eventually led to their mobilization through the Bergama protest movement, and on the other hand, tries to show how the failure of the local structures in Bergama area to domesticate the gold-mining project had led to the dislocatory experiences of Bergama peasants, which eventually played a crucial role in the mobilization of the Bergama peasants. The third section is devoted to the examination of the political logic of the emergent anti-goldmining discourse constituted both through a

specific articulation of the gold-mining project and through the construction and articulation of particular social demands of different actors. The fourth section deals with the responses and reactions of the mining company to the emergent protest movement. Finally, the last section examines the ways through which the Turkish state dealt with the Bergama movement in its emergence period.

### **7.1. The Gold-Mining Project in Bergama Area**

As given in the preceding chapter, the foreign direct investment inflow into Turkey has not been as high as desired by the Turkish state. However, the situation has been different in mining sector. After 1985 several foreign mining companies applied for carrying out exploration activities in Turkey<sup>67</sup> (Müezzinoğlu, 2003). The door to foreign mining investment was opened with the enactment of a new mining law in 1985 (Law No. 3213 on Mining) that allows national private and foreign mining companies to carry out mining and mineral exploration and extraction activities (TMMOB- Chambers of Mining Engineers, 2005).

The gold-mining project concerning the gold reserves in Bergama area was proposed by the Eurogold company. Eurogold was one of the first companies that are established in Turkey by foreign corporations to carry out mining exploration and extraction. It was established in 1989 as a Turkish company, *Eurogold Madencilik A.Ş.*, in line with the requirements of the Turkish law for the foreign investment (Gökvardar, 1998). It was a joint venture between Poseidon Gold Limited (67 %) that belongs to Australia's Normandy Poseidon, and Canada's and Germany's Metal Mining Corporation (33 %)<sup>68</sup> (Taşkın, 1998). After obtaining licenses and permissions for the exploration of the gold

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<sup>67</sup> Unlike those in other sectors, the willingness and eagerness of multinationals in mining sector to invest in Turkey can be explained with the existence of 'commercially viable' deposits in Turkey. Although it is important for manufacturing and service MNCs to consider the competitive advantages of a developing country over the others in making the investment decision, the same may not be true for mining companies since the most important criterion for the latter is the existence of 'commercially viable' deposits in a country.

<sup>68</sup> In 1994, some shares of Normandy Poseidon were sold to a French company, BRGM (Bureau Recherche Generales Mines), and in 1995, the shares of Metal Mining Corporation was bought by Canadian Inmet Mining Corporation that also belonged to German Metallgesellschaft (Taşkın, 1998). In 1999, all Canadian and European shareholders sold their shares to Normandy Poseidon, and accordingly the name of the company was changed from Eurogold to Normandy. In 2001, the company was sold to American company Newmont. In 2004, it was taken over by another company called Frontier Pacific, and finally in 2005, it was taken over by a national company, Koza Altın.



reserves in the Bergama region, Eurogold started exploratory drilling in the area towards the end of 1990.

After the explorations revealed that there are some valuable gold deposits in the region that are commercially worth extracting, the company proposed its ‘mining project’ and applied for the necessary permits to governmental agencies for the operation of the gold mine without preparing Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report<sup>69</sup>. In fact, many permits were easily granted to the company by the related Ministries partly due to the lack of detailed legislation concerning the licensing and operation of the mining, and the management and safe disposal of mining waste in the early 1990s, and partly due to the determination of the Turkish state to support and promote foreign investments. In 1991, the company was granted by the Ministry of Forestry the permission to operate in the proposed site in Bergama, and in 1992, the company applied to other Ministries for other permissions<sup>70</sup>.

The proposed mining site was in the vicinity of Ovacık, Çamköy, and Narlıca villages of Bergama, actually covering some settled lands, such as the cemetery of Ovacık village<sup>71</sup>. The mine would occupy 100 hectares of land in the area. The company planned to operate eight years and to produce three tones of gold and three tones of silver annually through both surface, open cut, and underground mining. It planned to extract 2.5 million tones of ore through three-year surface mining and five-year underground mining (Taşkın, 1998). It also planned to process the extracted ore in a plant which would be constructed in the mining site. The plant would have the capacity to process 300,000 tones of ore a year. The ore would be crushed and reduced to very small parts which would be, then, decomposed into its constituents. The technology that the company planned to use in the post-mining production process, that is, in the decomposition of the gold bearing ores, was the ‘cyanide leaching’ method.

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<sup>69</sup> The rules and regulations concerning gold-mining and environmental protection have been shaped within the Turkish context largely during the last 25 years. Although in 1993 ‘Environmental Impact Assessment’ report was made necessary for the mining companies by law, it had not been a legal requirement before this date. Therefore, it was not a requisite for Eurogold to prepare that report during the initial phase of its investment.

<sup>70</sup> It was necessary to get permission from the Ministry of Forestry because the mining site was full of pine and olive trees.

<sup>71</sup> The mine, therefore, is called by the company as ‘Ovacık Mine’.

As being the most cost efficient technology in extracting gold, the cyanide leaching method has been widely used in the goldmines for over the one century (Mine-Engineer, 2005). It is basically a chemical process that involves combining sodium cyanide with gold bearing ores to recover gold and silver from the ore. This method allows collecting even the tiny fragments that are embedded into hard rock. During processing the ore with cyanide solutions, some other contaminants are also released from the ore as the by-products of cyanidization, such as “arsenic, selenium, chromium, antimony, nitrate (from blasting), and a variety of salts which degrade waters, including sulfates and chlorides” (Miller as cited in Udesky, Turkish Daily News, 17 February 1997). The company planned to collect and keep these mining wastes in a ‘tailings pond’ which would be built in the mining site. The mining waste in the tailings pond, according to company, would evaporate under the sun, and therefore, would not be harmful to environment<sup>72</sup>.

Bergama town is located near the west coast of Turkey in the Northern Aegean region. There are 106,536 people living in the downtown and 114 villages of Bergama, 52,173 in the downtown and 54,363 in the villages, according to 2000 population survey (Nüfus ve Vatandaşlık İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2005). While tourism and trade are important sources of income for Bergama proper, which is the site of the ruins of the ancient city Pergammon, it is mainly agriculture for its villages. The region where Eurogold started exploration activities is surrounded by three villages of Bergama town, namely Ovacık, Çamköy, and Narlıca. In addition to these three villages, there are also fourteen other villages located within a 10-kilometer radius of the mine site<sup>73</sup>. These villages are 10 kilometers far from Bergama proper which is itself 100 kilometers far from İzmir.

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<sup>72</sup> While it was a common practice during the early years of the use of the cyanide leaching method to simply discharge the remaining into nature without any further treatment, the use of ‘tailings pond’ has been adopted later by the mining companies to reduce the negative environmental impact of the mining wastes. The use of tailings pond, which involves building a pond to store mining waste known as ‘tailings’ which contain toxic mineral deposits, is the cheapest and therefore the most common one (Arsel, 2005a). Cyanide leaching tailings can be “sent to tailings ponds for natural degradation of cyanide either directly from the plant or after being subjected to chemical decomposition process” (Atalay, 1998). In direct storage of the tailings in the tailings pond without chemical treatment, the tailings are exposed to the air and sunlight with the expectation that air and sunlight would break the remainings into other chemical compounds, and thereby would make them harmless. This, however, is a highly controversial issue because contrary to these claims, it is also claimed that the tailings ponds and sunlight are not enough to minimize the negative effects of the tailings to environment.

<sup>73</sup> These villages are Alacalar, Pınarköy, Tepeköy, Aşağıkırıklar, Kurfalı, Sağancı, Süleymanlı, Yeniköy, Bozköy, Sarıdere, Eğrigöl, Çaltıbağçe, Yalnızev, and Küçükaya.

The region where Eurogold planned to construct a mining complex is known as one of the most fertile agricultural regions in Turkey. The lands are highly fertile that it is possible to produce many agricultural products such as cotton, olives, pine nuts, citrus fruits, figs, grains, and tobacco. Moreover, it is possible to make agriculture throughout a year producing different products. Therefore, the principal economic activity of the inhabitants of the villages is agriculture. Agriculture, in fact, has been the economic organization of the villages for long years. They earn their living mainly through small-scale agricultural activities. Most of them have the ownership of some lands and the machinery for agriculture. As such, most of the peasants work on their own lands as independent farmers.

## **7.2. The Dislocatory Effects of the Gold-Mining Project and the Mobilizations**

Up until now, the study broadly mapped out the broader structural conditions, and delineated the gold-mining project of Eurogold in Bergama area. Beginning with this section, the study analyzes the emergence of the Bergama protest movement as a particular response to these structural conditions. The broader structural changes, and the proposal of a gold-mining project by Eurogold as a specific outcome of these changes, played a crucial role in the emergence of the Bergama movement. In order to understand their role, however, the study will not focus upon their objectivities but examine the discursive articulation of both broader changes and the mining project of Eurogold within the Bergama resistance discourse.

Although the broader changes and the proposal of the gold-mining project played a key role in the emergence of the Bergama movement, contrary to what is implicitly or explicitly assumed in most of the studies on Bergama movement, they did not directly lead to the emergence of the movement. Rather, disrupting the existing meaning structures, they *dislocated* both the locals of Bergama and some other groups, which opened up a space for the construction of a new discourse through political mobilizations. Yet, they neither determined the form of the new discourse nor guaranteed the emergence of the movement. That is, in spite of providing new possibilities for the constitution of a new discourse, structural dislocation was not the reference of the transformation. However, this does not mean that dislocation created a total absence of structuration in which everything became possible. In this regard, the structural changes and the proposal of the mining project by a multinational company are regarded in this

study not as directly generating the movement but as only providing the ‘conditions of possibility’ for the emergence of the Bergama movement. This is to say that although structural changes are necessary preconditions of the emergence of the movement, they were in no way sufficient.

Thus, although a relation of subordination, which refers to the subjection of an agent to the decisions of another, was constructed between the people of the Bergama area and the mining company, the movement did not directly emerge as an inevitable and necessary response to this relation. Granting the necessary permits to the company to operate in the settlement area of Bergama peasants, the Turkish government subjected the people of the area to the interests of the capital, and thereby established a relation of subordination. However, there did not directly emerge a resistance to this subordination because the existence of a situation of subordination cannot directly generate resistances. It is only after the relation of subordination is turned into a ‘relation of oppression’, which refers to the construction of an antagonistic relation between the two parties, that a resistance can emerge. Rather than relying on the existence of relation of subordination in explaining the emergence of movements, therefore, we need to explain the conditions under which relations of subordination turns into relations of oppression (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 153-4).

Bergama movement emerged through the constitution of a new discursive space that, articulating the mining project in relation to broader structural changes particularly in the economic realm, provided new meanings and identities. Different groups have involved in the movement identifying with these meanings and identities. Although initially emerged as a particular response to the operation of a goldmine in Bergama area, Bergama movement has not simply expressed the demands of the local residents for the ‘prevention of the operation of the goldmine in Bergama’ in an isolated way, but also constituted and voiced some other demands for ‘broader’ changes, such as ‘prevention of the gold-mining’ in general, ‘protection of the environment’, ‘prevention of the operation of the multinational and foreign companies in the country’. From the very outset, therefore, the constituents of the Bergama movement have not been limited with the local people. A number of other groups have also identified with the Bergama resistance discourse due to the construction and articulation of different social demands in and through the Bergama resistance discourse.

The common feature of the social demands that were articulated within the Bergama discourse in its emergence period is that they were all *unsatisfied* within the existing structural arrangements. The appeal of the Bergama discourse for different social groups lay in its proposition of a discursive space for the articulation of these unfulfilled social demands: the prevention of the operation of the gold mine in Bergama area; the prevention of gold-mining in general; the protection of the environment; the prevention of the operation of multinational corporations in Turkey. There were four social groups that, identifying with the movement around different social demands, became the main constituents of the Bergama movement in the emergence period: local residents of Bergama, mostly, though not exclusively, consisted of the peasants who live in the villages that surround the proposed mining site, the environmentalists, academics and various professional circles. While the Bergama locals mobilized for the prevention of the operation of the company in their area, the environmentalists, academics and some professionals for the prevention of gold-mining in general and for the protection of the environment, and some professional circles for the prevention of the operations of the foreign and multinational companies in general in the country.

Although it is a common feature of all the social groups that they involved in the movement around unsatisfied demands, there are different specific factors that have played important roles in the mobilization of each of these different groups against the mining company. As noted before, the emergence of the Bergama resistance with the mobilization of different groups was highly related to the dislocations that these groups experienced within the existing structural configurations in Turkey in the early 1990s. More precisely, two sorts of somehow related but still distinct dislocation lay at the basis of mobilizations against the mining project. While the mobilization of the Bergama locals owed much to the dislocation that they experienced with the ‘mining project’, the mobilization of the environmentalists and professionals rather related with the dislocation that they experienced with the broader structural arrangements and transformations of the country. Yet, although the meaning and the extension of dislocation is different for these groups, it is their perception of a threat to their particular identities posed by the ‘mining project’ that has brought all these different groups together to oppose the ‘mining project’.

As it will be detailed below, among the social groups who identified with the Bergama movement it was the Bergama people who experienced the deepest dislocation. Due to the location of the gold mine, they have been the most directly affected group from the

mining project. This was all the more true particularly for the peasants. Disrupting the traditional way of life and traditional self-image of the Bergama peasants, the mining project dislocated them and thereby paved the way for their mobilization. The mobilization of the other groups, on the other hand, is rather related with the dislocation that these different groups experienced with the neo-liberal transformation of the country. It was, therefore, not the ‘mining project’ *per se* that led to the dislocation the environmentalists, academics and professionals. The mining project, however, was seen by these groups as the embodiment of the broader neo-liberal structure, and it was precisely this perception that led to the mobilization of these groups against the mining project. In other words, the opposition to the mining project provided these groups an outlet to express their dissatisfaction with the broader structures. Unlike the peasants who experienced a deep dislocation, the involvement of these groups in the movement, therefore, did not lead to a radical reconstitution of their identities but to reproduction of their ‘environmentalists’ and ‘leftist’ identities to some extent, which were blocked within the existing broader social configuration due to the neo-liberal transformation of the country. In the following four sections, the study will present an account of the process in which a new discursive space was constituted through the political interventions of all these actors.

### **7.2.1 The Initial Mobilizations against the Gold-Mining Project of Eurogold: The Interventions of Organic Intellectuals**

The ‘mining project’ of Eurogold did not directly generate negative responses and reactions of the local people. Rather, while a small group welcomed the mining project largely because of the promotion of the mine by the company officials, most of the local people tried to understand what was going on around them. After proposing the ‘mining project’ and applying for the necessary permits to governmental agencies, Eurogold officials organized meetings with the local authorities and the local people to inform them about the project (Interview No. 1: 2004). In the meetings, the company particularly promoted the idea that it would contribute to economic and social development of both the area and the country in general. It was also particularly emphasized by the company that new job opportunities would be opened up for the local people with the opening of the mine. The emphasis on the potential economic benefits of the mine for the area led to the rise of economic expectations of some peasants and local residents of Bergama town (Taşkın, 1998; Reinart, 2003). As a result, the mining

company was welcomed both by some peasants and by some residents of Bergama proper. The company started to buy some lands from the peasants and construct company buildings in the area, and also some houses in the Ovacık village for those peasants who had to move because the mining site also covered their settlement area (Interview No. 1: 2004).

The activities of the company, however, did not convince all the local people about the operation of the mine. Rather, as it will be detailed in the following sections, the mining project dislocated many local people, particularly the peasants, in the sense that they could not easily make sense of the operation of the mine in their area. It is precisely in this sense that the proposed mining project created a ‘crisis’ situation, that is dislocation, for the Bergama locals, which does not refer to an objective crisis but rather to the inadequacy of the existing local meaning structures to impute meaning to the mining project. Two factors became particularly pertinent in the dislocation that most of the local people of Bergama experienced. One is that, despite the increasing hegemony of the neo-liberal ideology in the broader Turkish context, the operation of a ‘foreign mining company’ in villages was something new, and therefore, not inherently meaningful for the Bergama people in the early 1990s. In other words, since the local people faced with the outcomes of the neo-liberal transformation for the first time with the proposal of the mining project, they could not easily attribute meaning to it. The other factor is that the complicated technical processes of mining activities made it difficult for the local people to arrive at easy and quick judgments whether the operation of the mine would be beneficial or harmful to them. This is particularly true concerning the cyanide-based technology that the company declared that it would use in its operations.

Most of the local people, therefore, neither celebrated nor condemned the mining project at the beginning. While a great majority of these people began passively and anxiously waiting for the developments, a few number of organic intellectuals, some local left-wing politicians including the then mayor of Bergama, Sefa Taşkın, union leaders, and some activists from some NGOs, started to take actions in order to make sense of the mining project. As it is told by Taşkın, these organic intellectuals, first of all, began collecting technical information and documents particularly about the ‘cyanide-leaching method’ from some professional organizations, such as the Chambers of Geology Engineers, and Chambers of Environmental Engineers, and some NGOs, such as

Greenpeace and Minewatch<sup>74</sup> (Interview No. 1, 2004). Although there are different views concerning the environmental impact of the cyanide-based technology used in the gold mines, the information provided by these sources pointed out its negative impact to environment and to public health.

Combining this information with the ‘foreignness’ of the mining company, the mayor and the other local politicians conceived and constructed the ‘mining project’ as an attempt of the multinational company to exploit the resources of a ‘developing’ country without caring the environment and public health. The mining project, therefore, was seen as not something to be celebrated but something to be opposed of for the well-being of the Bergama people. Thus, in attributing meaning to the mining project of Eurogold, these organic intellectuals articulated elements from the leftist ideology, which is stated by Taşkın in following terms: “I am a graduate of METU, and come from the leftist tradition. I know the logic of multinational companies; they do everything to increase their profit” (Interview No. 1: 2004).

Through the interventions of these organic intellectuals, a process for the construction of a new discursive space was started. As it will be indicated in the following sections, although these organic intellectuals started this process, they were not the sole actors of it. Rather, the new discursive space was shaped and reshaped with the involvement of new actors. As in the construction of all discourses, the construction of this new discourse was started with the establishment of its limits. The production of *limits* was realized in the emergent discourse through the construction of the mining company as an *enemy*, and the mining project as something that should be opposed. Before, however, going into the details of the construction of the new discursive space, we should focus on how it became possible for these organic intellectuals to start a process of the construction of a new discourse.

First of all, it should be stressed that it was the dislocation the mining project created in the local Bergama context that opened a space for the interventions of the organic intellectuals. As it has been explained in the Chapter 3 and 4, dislocation creates a terrain in which subject, as an agent, comes into being and acts politically so as to institute a new order in place of the dislocated order. In other words, subject ceases to occupy a

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<sup>74</sup>Although Greenpeace did not directly support the Bergama protesters, it was the Greenpeace activists, the mayor called upon their support when a Greenpeace boat visited İzmir in 1992, who provided contacts to the mayor with some other NGOs that deal with mining related issues, such as Minewatch in UK (Interview No. 1, 2004).



subject position which is fixed in a definite social order. This is so because, the order that temporarily fixes the subject positions loses its capability of fixing these positions due to dislocations. Thus, the emergence of the subject as an agent is strictly linked to dislocations. Concerning the Bergama case, then, the political interventions of the organic intellectuals became possible with the dislocation that they experienced with the proposal of the mining project.

The emergence of these organic intellectuals as agents, however, did not mean that they created a completely new discourse. Rather, drawing upon available elements, they rearticulated them in a new way and thereby contributed to the construction of a new discursive space. As briefly mentioned above, the organic intellectuals drew upon the elements of leftist ideology. In this respect, they regarded the investment of multinational companies in general, and the investment of Eurogold in particular as a form of 'imperialism'. Emphasizing that Turkey is not a third world country open to the exploitation of imperialist powers, they opposed to the investment of Eurogold (Taşkın, 1998). In fact, they believed that their opposition to Eurogold is an opposition to imperialism, which is stated by Taşkın in the following terms: "This is a struggle against imperialism because the people in Bergama live face to face with the concrete embodiment of imperialism in the mining company" (Interview No. 1: 2004).

Although these organic intellectuals employed elements from the leftist ideology, they articulated these elements in a new way together with environmental concerns. As it is stated by Taşkın, "Eurogold is a branch of one of the most powerful gold monopolies in the world, it is an imperialist company and wants to extract the gold in our lands harming the *environment* and the people" (EMEP, 2006, italics are added).

Concerning the environmental issues, the local politicians were specifically claiming that there is a risk of pollution of both underground waters and the air from the cyanide that would be used by the company. According to the mayor, both forms of pollution would lead to the poisoning of the local people, not only those who live in the immediate environ of the mine but also those who live in the Bergama proper (Cumhuriyet, 5 July 1991; 18 September 1991; Hürriyet, 7 November 1991; Milliyet, 6 June 1991).

Thus, as early as 1990, the mayor and a few local politicians mobilized against the mining project of Eurogold. That is, within a short time after the company announced the mining project, organic intellectuals, giving different meanings to the mining project, began to articulate another discourse than that of the company. The mining project which

was promoted by the company for its potential economic benefits, turned into a pressing problem in the discourse articulated by these organic intellectuals. In fact, rearticulating the leftist elements together with environmental elements, the organic intellectuals did not only provide a new principle of reading of the mining project, but also put into place the conditions for the later expansion of the new discursive space along the lines of both environmentalist and leftist demands. As it will be explained in the following sections, some other groups than the local people of Bergama involved in the movement around some specific demands constituted through the articulation of environmentalist and leftist elements.

Having decided to oppose to the mining project, the mayor and other local politicians began pressurizing both the company and some state agencies on the one hand, and publicizing their opposition on the other hand. While they demanded from the state authorities to inform themselves both about the use of cyanidation process and its impact on environment and about the mining complex that would be built in the area (Cumhuriyet, 5 July 1991), they demanded from the company to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report (Cumhuriyet, 18 September 1991). They started to publicize the issue particularly emphasizing the negative environmental impact of the cyanide-based technology on the basis of the information and documents they collected from the academics, professionals, and some NGOs.

One of the discursive strategies that local politicians adopted in their early efforts in publicizing the issue was that they were not against the operation of the company and its potential economic benefits, but only to the use of the cyanide-based technology (Interview No. 1: 2004). As Taşkın stated in December 1990, ‘of course we want economic wealth but we do not want to die poisoning with cyanide’ (Yeni Asır, 2 December 1996). Although these political entrepreneurs conceived the multinational company as an ‘imperialist power’, they were of the opinion that to oppose to a foreign investment in a context where neo-liberalism was becoming hegemonic is difficult. As Taşkın stated, “it was not an easy task to oppose to a foreign investment which is seen as something sacred in our country” (Reinart, 2003: 42).

Upon the demand of the protesters, the company commissioned some academics to prepare an EIA report (Cumhuriyet, 18 September 1991; Güneş, 20 May 1991).

However, not being satisfied by the prepared EIA report<sup>75</sup>, the local politicians attempted to further publicize the issue and broaden the opposition to the use of cyanide leaching process in the extraction of the gold, directing their activities both to local community and the general public. To this end, they mainly engaged in conventional action, such as lobbying, waging petition campaigns, conducting press conferences, organizing panels, seminars, and workshops, and appearing on local TV channels. (Taşkın, 1998; Reinart, 2003). In this phase, they did not engage in any direct action, nor did they have such a plan for the future. In fact, they were of opinion that they would prevent the use of cyanidation process once they informed the public and the people of Bergama about the hazardous impacts of the cyanidation process (Interview No. 1: 2004). Therefore, their main strategy was to inform the general public, authorities, and local people about the hazardous impact of the cyanide to the environment. They attributed a particular importance to the mobilization of the local people against the mine because such a mobilization would attract the attention of the public and authorities to the issue. In their attempt to mobilize the local people, the local politicians directed their efforts not only to the people of the three villages that surround the proposed mining site, but also to the people of fourteen other villages which are also located in the area. The first meeting in the villages took place in Ovacık village in April 1991, which was followed by a series of meetings (Yeni Asır, 2 December 1996). At the beginning, the local politicians did not directly contact with all the people living in these seventeen villages. Believing that the heads of these villages are the political representatives of them, they mainly contacted with the heads of the villagers. As it will be explained below in more details, however, these meetings became highly effective in the mobilization of the peasants.

In this initial phase of mobilizations against the mining project, the ‘personal experiences’ and ‘personal networks’ of the mayor, and the ‘resources of the municipality’ were of great value. The mayor was experienced in initiating and organizing campaigns since he had also organized another campaign for the return of the famous Altar of Zeus to its hometown, Bergama, from the Pergammon Museum in Berlin. In addition, as being the mayor of the town, he was able to call upon the support of academics, environmental NGOs, and professionals, such as lawyers and engineers. He was also able to engage in lobbying activities in some Ministries, such as the

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<sup>75</sup> The EIA report, which had been prepared by some academics from Dokuz Eylül University, was examined by professionals from three local Chambers of Engineers. According to professionals, the report was not satisfactory, and a gold mine in the area would pose serious threats to environment (Yeni Asır, 2 December 1996).

Ministry of Forestry, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources. Moreover, the resources of the municipality helped mayor to establish a team in the municipality whose only responsibility was to deal with the gold-mining issue. Collecting information, documents and films about the cyanidation process, and preparing brochures on ‘cyanide-gold-environment’, the team actively involved in informing the public.

Despite all their efforts, however, the initial protestors did not succeed much in the first two years of their mobilizations in attracting public attention and in getting the support of different groups. They got the support of only some professionals from the İzmir branches of some NGOs, such as the Turkish Physicians’ Association (*Türk Tabipler Birliği, TTB*), and the Turkish Union of Chambers of Architects and Engineers (*Türkiye Mimarlar ve Mühendisler Odası, TMMOB*). The support of these groups was mainly in the form of providing technical knowledge and expertise on the impact of the cyanide leaching method to environment and to public health. Although leftists concerns, as mentioned before, were also expressed by the local politicians in their struggle against the gold-mining project, leftist circles did not immediately involve in the struggle. As Taşkın remarked, even the so-called leftist media, like *Cumhuriyet* Daily, did not show any interest in the case at the beginning (Interview No. 1, 2004). However, the situation began changing in 1992. As the local politicians intensified their efforts to publicize the issue through conducting press conferences, and appearing on the TV channels, they attracted the attention of some other groups, as well.

In what follows, first, the identification of the peasants with the emergent discourse, and then, the involvement of the other groups in the embryonic movement will be examined. As mentioned before, two distinct forms of dislocation lay at the basis of the mobilizations of these groups. While the mobilization of the peasants was strictly connected to the dislocation that they experienced with the mining project, the mobilization of the other groups rather related with the dislocation that they experienced with the broader structural transformation of the country. Therefore, while the peasants identified with the emerging discourse around the particular demand for the prevention of the operation of the mine, the other groups identified with the movement around the demand for the protection of the environment, and the demand for the prevention of the operation of the multinationals in the country. It should be noted here that the examination of the mobilizations of these groups will not focus on the groups but rather on the construction and articulation of some particular demands by these groups. It

should also be noted that the order of the examination of the mobilizations of these groups does not reflect the chronology of their mobilizations. In fact, it is very difficult to give the chronology of the mobilizations of these groups, except the above-mentioned organic intellectuals who definitely became the first in the mobilizations, because while some people in a certain group are among the early protesters, some others take place among those who mobilized later.

### **7.2.2. The Mobilizations of the Bergama Peasants for the ‘Prevention of the Operation of the Gold Mine’**

Disrupting the traditional meaning structures that formed the imaginary horizon of the peasants who live in the villages that surround the proposed mining site, the proposal of the mining project by Eurogold dislocated these peasants. This is to say that within the minor social space of the Bergama peasants that had shaped their traditional way of living as small-scale farmers, the operation of a multinational mining company was not an event that could easily be symbolized. Due to the incapability of the existing traditional structures in directly rendering the mining project meaningful for them, the peasants needed some ‘new’ meanings in order to make sense of the ‘mining project’ of the multinational company because, as a dislocatory event, the project did not carry a necessary meaning within itself, nor was it possible for the local people to interpret it within the existing meaning structures. Thus, creating an indeterminacy for the peasants, an undecidability in the objective structures in Laclau’s terms, dislocation of local meaning structures forced them to take political decisions and to act. In other words, the inadequacy of the existing structures to confer meanings to the mining project forced the peasants to identify with a discourse that attributes meanings to it. Hence, it is not the determinacy of structural conditions but rather their indeterminacy caused by dislocation became a critical factor in the politicization of the peasants.

Although it is the dislocation engendered by the mining project that created a crisis situation, that is, dislocation for the Bergama peasants, it cannot be said that it did directly lead peasants to regard the mining project as a social problem, or did directly lead to their mobilizations against it. This is so because dislocation does not contain any necessary meaning in itself, and therefore, can be interpreted in many different ways. It was only after the efforts of the organic intellectuals, such as the then mayor of Bergama, some local left-wing politicians, and some academics, who informed the peasants defining the ‘mining project’ as a ‘problem’, that the peasants began to conceive it as a

problem to be solved. Constructing mining project as a direct threat to the livelihoods of peasants, these organic intellectuals created a sense of crisis at the discursive level. Bergama peasants, some of whom initially welcomed the mining company with economic expectations, began regarding the mining project as a pressing social problem and accordingly began questioning the mining project as they identified with emergent resistance discourse<sup>76</sup>. Put differently, it was only after they identified with the protest discourse that the peasants questioned the mining project, considering it as posing a serious threat to their traditional way of life and traditional self-image, and accordingly, a serious social problem to be solved. It is precisely this particular perception of the mining project that paved the way for the mobilization of the peasants against the mining company. The situation would have been completely different if the peasants had identified not with the protest discourse but with the discourse of the mining company in which the operation of the mine was not constructed as a problem but something that should be celebrated by the local people.

The identification of the peasants with the emerging protest discourse, however, did take some time because local politicians initially directed their activities only to the heads of the villages. It was in 1991 that the local politicians decided to direct their activities to the other peasants in the villages that surround the mining area. The first meeting was held in Ovacık village in April 1991, which was followed by several panels and meetings in the villages organized by local politicians together with the environmentalist, professionals and academics (Yeni Asır, 23 April 1991). In the panels and meetings, these intellectuals, particularly academics and professionals, provided technical information about the cyanide-leaching method emphasizing the risks it bears for the environment and for the public health. They emphasized the negative impact of the ‘cyanide technology’ to the lives of the people in the area, particularly stressing that it would damage the surrounding environment, harm agriculture, and lead to serious health problems for people living there. It was repeatedly being stressed in the meetings that ‘cyanide is the most dangerous poison in the world’, and as such, it does not merely threaten the environment and the quality of life of the inhabitants of the region but ‘more

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<sup>76</sup> The Bergama case also indicates that interests are not given, or pre-existing. Rather, interests of people are subject to change and construction. While some peasants initially regarded the ‘mining project’ as furthering their interests as a new source of income, after their identification with the protest discourse they regarded it as a threat to their interests. Thus, interests are also constructed in relation to identities of people.

importantly' it 'kills the people and the nature' (Taşkın, 1998: 9). In the meetings, some documents and documentary movies about the negative environmental impact of the mines were used. In addition to the environmental risks of the cyanide-leaching method, it was pointed out that there would be other hazardous effects of the mine to the surrounding area and to the people: in grinding the ore large amounts of dust would be produced which would harm both the agricultural products in the lands and the people of the area; the company would use considerable amounts of water everyday, and as such it would consume the water resources of the area which would make it difficult for the peasants to have sufficient water supplies for agriculture; the mining waste would contain not only cyanide but also some other heavy metals, such as arsenic, cadmium, and antimony, which are as harmful as the cyanide to the environment and to the public health (Interview, No. 1, 2004).

In addition to emphasizing the environmental dangers of the cyanide-leaching method, organic intellectuals also underlined in the meetings that multinational companies like Eurogold invest in 'developing' or 'underdeveloped' countries not for the well-being of the local communities but for exploiting the resources of these countries (Interview No. 1: 2004). They also effectively countered the claims of the company, which emphasized the economic benefits of the mine to the area, by means of stressing that Bergama region has highly fertile agricultural lands which is economically more valuable than the mining activities which would cover a short-time period, and that the potential contribution of the mine both to the people in the area and to the national economy is far less than the harms it would bring. For these reasons, it was underlined that it is in no way worth bearing the risks the operation of the mine carry (Interview, No. 1, 2004).

Hence, the operation of the mine was constructed as a direct threat both to the environment and to the lives of the peasants and the company itself was constructed as an 'enemy' in and through the emergent protest discourse. Besides defining the mining project as a 'social problem' and the mining company as an 'enemy', the solution to the problem was also offered in the protest discourse: the opposition to the mining company and the mining project. It was stressed that if peasants do not oppose to the operation of the mine, their lands and their lives would be destroyed, and they, at best, would be displaced from their lands, or at worst, would simply die. Thus, the survival of the peasants in their own lands would depend on the struggle against the mine. It was also emphasized that it is the peasants who should protect their land, and it is their one of basic rights to oppose the operation of the company in their region (Interview No. 1,

2004). Moreover, the importance of acting together, *acting collectively*, was repeatedly stressed in the meetings. Taşkın stated, “we repeatedly emphasized in the meetings that our success could be achieved only through our unification against Eurogold” (Interview No. 1, 2004).

The initial reaction of the villagers, some of whom, as mentioned, had welcomed the idea of the operation of the gold mine in their area at the beginning, was that they were neither against nor for the mining activities. They were suspicious of both the claims of the mining company and the claims of the initial protestors (Interview No. 1, 2004). Without taking a certain stance, they were stating that ‘if it would be beneficial for our country, the mine should be operated, but if not, it should not be operated’ (Taşkın, 1998). However, as the number and intensity of the panels and meetings increased, the peasants gradually identified with the emergent protest discourse and mobilized against the company. ‘First of all’ Taşkın remarked ‘people learnt the impact of the cyanidation process. They did not directly participate to the protests. But after a learning process, they decided to oppose the mine’ (Interview No. 1, 2004). Towards the end of 1991, the heads of the ten villages, Alacalar, Ovacık, Çamköy, Pınarköy, Tepeköy, Aşağı Kırıklar, Kurfalı, Sağancı, Narlıca, and Süleymanlı villages, declared that they do not want the mine. They started a petition campaign in the villages against the operation of the gold mine. The petition was signed by 100 people from each village and then submitted to the İzmir governorship (Hürriyet, 7 November 1991).

The most important factor that turned the ‘ordinary’ peasants into ‘protesters’ was the *sense of crisis* that was created at the discursive level through the construction of the ‘mining project’ as a direct threat to the environment as well as to the health of the peasants in the protest discourse. Thus, the mining project did not directly bring unrest to the local community, and did not directly lead to the emergence of the protests. But, rather, both unrest and the necessity of mobilizations to overcome unrest were created through the construction of the protest discourse. In other words, the peasants conceived the mining project as a direct threat to their traditional livelihoods, and decided to mobilize against the mining project, with their identification with the emergent protest discourse.

Through the *identification* of the peasants with the emerging discourse, however, the discourse took new forms. That is, the peasants also constituted the protest discourse with their identification with it. While organic intellectuals mainly emphasized the



'threats' of the mining project to the environment and to the lives of the peasants, the mining project was also perceived by the peasants as a threat to their 'culture' and related lifestyle. That is, the peasants regarded the operation of the mine as a direct threat not only to their means of subsistence and their lives but also to their 'peasant' identity and the whole lifestyle that accompany this identity. This is because peasants believed that not only their livelihoods but also their identities are strongly tied to the land. This perception furthered the sense of crisis that was created through the protest discourse. Thus, a feeling and an experience of dislocation emerged in the local community through the creation of a sense of crisis of survival and a sense of crisis of culture in the emerging resistance discourse, which can be best captured in the statements of the peasants:

It is the fear of death that leads us to resist the opening of the mine. Our lands are gold for us, we do not need any other gold (Gökçeoğlu, as cited in Reinart, 2003: 6, author's translation).

We have been trying to save our lives (Umaç, as cited in Reinart, 2003: 9, author's translation).

If we move from our villages to another place, what would happen to us? What would we eat and drink? We cannot live in a city. We have been living in honor in our villages. Even those who were born and grown up in cities have some difficulties there. It would be our end to move cities because the only way of living we know is to live in our villages dealing with agriculture and nothing else (Kurhan, as cited in Reinart, 2003: 6, author's translation).

Who does purchase our land if we try to sell them? We do not have any other profession. What can we do [in order to earn our living] if we move to another place? If someone rejects to buy our agricultural products claiming that they are produced in the lands polluted by the use of cyanide, this would be our end (Interview No. 6, 2004).

Thus, making sense of what was happening in their settlement area through the emergent protest discourse, peasants began to be afraid of losing the means of their subsistence and therefore displacement from their homelands. They believed that damaging their livelihood and driving them from their homes and lands, the operation of the mine would also destroy their traditional patterns of life. It is precisely the disruption of their sense of self-identity in this way that forced the peasants to take a decision. Accordingly, in order to prevent all these threats they decided to act against the mining project.

Although the protest discourse emphasized the threats of the gold-mining to the traditional livelihood of the peasants, it did not only refer to the interests of the peasants. Besides, there was a strong *affective* dimension in the protest discourse that was also mobilized. The affective dimension of the emergent discourse, which was highly related

with the constitution of the mining company as an enemy, consisted of the construction of the mining company as the one that poses a threat to the *fullness* of the peasants that they, allegedly, had enjoyed before the mining project was introduced. In that way, the traditional 'peasant' identity was reconstituted again as something that provided peasants a fullness, *jouissance* in Lacanian words, which missed with the mining project and created a *lack* in them. The peasants expressed this experience in the following way:

We had been very happy in our villages until the mining company announced that they found gold (Sezer in Reinart, 2003, author's translation).

We had been living in peace until this foreign company came here. It is the mining problem that disturbed our lives. At this old age [75-year old], I have turned into a protester which I did not know anything about it before (Ünek in Reinart, 2003: 39, author's translation).

In order to overcome the problems that they experienced, that is, in order to achieve the fullness, which they believed they had before the mining company invested in their area, peasants identified with the emerging protest discourse and decided to act together with all those who also oppose the mining project, such as the local politicians, professionals, and environmentalists. Put differently, peasants attempted to fill the lack, which became apparent to them with the dislocation of their traditional self-image, through their identification with the emergent protest discourse that provided solutions to the dislocation that they experienced. As it will be indicated in the following chapter, as the threat became more concrete with the initial operations of the mining company in the mining site, the peasants decided to stage protests engaging in direct action to prevent the operations of the mine.

Besides the lack that peasants felt, two 'positive' factors became influential in the mobilization of the peasants. One is the participation of women to the meetings, and the other is the ethnic characteristics of some villages. At the beginning, only men from the villages were participating to the meetings because meetings were held in public coffee houses in the villages where traditionally only men come together. After the local politicians invited the women to the meetings, it became much easier for them to mobilize the peasants. The women, unlike the men, had not expected to work in the mine. Therefore, they did not conceive the mine as an alternative work to agriculture, and this increased the threat they perceived to their 'peasant' identities. Afterwards, the mobilization of the villagers owed much to the participation of the women to the meetings because the women played crucial roles in the Bergama movement not merely actively involving in the protests but also convincing the men to take part in them. In the

later phase of the movement, they even took the decision of not sleeping with their husbands in order to urge them to be more active in the struggle (Interview No. 2, 2004; Yeni Yüzyıl, 17 May 1997; Radikal, 17 May 1997).

Among the villages surrounding the mining site, some of them, such as Narlıca and Çamköy, mobilized earlier than the others. The ethnic characteristics of some villages helped their rapid mobilization. The predominant leftist tendencies in Alevi villages were of great help in their rapid mobilization because, due to the articulation of leftist elements in it, the protest discourse easily appealed to them (Interview No. 1, 2004). The peasants from these villages played important roles in the mobilization of other villages. Particularly, the women of these villages played crucial roles in the mobilization of the other peasants from the other villages, visiting the women in other villages and convincing them to the cause of the protests (Interview No. 6, 2004).

Although there is a shared territorial identity of the peasants, as being ‘peasants of Bergama’, the territorial identity is not a strong bond between the peasants due to the considerable ethnic differences among them, and therefore did not play an important role in the mobilization of the peasants. Each village in the area represents a particular ethnic identity<sup>77</sup>. Due to these differences, it was not an easy task to bring all of them together. In order to bring them together, it was repeatedly underlined in every meeting that ‘cyanide kills everybody without separating the Sunni from the Alevi, the Turk from Circassian or the Kurd, or the Leftist from the Rightist’ (Interview No. 1, 2004). Thus, despite their pre-existing differences, peasants from different villages became equivalents in the sense that they were all threatened by the mining operations. Ethnic differences, however, became unimportant through the struggle because solidarity developed among the peasants who have different ethnic belongings (Interview No. 8, 2005).

In the identification of the peasants with the emerging discourse not merely its availability as an alternative to the discourse of the company but also both the credibility of the protest discourse (Laclau, 1990) and the reliability of the organic intellectuals played important roles. The credibility of the emergent discourse was high for the Bergama peasants, at least higher than that of the company, because it clearly related to

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<sup>77</sup> Ethnic composition of villages: Alevis, migrants from Balkan countries such as Pomaks of Bulgaria, migrants from Greece and former Yugoslavia, Turkmen villagers called Manav, and those called Yürük (Interview No. 1, 2004).

the basic principles that characterized the Bergama peasants. It, for instance, stressed the importance of land and agriculture for the peasants. More importantly, the emphasis on the ‘foreignness’ of the company and its aim of ‘exploitation’ well resonated among the Bergama peasants because they related to the historical experiences of these people<sup>78</sup>. The credibility of the emergent discourse was further increased with two incidents and a news. The incidents consisted of the ‘pollution’ of underground waters in June 1991 in Narlıca, Ovacık, and Çamköy villages and the explosion of dynamites during the exploratory drillings of the mining company (Milliyet, 6 June 1991). The news, on the other hand, which appeared in a journal called *US News and World Report* in October 1991, was about the negative environmental impact of the goldmines and goldmining with cyanidation process in general, and about the potential risks of the operation of the gold mine in Bergama in particular (Yeni Asır, 4 December 1996). The organic intellectuals disseminated this news in the villages. These factors, the pollution of the water resources, the explosions, and the news about goldmining, contributed to the mobilization of the peasants against the mining project furthering their doubts about the mining project, which had been already raised through the activities of the organic intellectuals. They, in a sense, ‘warned’ peasants about the negative environmental impact of mining activities.

The mobilization of the peasants against the mining project became influential in the mobilization of some other groups because it attracted the attention of these groups to the movement, and thereby, made them aware of the availability of a protest discourse. “It is after peasants mobilized that the mining project attracted much attention of professionals and environmentalists in İzmir” (Interview No. 3, 2004; Interview No. 4, 2004). Moreover, those who had supported the movement before the mobilization of peasants began committing much more time and energy to the movement after the mobilization of the peasants. It is to the mobilization of these groups that the study now turns.

### **7.2.3. The Involvement of Environmentalist, Academics, and Professional Groups in the Emerging Movement**

As the local politicians publicized the issue, some other local politicians, some groups of academics, environmentalists, and professionals, such as engineers, physicians and lawyers, began identifying with the movement around some environmental demands.

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<sup>78</sup> The ancestors of Bergama peasants fought against foreign invaders in the National Liberation War of Turkey waged in the early 1920s (Interview, No.6, 2004).

Bakırçay Union of Municipalities, which consisted of 18 municipalities in the region, was one of the first supporters of the emergent movement (Cumhuriyet, 11 April 1992). A group of academics from the universities in İzmir and İstanbul also engaged in the emerging movement, committing substantial technical expertise to it. They actively participated to the meetings, panels, seminars and workshops both in Bergama proper and in the villages of Bergama, providing technical knowledge and expertise on gold mining, the cyanide-leaching method, and the environmental impact of both gold-mining and cyanide-leaching method. Similarly, some professional groups in İzmir supported the emerging movement with environmental concerns. Constituting an informal organization called ‘İzmir-Bergama hand-in-hand Movement’, which consisted of all the local branches of Chambers of Engineers in İzmir, except the local branch of the Chamber of Mining Engineers, and some local environmentalist NGOs, they began preparing reports on the impact of the cyanidation process to public health, and to environment, and participating to panels, meetings, and press conferences to inform both the locals of Bergama, and the general public about the negative environmental impact of gold mines (Interview No.3, 2004).

Although professional groups were involved in the mobilizations against the gold-mining project as early as 1991, they gradually invested much more time and energy to the movement. The rapid involvement of the professionals owed much to the existence of environmental commissions in these professional organizations, which did not exist in the local professional organizations in other cities. The involvement of the professionals in the mobilizations is also related with the character and nature of the gold-mining issue. Gold-mining and its impact to the environment is a multifaceted subject which concerns experts from different disciplines. The ‘mining’ issue, for instance, concerns not only mining engineers but also geology, and metallurgy engineers. Moreover, because of the chemical processes used in recovering gold, chemistry engineers are also concerned. Finally, the impact of mines to surrounding area concerns environmental engineers, agricultural engineers, and physicians.

It should be stressed, however, that although all of these factors contributed to the mobilization of these groups, none of them directly led them to oppose the mining project. The main factor behind the mobilization of these groups against the mine was that the emergent discursive space appealed to them through the articulation of environmental elements. It provided an avenue for these people to construct and express environmental demands. Unlike the locals of Bergama, these people, in fact, did not

experience a deep dislocation with the mining project. Therefore, they did not engage in the movement in a way to reconstitute their identities in a radical way. Rather, most of them involved in the movement to reproduce their existing identities, which they felt somehow blocked within the existing structures. The particular contribution these groups made to the constitution of the new discourse was to clearly construct and articulate environmental demands. Although environmental elements had already been articulated by the above-mentioned organic intellectuals, they turned into clearly articulated demands only with the participation of the professionals, environmentalist, and academics. Thus, these groups did not only oppose to the specific mining project of Eurogold but also articulated the demands for the prevention of the operation of the gold mines in the country and also for the protection of the environment.

In their opposition to the operation of the gold mine in Bergama, the academics, engineers and environmentalist particularly questioned the rationale behind permitting gold-mining in Bergama area which, they argued, is one of the least suitable places for gold-mining for a number of reasons (Interview No. 3, 2004). For one thing, the proposed mining site was very close to the settlement area of villagers, and therefore, would threaten the public health. Secondly, gold-mining would harm the main economic activities in the region, such as agriculture and tourism. Thirdly, there was a risk of discharge from the tailings pond where the company planned to collect and keep the mining waste, which, if realized, would poison the underground water reserves. Moreover, the risk of discharge would continue for long years, even after the mining operations are over.

In addition to the above-mentioned groups, a group of lawyers from İzmir, called ‘Lawyers for the Environment’<sup>79</sup> also involved in the movement for environmental

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<sup>79</sup> The ‘Lawyers for the Environment’ group mainly deals with the legal dimension of environmental issues that negatively affect the ecological balance and the historical integrity of İzmir and its surrounding area. They provide service, free of charge, for those who want to take environmental issues to the courts (Turkish Daily News, 13 June 1997). It was first established as the environmental commission of the İzmir Bar Association but eventually separated from the Bar and maintained its activities on its own. It is not registered anywhere as an NGO but maintains its activities on the basis of the constitutional rights for organization and appeal (Özkan, 2004). Before their involvement in Bergama struggle, they staged different successful campaigns, such as preventing the construction of a big shopping mall in Konak, İzmir, and preventing the construction of power stations at different sites around İzmir. They also actively involved in the protest campaign waged against the operations of the gold-mining multinational Preussag in Küçükdere-Havran.

concerns towards the end of the 1993<sup>80</sup>. While the academics and engineers opposed to the mine on the grounds of ‘scientific’ and ‘technical truths’ about the environmental impact of gold-mining, the lawyers opposed to the mine on the grounds of ‘environmental rights’ of local people. They argued that the mining company was required to get the approval of the local people to operate the mine, stating that:

It is very clear in Bergen agreement, the Paris Treaty and the Rio Declaration, to which Turkey is a signatory, and which are higher than our own law, that there must be a formal public hearing and approval by people who would be affected from the operation of the gold mine (Interview, No. 2, 2004).

As it will be indicated in the following chapters in more details, the involvement of the lawyers to the movement has become particularly influential in the unfolding of the movement due to a number of reasons. For one thing, the lawyers added a new dimension to the emerging resistance discourse emphasizing the ‘rights’ of the local people that are guaranteed by the Turkish constitution, such as the ‘right to live’ and the ‘right to healthy environment’. Secondly, being experts in environmental issues and environmental law, they, most notably Senih Özay and Noyan Özkan, initiated a litigation process against the mining project which played a crucial role in the trajectory of the movement<sup>81</sup>. Thirdly, their experiences in waging environmental campaigns highly contributed to the Bergama movement<sup>82</sup>. And finally, taking place in environmentalist networks, they provided new links to the movement both at the national and international levels.

The emergent movement was also supported by some regional and national environmental NGOs, such as the South Marmara Environmental Protection Association (*Güney Marmara Çevreyi Koruma Derneği*), and the Association for the Protection of Natural Life (*Doğal Hayatı Koruma Derneği*) (Milliyet, 18 July 1992; Hürriyet, 15 November 1993). With the involvement of these environmentalist groups in the

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<sup>80</sup> In fact, the ‘Lawyers for the Environment’ group began interesting in the issue in 1992. However, they could not start the legal struggle at that time because Bergama peasants, at first, did not cooperate with them. It was after the Lawuers for the Environment group obtained an important court decisions in favor of the protesters in Küçükdere-Havran, the Bergama peasants relied on them and accepted to cooperate in bringing the issue to the courts (Yeni Asır, 6 December 1996).

<sup>81</sup> Senih Özay was among the founders of the short-lived Green Party in Turkey, whereas Noyan Özkan is the first lawyer who initiated litigation processes on the basis environmental rights. Moreover, Senih Özay was also the lawyer of the Greenpeace activists (Özay, 2006).

<sup>82</sup> They actively participated in the protest campaign in Küçükdere-Havran which was waged against another gold-mining multinational.

movement, the environmentalist concerns began to be more strongly pronounced in the embryonic discourse of the emergent movement. Together with the local politicians, some of these NGOs also played very important roles actively participating to the meetings and panels that were organized to inform local people and the general public. They also prepared a number of reports on the issues of gold-mining, the use of cyanide, the environmental impact of gold-mining, and so on. The Association for the Protection of Natural Life, for instance, prepared an alternative report to the EIA report of the company, which stated that the EIA report was full of mistakes and omissions, and that there was a considerable risk that the cyanide could mix up with the underground water and lead to some serious illnesses (Milliyet, 4 August 1992). A similar report was also prepared by a special commission set up by the Chambers of Architects and Engineers (Milliyet, 18 July 1992). These reports were not only used in informing the local people and the general public but also sent to the then Prime Minister, and other ministers (Milliyet, 4 August 1992).

#### **7.2.4. The Involvement of the National Chambers of Professionals in the Movement**

Towards the end of the initial phase of the Bergama movement, both some professionals from the different chambers, and some chambers themselves that operate at the national level such as Chamber of Geology Engineers, Chamber of Environmental Engineers, and Chamber of Chemistry Engineers, and also the Union of the Chambers of Engineers and Architects involved in the struggle for both environmental and leftist concerns. As is the case with all groups that involved in the struggle, with the involvement of the professionals from these different chambers the Bergama struggle gained new meanings and a new importance. In other words, actively engaging in the process of the constitution of the new discursive space, the professionals further contributed to the construction of the emergent discourse through their interventions.

The people from these chambers attempted to expand the struggle by turning the locally emerged movement into a national one. To this end, they involved in the struggle emphasizing that 'everywhere is Bergama and we are all from Bergama'. Bergama struggle has been conceived by these people as an 'anti-imperialist' and 'anti-globalization' struggle (TMMOB, 2000). The particular meaning that these actors attributed to the 'mining project' was closely connected to the dissatisfaction that these people felt with the rise of neo-liberalism. They opposed to the operation of the goldmine in Bergama because they regarded the mining company as part of the 'new world order'



to which they oppose. In the new world order, they argued, ‘imperialist powers created a terror on the natural resources of underdeveloped and developing countries’ (TMMOB, 2000). As they stated, their opposition to the operation of the gold-mining multinational company in Bergama is ‘not only for the environmental risks it carries but also for the aims of the multinational corporations on our country’s mines’ (TMMOB, ND). This is so because:

Although the risks for the environment has been the one that is mostly stressed in Bergama case, there is another dimension of it which is as important as the environmental risks: the interests and plans of the multinational corporations on our natural minerals and resources. They [multinational corporations] started their activities with gold mines but in the future they will attempt to take over all the mines in our country. Their real aim is to use these mines not for the interests of the people of our country but for their own interests. Therefore, it should be our the most prioritized task to reveal the plans of the multinational corporations (TMMOB, ND).

This perception is related with how the broader changes in Turkey have been conceived by these circles. Contrary to its promotion by governments, the opening of the Turkish economy to international capital as a result of the liberalization policies is regarded by these circles as a threat to the economic independence of the country. In a parallel way, the investment of foreign capital to Turkey is seen as a new form of colonialism and imperialism, because ‘through liberalization and globalization, the natural resources of developing and underdeveloped countries have been opened to the exploitation of the multinational companies’ (Öngür, 2002: 3). The appeal of the Bergama protest discourse for these people, therefore, should be explained with the fact it opposes and antagonizes a multinational company.

With the involvement of professional groups in the movement, not only leftist and anti-imperialist themes began to be more strongly pronounced in the discourse of the movement, but also ‘the loose environmental rules and regulations’ in Turkey began to take place in the anti-gold mining discourse. It is stressed that multinational corporations, especially producers of toxic substances like mining companies, choose to locate their operations not in developed countries but in developing and underdeveloped countries in order to benefit both from the low environmental standards and from the weak enforcement of the rules and regulations in these countries. This is also because they are not allowed in developing countries due to their harmful effects to environment:

....after their harmful effects to the environment became clear in the mid of 1980s, the mining companies directed their activities to the developing and

underdeveloped countries due to the loose environmental rules and regulations in these countries (Öngür, 2002: 6).

It is also underlined that the governments of developing countries keep environmental standards as low as possible for the foreign investments for offering them investment opportunities with low costs. In other words, developing countries lower their environmental standards, or just not raise them, in order to gain competitive advantages over others and thereby to attract new FDI, particularly those operating in chemicals, oil, and mining sectors.

The governments of developing countries expected that foreign companies would be attracted to the country because of the existence of various mineral resources and because of loose environmental rules and regulations (Öngür, 2002: 6)

Hence, with the more emphasis that the professional groups put on ‘anti-imperialist’ themes, the emergent anti-gold mining discourse gained a new meaning, and a significance over the ‘prevention of the operation of a specific mine’. Within the ideological context which is marked by the Turkish state’s commitment and eagerness to provide an attractive investment climate for foreign companies, it has turned into an opposition to the neo-liberal ideology that govern Turkish state’s policies in the fields of ‘foreign direct investment’ and ‘environment’.

With the involvement of those groups other than Bergama locals in the movement, the issue of the operation of the mine in Bergama were tied to some wider issues, such as the state’s ignorance of environmental protection, or prioritization of economic activities over environment, and neo-liberal transformation of the country, and this paved the way for construction of the new social demands: protection of environment, prevention of the operation of the gold mines, and prevention of the operation of the foreign and multinational companies that means another form of economic developmentalism which does not ascribe a priority on big companies, particularly MNCs, over the small-scale farmers. As mentioned, the ‘mining project’ did not pose the same threats to these people as it posed for the Bergama people, therefore, did not lead to a dislocation in the sense that it created for the peasants. The dislocation that these groups experienced was rather a result of the neo-liberal transformation. But still these groups were mobilized against the mining project because it was conceived by them as the embodiment of the broader neo-liberal arrangements, and therefore, a concrete target to oppose. With this opposition, they attempted to reproduce their ‘environmentalist’ and/or ‘leftist’ identities,

which they felt as blocked with the rise of neo-liberalism and concomitant collapse of left-wing politics. Thus, these groups regarded the mining project or the mining company as the one that embodies the blockage of the full constitution of their identity, or what amounts to the same thing, as an antagonist. However, with their opposition to the mining project, these groups, in fact, expressed their opposition to the hegemony and logic of the neo-liberal order. Thus, while for the peasants it is ‘the prevention of the operation of the mine’ per se that is important, for the environmentalists and professionals ‘the prevention of the mine’ signified some other meanings.

Having examined the identifications of different social groups with the emerging anti-gold mining discourse, the study now turns to analyze the logic of the new discourse that was constituted through the interventions and identifications of these actors.

### **7.3. The Logic of the Emergent Bergama Resistance Discourse**

Unlike the other mobilization in Küçükdere against another gold-mining multinational, Bergama protest movement represented more than a local opposition to the operations of a goldmine, for it has not simply expressed the demands of the local residents for the prevention of the goldmine in Bergama in an isolated way, but also constituted and voiced some other demands for ‘broader’ changes such as ‘protection of the environment’, ‘prevention of goldmining’, and ‘prevention of the operation of the multinational and foreign companies in the country’. Accordingly, the constituents of the Bergama movement have not been limited with the local people in the initial phase of the movement. A number of other groups have also involved in the movement constructing and articulating different social demands.

From the perspective adopted in this study, discourses do not refer to self-contained entities and as such the constitution of a discourse requires drawing frontiers and defining those that remain outside. In other words, the discursive production of ‘others’ was a necessary condition for the constitution of the protest discourse. In the constitution of the anti- mining discourse, the mining company and all those who support the company were regarded as the ‘enemy’ to be opposed of. As such an *antagonistic* relation was constructed between the mining company, and its supporters, and the protestors. Put differently, the discourse of the movement was constituted exteriorizing the mining company and its supporters as the radical ‘other’ who prevent the satisfaction of the demands of protesters. Although ‘environmental’ and ‘anti-imperialist’ demands

targeted the broader structures, those people who mobilized around these demands still regarded the mining company as the enemy because they envisaged it as embodying the broader structures. The constitution of the mining company as the common enemy has utmost importance in the emergence of the Bergama movement. As being the enemy, the mining company was seen as responsible from the *lack* that the Bergama peasants and other groups felt with the *dislocation* that they experienced. That is to say that constituting an antagonistic relation with the mining company, the protesters displaced the responsibility of their lack onto the mining company. It is exactly the constitution of the mining company in this way that led to the mobilization of these groups against it since they believed that the elimination of the mining company as the enemy would also eliminate their lack.

While the anti-mining discourse was initially constituted in opposition to the mining project, the articulation of this opposition with environmentalist and leftist themes prepared the ground for the expansion of the opposition from the very outset. In this way, besides constructing ‘the prevention of the operation of the mine’ as a specific social demand of Bergama locals, the emerging discourse also provided a space for the construction and articulation of some other social demands that are much broader, such as protection of environment in general, and prevention of the operation of the multinationals. In fact, extending the particularistic demand of the prevention of the operation of the gold mine through the articulation of the other demands, Bergama protest movement, did not only oppose to the specific mining project of Eurogold but also to the mining, environmental, and foreign direct investment policies of the Turkish state. In this regard, it also signified a resistance to the neo-liberal ideology which governs the policies of the Turkish state in all these fields. In other words, although emerged as a response and reaction to a ‘mining project’ that was proposed by a multinational company, Bergama movement also began signifying a resistance to the logic of the broader structures that privilege economic activities of foreign corporations over local communities, public health, and environment.

The different particular demands were articulated in the anti-gold mining discourse through inscribing them in a chain of equivalence that was formed against the operation of the mining company. Accordingly, the boundaries of the coalition between different groups were drawn through identifying the multinational company as their common enemy. As such, both the *logic of difference* and the *logic of equivalence* come into play in the Bergama protest discourse. While the differential relation among these demands

refers to differences between their positive features, the equivalential relation refers to the fact that they all oppose to the mining project.

Although different groups have been brought together through linking their different particular demands in a common discourse, there were different specific factors behind the mobilization of each group. In the kind of analysis pursued in this study, the mobilization of these groups was viewed as related with dislocation. As explained, the dislocatory experiences of the peasants, stemmed from the mining project, coincided with the dislocation that the other groups experienced with the broader structural transformations. Disrupting not only existing structures but also together with them the subject positions internal to these structures, dislocation forced these people to construct themselves through the acts of identification. As explained above, the anti-mining discourse was started to be constituted through the opposition of a few numbers of local politicians to the mining project of Eurogold. It took new forms as the peasants, environmentalists, academics, and professionals identified with it. Thus, in the final instance, the anti-mining discourse was constructed in the emergence phase of the Bergama movement by the *decisions* of all these actors to identify with it. What is meant here with the decision of actors is not something that is based on a rational calculation. Rather, decision is used here to denote the political act of subjects. In fact, subject emerges with the decision because the dislocated structure refers to the *undecidable* terrain, and as such, cannot determine the decision of the subject. The moment of the decision, therefore, is that of the subject. It should be underlined that although the emergent discourse was constituted by these actors, it was not totally fashioned by these actors as they wished. This is because these actors faced with a situation in which objectivity was only partially dislocated.

Concerning the construction of the protest discourse, it should also be noted that it was a *radical construction* because it is not determined by the existing structures. As a new space of representation, it does not bear a necessary relation of continuity with the existing structures, and this discontinuity gives the emergent discourse a *mythical* character. Thus, although the emergence of the resistance discourse had precise ‘conditions of possibility’, its emergence was neither a necessity nor its form and shape totally determined by the existing structures. Through the articulation of different demands a new discourse, *myth* as Laclau calls it, was constituted that brought different groups together. It is very important to underline here that the particular problems and dissatisfaction of different social groups who involved in the Bergama movement were

translated into *social demands* with the constitution of the new discursive space. In other words, social demands that were articulated within the emergent protest discourse did not pre-exist their inscription in that discourse. The protest discourse, therefore, did not passively convey, but rather actively constituted them.

Yet, the resistance discourse cannot be seen as a total creation because it still, to some extent, drew on the existing meaning structures. Although the resistance discourse as a whole represented a break both with the existing structures in the local Bergama context and with the neo-liberal logic, it nevertheless had some components of the existing structures. The emergent discourse, therefore, entailed both continuity and discontinuity with the existing structures. It had some continuity particularly with the pre-existing environmental discourse and leftist discourse since it employed ideological raw materials from both. Besides articulating the demands of the peasants for survival, it articulated the concerns of environmentalists and the demands of those who oppose to neo-liberal globalization. While the former was totally constituted through the resistance discourse, the same cannot be claimed for the latter two demands. What gives the anti-mining discourse a different character, however, is that it articulated all these pre-existing elements in a new way. That is, the articulation of these different particular demands within a discourse was new.

The existing structures influenced the emergent movement not only providing ideological raw materials but also through the availability of *resources* and *mobilizing structures*. As it is well documented in social movements literature, the availability of resources, such as money and information, and pre-existing formal or informal mobilizing structures, such as pre-existing organizations, work settings, and neighborhood, play crucial roles in the mobilization of people. As mentioned, in its initial phase the resources of the municipality were of great value for the Bergama movement. Moreover, the resources professionals, academics, and environmentalists provided in the form of technical knowledge and information were very valuable in the construction of the protest discourse as well as in the mobilization of the peasants. On the other hand, the movement largely drew on the preexisting networks in its emergence phase. Unlike most of the other cities in Turkey, the presence of environmentally-concerned groups in İzmir, and existence of social networks between these groups was very important in the rapid mobilization of these groups against the mining project. The mobilization of the local people against the mine rapidly attracted the attention of such environmentally sensitive circles.

To sum up, it was through the constitution of a new discursive space which constructed and articulated particular social demands of different social groups, that a process of mobilization started against the mining company, gold-mining, and the neo-liberal logic. Despite the rapid mobilization of some groups in this initial phase, however, a collective identity among those who involved in the movement did not yet develop.

### **7.3.1 Action Forms of the Bergama Movement in the Emergence Phase**

The actions that social movements engage in are important part of their discourses because the activists construct and articulate new meanings not only through what they verbally claim, but also through their actions. Moreover, it is through employing different action forms that movement actors endeavor to disseminate the meanings constructed within the discourse of the movement. In grasping the discourse of a movement, therefore, the analysis of action forms of a movement, or the repertoire of action of a movement in Tilly's (1978) words, is as important as the analysis of what movement actors say and write. As it will be explained below, among the different forms of collective action it is particularly public protests that are very valuable for movement actors who, unlike their most powerful adversaries, often lack, or have a limited, access to the institutionalized means for voicing their claims.

As explained in Chapter 4, after their initial emergence social movements engage in different forms of action in their attempt to voice their claims and thereby to further their causes. With their actions, the movement actors attempt to convey messages to different audiences that consist of not merely the related state authorities and the adversaries but also the general public, whose sympathy and support can play a critical role for the movements in pressurizing both the adversaries and the state authorities to effect the changes they want. The movement actors, therefore, also try to win the sympathy and build the support of the bystander public via attracting the sympathetic coverage of the news media through engaging in different forms of action. Although the actions of movements possess a strategic dimension, the strategies of movement actors are also influenced by a number of structural factors, such as the institutional political structure in the country, the counter-strategies of the rival parties, the counter-actions of the social control apparatuses of the state, the resources of the protesters at their disposals, and so on. Depending on all these factors, social movements employ either *conventional* or *unconventional actions*, or a blend of both. The unconventional actions, particularly innovative and confrontational ones, are usually more effective in terms of attracting the

attention of the news media and the bystander public than the conventional actions that are often unnoticed.

As it is the case with almost all social movements, after the initial formation of the movement, the actors of the Bergama movement strategically engaged in different forms of actions to voice their claims against the authorities. It should be borne in mind that the strategies of the Bergama movement were shaped through the process whereby the reciprocal interactions between movement actors, the company, and state agencies took place. Although in retrospect, it can appear that the movement actors were totally self-conscious, rational, and calculative, it was in fact almost impossible for the movement actors to be rational to that extent. It should also be noted here that Bergama protesters did not establish any formal, be it legal or illegal, organization which would function as the central body of the movement. Rather, the movement consisted of an informal and non-hierarchical network among the different social groups who identified with the anti-mining discourse. Therefore, while there was a communication and coordination between different groups, there did not exist any central organ that determine strategies and tactics of the movement and lead all the social groups.

The action forms that Bergama protestors used throughout the 14 year between 1991 and 2005 can be broadly classified as *conventional* forms of action and *unconventional*, or noninstitutionalized, forms of action<sup>83</sup>. Although this classification, which is commonly used in the social movement literature, is helpful in identifying the type of actions that movements use, it is too broad to differentiate some actions from the others. For instance, it cannot differentiate peaceful demonstrations from the confrontational ones due to its placing them under the same category. Therefore, under these broad categories, four more specific categories will also be employed in this study in classifying the collective action forms that the actors of the Bergama movement adopted: appeal activities, procedural activities, demonstrative activities, and confrontational activities (della Porta and Andretta, 2002)<sup>84</sup>. ‘Appeal activities’ include those action forms such as petition, press conference, leaflet, teach-ins, meetings and so on, ‘procedural activities’

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<sup>83</sup> Although the emergence of the movement dates back to 1990, the protesters engaged in actions first in the 1991.

<sup>84</sup> della Porta and Andretta (2002) used these four categories in categorizing the action forms of environmentalists in Italy. Although there are two more categories, light violence and heavy violence, that were also used by della Porta and Andretta in their categorization, these two categories are not used in this study because the Bergama protesters did not engage in any violent action.



consist of the use of procedural complaint mechanisms and litigation, ‘demonstrative activities’ refer to demonstrations and marches, and ‘confrontational activities’ cover occupation, disruption of events, hindrance, and so on (della Porta and Andretta, 2002: 68).

At the beginning the Bergama protesters did not have clear-cut strategies and tactics to prevent the operation of the gold mine. Rather, as mentioned above, the strategies and tactics of movement actors were shaped during the life course of the movement through their interactions with the mining company and various state agencies, as it became evident both with the specific demands that they voiced to state authorities and to the company, and with the action forms that they adopted. Concerning the demands from the company and the state, for instance, the protesters first demanded from the authorities to inform themselves both about the impact of cyanidation process on environment and about the mining complex that would be built in the area (Cumhuriyet, 5 July 1991). But, they could not invoke the help of the state authorities. Then, they demanded from the company to prepare an EIA report (Milliyet, 19 March 1992) with the hope that the EIA report, revealing the negative environmental impact of the gold mine to the area, would eventually lead to the prevention of the operation of the mine. Although the company prepared an EIA report, the protesters were not satisfied with it because the EIA report stated that the mine would not pose a threat to the environment and to the public health. Then, the protesters directed their efforts to prevent the grant of the environmental permission to the mine because that specific permission, unlike the other permissions, had not been granted yet at that time. Claiming that the local people has the right to participate to decisions of investments in their area, and that a few bureaucrat in Ankara can not decide for such a dangerous investment in the name of the local people, they began demanding from the state to conduct a referendum in Bergama before deciding to grant the environmental permission (Cumhuriyet, 20 June 1992). At the same time, some academics who involved in the movement for environmental concerns, began stating that the company should build filtration facilities in the mining site in order to minimize the risks of the cyanidation process (Cumhuriyet, 28 June 1992)

In addition to voicing these specific demands, the protesters attempted to convey some messages both to the company and to the state agencies through the actions they engaged in. In order to grasp the messages that actors of the Bergama movement sent through the actions that they engaged in the emergence phase, it is necessary to consider both the ‘type’ and the ‘timing’ of the actions, as presented in the following two Tables. While

the first Table groups the actions of the movement actors according to the categories of action introduced above, the second Table shows them in their chronological order.

As to the action forms of the protesters in the initial phase of the movement, the Bergama protestors engaged mostly in appeal activities, while engaging only three procedural, and three demonstrative activities to prevent the operation of the mine, as it is shown in the Table 7.1. In short, the protesters engaged only in conventional forms of actions. The appeals, which were predominantly used by the local politicians and by the members of the İzmir-Bergama hand-in-hand movement, were the most frequent action because these people at first tried to attract the local people to the emerging movement through appeal actions such as panels, seminars, and teach-ins, and then employed other forms of appeal actions, such as petitions, visits, and mails, to express their demands to the state authorities. For the mobilization of the local people they organized several meetings, panels, seminars and also press conferences, and prepared reports about the environmental impact of the gold mines (Milliyet, 18 June 1992; Milliyet, 4 August 1992; Bizim Bakırçay, 4 March 1993). For expressing their demands to the state agencies, they mailed letters and postcards to them (Milliyet, 12 June 1992; Milliyet, 29 December 1993; Hürriyet, 30 December 1993), submitted a petition (Hürriyet, 7 November 1991), and visited the Prime Minister (Hürriyet, 30 March 1992).

As it seen in the Table 7.1, the protesters engaged in only three demonstrative activities in the emergence period, one was directed to journalists visiting the mining site (Hürriyet, 20 June 1992), one was the expression of their reaction to permission granted by the Environment Ministry to the mine in October 1994 (see, Appendix A, picture 1) (Cumhuriyet, 17 October 1994), and one, as it will be detailed below, was directed to international audience (Yeni Asır, 12 October 1995). In fact, the movement actors did not employ demonstrative activities at this stage as a tactic to influence authorities or the general public. They were rather of the opinion that, employing appeal activities, they could voice their demands to state authorities either directly or indirectly through the media, and thereby prevent the operation of the gold mine. Therefore, they directed a considerable number of the appeal activities to the state agencies, particularly to the government. They demanded from the government and some other state authorities not to grant the operation permits to the mining company by means of mailing letters and postcards to the members of the government, to members of the parliament, and to the state bureaucrats (Milliyet, 12 July 1992; Milliyet, 29 December 1993; Hürriyet 30 December 1993), submitting a petition to the İzmir governor that was signed by the

**Table 7.1**  
**Types and Forms of Action of Bergama Protesters (1991-Apr 1996)**

Types of Action		Forms of Action	Date
CONVENTIONAL (INSTITUTIONALIZED) ACTION	Appeal Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first meeting in Ovacık Village (followed by about 30 meetings, panels, and seminars in villages)</li> <li>• The petition campaign in the villages</li> <li>• Visiting the Prime Minister (Bakırçay Union of Municipalities)</li> <li>• Mailing letters to members of government, MPs, state bureaucrats, local administrators</li> <li>• Preparing reports on environmental impacts of gold mines (one by the Association for the Protection of Natural Life, and another by the special committee set up by Chamber of Architects and Engineers İzmir branch)</li> <li>• Visiting the Sirius Yacht of Greenpeace in İzmir</li> <li>• Preparing a report on the environmental impact of the cyanidation process (prepared by İzmir Bar)</li> <li>• Mailing postcards to celebrate the new year and to attract the attention of authorities to the issue</li> <li>• Sending the documents about the environmental impact of the mine to the prime ministry and to the MPs of İzmir</li> </ul>	<p>Apr 1991</p> <p>Nov 1991</p> <p>March 1992</p> <p>July 1992</p> <p>Aug 1992</p> <p>Sept 1992</p> <p>March 1993</p> <p>Dec 1993</p> <p>Jan 1995</p>
	Procedural Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filing three lawsuits to cancel the permissions of Eurogold</li> </ul>	Nov 1994
CONVENTIONAL (NONINSTITUTIONALIZED) ACTION	Demonstrative Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating in the road to the mining site (directed to journalists to whom the company organized a trip to the mining site)</li> <li>• Attempting to stage a demonstration with the participation of three thousands people (which was forcefully prevented by the gendarmerie)</li> <li>• Demonstrating in Germany in front of the Dresdner Bank's building</li> </ul>	<p>June 1992</p> <p>Oct. 1994</p> <p>Oct. 1995</p>

Source: Cumhuriyet 1991- 1996; Hürriyet 1991- 1996; Milliyet 1991- 1996; Yeni Asır 1991 – 1995.

heads of ten villages and by hundreds of the peasants (Hürriyet, 7 November 1991), and visiting the then Prime Minister (Hürriyet, 30 March 1992).

Despite all their efforts, however, the protesters could not succeed to get the support of the state to their cause. On the contrary, the state, particularly the government, lent its support to the mining company which became evident with the environmental permission granted to the company in October 1994. Upon this permission, the protesters decided to start a litigation process in order to annul it. With the expertise and technical support of environmentalist lawyers, 652 plaintiffs, consisted of peasants and some local politicians, brought the case to the Court towards the end of 1994 filing three separate lawsuits against the decisions of the Turkish government<sup>85</sup>. With these cases protesters attempted to overrule the environmental permission the company was granted by the Ministry of Environment, and to obtain stay of execution for the same operation permit. They argued that the permission of the Ministry of Environment violated Article 56 of the Constitution because the mine would have adverse environmental effects<sup>86</sup> (Cangı, 2002).

When examined in their chronological order as presented in Table 7.2, it is seen that the activities of the protesters were intensified particularly in 1992. One of the main reasons behind the intensification of the activities of the protesters in this year was the mobilization of the most of the constituents of the Bergama movement by this time. While the activities before this year had largely been directed to the mobilization of the local people, they were directed to the state agencies after the local people mobilized. Another reason was that in January 1992 the mining company applied for the permission of the Environment Ministry. After that application, the protesters focused their activities to prevent the grant of that environmental permission to the mining company.

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<sup>85</sup> The cases were brought to the İzmir Administrative Court because the protesters applied to the court for overruling the permission granted by the Environment Ministry, that is, a decision of Administration. In Turkish system, “the judicial control of the Administration is the function of administrative courts” (Güran, 2005).

<sup>86</sup> During the legal process, the company did not halt its operations nor did the state authorities order the company to do so.

**Table 7.2****Forms of Action of Bergama Protesters in Chronological Order (1991- April 1996)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Actions of Protesters</b>
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The first meeting in Ovacık Village (followed by a number of meetings, panels, and seminars in villages)</li><li>• The petition campaign in the villages</li></ul>
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrating in the road to the mining site (directed to journalists to whom the company organized a trip to the mining site)</li><li>• Mailing letters to members of government, MPs, state bureaucrats, local administrators</li><li>• Preparing reports on environmental impacts of gold mines (one by the Association for the Protection of Natural Life, and another by the special committee set up by Chamber of Architects and Engineers İzmir branch)</li><li>• Visiting the Sirius Yacht of Greenpeace in İzmir (the mayor and 15 peasants)</li><li>• Visiting the Prime Minister (Bakırçay Union of Municipalities)</li></ul>
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mailing postcards to celebrate the new year and to attract the attention of authorities to the issue</li><li>• Preparing a report on the environmental impact of the cyanidation process (prepared by İzmir Bar)</li></ul>
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Filing three lawsuits to cancel the permissions of Eurogold</li><li>• Attempting to stage a demonstration with the participation of three thousands people (which was forcefully prevented by the gendarmerie)</li></ul>
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sending the documents about the environmental impact of the mine to the prime ministry and to the MPs of İzmir</li><li>• Demonstrating in Germany in front of the Dresdner Bank's building</li></ul>

Another important date for the protesters was 1994 in which, as mentioned, Environment Ministry granted the company the environmental permission on the condition that a filtration system should be added to the mining project. With this permission it became evident to the protesters that the government was not with them but with the company. In a demonstration that they attempted to stage as a reaction to this permission, which was forcefully prevented by the gendarmerie, the protesters carried banners stating 'Is not there any owner of this country?', and 'Look the Minister! You choose either cyanide or us' (Cumhuriyet, 17 October 1994; Akşam, 20 October 1994). Realizing that the

government would not meet their demands, they began attempting to get the support of other state organs, and accordingly initiated the litigation process in 1994.

#### **7.3.1.1. International Actions and International Support**

During the emergence phase of the movement the protesters also mobilized an international support. The experiences of the mayor of Bergama and pre-existing networks of environmentalist lawyers became particularly helpful in carrying out international activities and in establishing international links. With the help of Birsell Lemke<sup>87</sup> who initiated the protest campaign in Küçükdere, the mayor, visiting some countries, established some international connections with the German academics, lawyers, politicians, and an US based NGO, World Mineral Policy Institute. As it is also argued by Kadirbeyoğlu (2001) a ‘transnational advocacy network’ was established through the efforts of these activists, which consisted of Bergama protesters, German scientists, activists, Greens, and NGOs<sup>88</sup>.

The different actors of the network lent their support to the movement in a variety of ways. For one thing, the World Mineral Policy Institute and German academics, most notably Prof. Friedhelm Korte who is a chemist and studies ecological impact of chemical industry, have provided detailed information on the environmental impact of the cyanide-leaching method used in gold mines (Interview No. 1, 2004). It was, for instance, Prof. Korte who, visiting Bergama and examining the mining project, warned the protesters that there is no technology to eliminate the harmful impact of the cyanide to environment (Cumhuriyet, 21 May 1993). Later he also prepared detailed reports on the filtration project of Eurogold, and again warned the protesters that it would not prevent the negative environmental impact of the cyanidation process to the environment (Hürriyet, 11 February 1995; Milliyet, 2 October 1995; Yeni Asır, 6 December 1996). Secondly, with the efforts of German Greens, the Green group of the European Parliament (EP) brought the issue to the EP using the reports on the issue prepared by Environmentalist Lawyers group of İzmir Bar (Cumhuriyet, 13 April 1993). EP, then, decided to warn the Turkish government, Germany and the other EC member countries

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<sup>87</sup> Lemke is one of the founders of the short-lived Green Party.

<sup>88</sup> As conceptualized by Keck and Sikkink (1998), transnational advocacy networks link different actors, such as NGOs, social movements, activists, and so on, across the borders on an issue. They are most likely to emerge when the channels between domestic groups and their governments are blocked, when activists believe to the benefit of networking for their mission, and when international contacts create opportunities for forming networks.

for not allowing gold mining with cyanidation process, as well as to warn Germany for not allowing German companies to run environmentally harmful operations in other countries, which are forbidden in Germany (Cumhuriyet, 24 November 1994). Thirdly, some German lawyers informed the Bergama protestors that the mining project of Eurogold was financed by the *Dresdner Bank* of Germany (Interview No.2, 2004). Upon this information, the Bergama protestors together with their German supporters pressured the *Dresdner Bank* to withdraw its financial support to the mining project in Bergama. They engaged in a demonstrative action in front of the *Dresdner Bank* (Yeni Asır, 12 October 1995), and demanded from the German Parliament to pressure the *Dresdner Bank* for not financing Eurogold (Cumhuriyet, 6 April 95). As a result of these pressures, the bank eventually declared that it withdrew its financial support to Eurogold (Yeni Asır, 6 December 1996). The protestors also attempted to pressure the German company *Degussa* that would provide cyanide to Eurogold, but it did not produce any concrete outcome. Fourthly, through their activities in Germany the Bergama protestors also attracted the attention of an NGO called FIAN (FoodFirst Information and Action Network), which supported the emerging movement through providing information, establishing connections with some German politicians, and ‘organizing urgent action calls’ in Germany (Kadirbeyoğlu, 2001: 13). As a result of an ‘urgent action call’ that FIAN organized, for instance, 800 letters were sent by German citizens to the Turkish Ministry of Environment calling the Ministry to ban mining activities in places like Bergama which have historical and natural significance (Kadirbeyoğlu, 2001: 14). Finally, some German Green Party members, and environmentalists visited Bergama and declared their support to the movement, and some German tourism companies supported the protestors sending letters to the Turkish Ministry of Tourism for preventing the operation of the gold mine (Akşam, 18 April 1995; Cumhuriyet, 6 March 1995).

As a result of all these local, national, and international activities, the Bergama protestors succeeded to attract the attention of not only local and regional but also national and even international written and visual mass media. During the emergence phase, hundreds of news appeared on newspapers and some TV channels. While a few national and local newspapers seemed supportive of the company, such as *Sabah*, *Türkiye*, and *Ege’de Yarın*, most of the newspapers seemed supportive of the protestors, such as *Cumhuriyet*, *Hürriyet*, and *Milliyet*. While the views of the company and those who support the company appeared in the former together with positive views on the economic benefits of the gold mines, the cyanidation process and gold reserves in Turkey, the views of the

protesters and the negative views on gold mines and cyanidation process took place in the latter<sup>89</sup>. The frequency of appearance of positive views about the mine increased particularly after the mining company organized and financed some trips for journalists to gold mines in other countries, such as New Zealand, Spain, and France (Milliyet, 25 June 1995). But overall the news supporting the protesters were much higher in number than the news that were supportive of the company.

#### **7.4. The Other Side of the Hegemonic Battle in Bergama: The Mining Company**

As mentioned before, in social movement studies the analytic attention is usually focused on social movements, largely disregarding the hegemonic attempts of opponents. However, we need to examine the hegemonic attempts of the antagonistic forces, too, if we want to deeply understand the power struggle that social movements engage in. This is so because the struggle of social movements for hegemony will always be limited by the opposition of the antagonistic forces because both social movements and their opponents attempt to hegemonize the same social field, though in different ways. Therefore, in spite of the antagonistic relation between them, the rival parties in an hegemonic battle will not be radically external to each other. Yet, due to the antagonistic character of opposition between them, they will not regard each other as legitimate adversaries, but rather they will try to subvert the hegemonic practices of one another.

As noted before, the mining company attempted to promote the mine in the area through emphasizing its benefits both to local and national economy. After the mobilizations of the protesters, the company also began claiming that the protestors were spreading misinformation about their mining project in particular and about gold-mining in general. In fact, it might be said that at the very beginning the company did not very much concern with promoting the mine because it did not expect any opposition to it. However, after the mobilization of the local people against the mine, the company also gave rise to its activities. Nevertheless, throughout the first period of the struggle the company's activities were to a great extent reactionary to that of the protesters.

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<sup>89</sup> For the news that were supportive of the mine, see Sabah, 22 April 1992; 2 June 1992; 14 August 1992; 15 August 1992; 17 August 1992; 19 August 1992; 25 August 1992; 31 August 1992; 29 November 1995; Türkiye, 8 February 1995; 5 July 1995; 21 July 1995; Ege'de Yarın, 26 February 1992; 11 March 1992; 27 April 1992. For the news that were supportive of the protesters see all the news appeared in Hürriyet, Milliyet, and Cumhuriyet on Bergama struggle between 1991 and 1995.



One of the first responses of the company to protesters was to prepare an EIA report. The report, prepared by academics from the Dokuz Eylül University, however did not eliminate the doubts of the protesters about the mine because it was regarded by them as unscientific and biased. Upon the intensification of the actions of the protesters in 1992, some of whom began demanding from the company to build a filtration system in the mining site, the company also intensified its efforts. Rejecting the demands for filtration system on the grounds that it would bring additional costs to the company and reduce the profitability of the mine (Türkiye, 30 June 1992), the company intensified its efforts with the aim of convincing the local people to the economic benefits of the gold mine and to the environmental safety of its technology. Accordingly, some booklets were prepared and distributed and some ads appeared on regional newspapers. In these ads and booklets the company gave priority to the economic benefits of gold mining on the one hand, and attempted to assure the people that the cyanidation process that it planned to use would not pose any environmental threat to the area. It was stated in the booklets and ads that gold mining would bring wealth to Turkey, and that the company would operate the gold mine in Bergama using the best technology and the highest standards in the world. These newspaper ads are worth quoting at length because they are well summarizing the discursive attempts of the company. Concerning the technology that the company planned to use, it was stated in the ads that:

Ovacık gold mine project was prepared using the highest standards that are used in the most developed countries. The cyanide-leaching method that will be used in extracting the gold is the only method that has been used in gold mines for 100 years. All of the gold mines in the world are using the same method. 75 % of these gold mines are located in those countries such as USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, where environmental consciousness is very high. Moreover, the cyanide leach method has been used by Etibank for seven years in silver mine in Kütahya-Gümüşköy (Yeni Asır, 28 August 1992, author's translation).

As to the safety of the tailings pond the ads stated that:

Ovacık Gold Mine project will use the modern and productive production technology to prevent environmental pollution. Ovacık Gold Mine tailings pond was designed according to the highest standards that are used in the Western countries. The similar tailings ponds are built and used in California which has high earthquake risks, and also in the other mines in the world that are built in settlement areas. The tailings of the mine production will be stored in the ponds that will not allow any leakage. ....None of the gold mines in the world has led to the pollution of air or the pollution of underground waters (Yeni Asır, 28 August 1992, author's translation).

And with regard to gold mining the company claimed through ads that:

Gold is the most valuable mine. It is an indicator of wealth and welfare. For long years we have hoped to have such mines in our country, admiring those countries which have such mines. For the last few years we have seen that our dreams are about to realize. The researches have shown that Turkey would be a rich country because of the gold she has. The first good news is from Aegean region, from Bergama Ovacık. Ovacık will be the first gold mine of our country and produce three tons of gold and three tons of silver a year. This is just a beginning. If gold mining is developed in the way expected and if all mine reserves are operated, Turkey will be among the first three countries in Europe that produce gold (Yeni Asır, 28 August 1992, author's translation).

As it is seen in these newspaper ads, the company employed some 'rhetorical strategies' in order to increase the appeal of its discursive attempts. It articulated gold mining as something that would realize 'our' dreams of being a rich country. In other words, gold mining was articulated as something that would eliminate the 'lack' that Turkish people as a collective subject has been experiencing because of not having any gold mine. With the discursive articulation of the gold mining in this manner, the company antagonized those who oppose the mine because they were seen as those who prevent the realization of the dreams of Turkey becoming a rich country. As it was stated by company officials and also supporters of the company, the protesters were attempting to prevent gold mining and thereby economic development of Turkey because of their self-interests. As such, the protesters consisted of 'those whose land was not purchased by the company and those who were not employed by the company' as a company official stated (Milliyet, 20 June 1992), or 'those who use the gold mining issue as an instrument to further their political career' as an academic stated (Cumhuriyet, 9 June 1995), or 'those from some European countries who try to prevent the economic development of Turkey' as the general manager of Eurogold stated (Cumhuriyet, 30 June 1995).

Furthermore, although it is a foreign company, the company referred to Turkey in the ads as 'our country' with the aim of showing its operation in Turkey as legitimate. It also repeatedly underlined that the cyanide-leaching method is the only method that has been used in gold mines, and it has been used in all gold mines in the world. Therefore, if Turkey wants to operate its gold mines, there is no alternative other than cyanide. Moreover, some 'developed' countries were used by the company as referents, stating that most of the gold mines are located in those countries where environmental consciousness is very high such as USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. It was also underlined that cyanide is also used in some other mines in Turkey.

As it was the case with the protesters, the strategies and tactics of the company were also shaped through its interactions with the protesters and with the state agencies. While at the beginning the company officials adopted an uncompromising attitude against the protesters insisting that there was nothing to worry about the operation of the gold mine because they were taking every possible measure for protecting the environment (Yeni Asır, 16 June 1991), they later made some changes in the original mining project upon the pressures of the protesters for improving the safety of the tailings pond, such as lining the tailing pond with a geomembran to prevent any possible leakage from the tailings pond (Yeni Asır, 3 December 1996). More importantly, while the company officials at first rejected to build a filtration system in the mining site (Türkiye, 30 June 1992), they later announced that they could build it if it is needed (Cumhuriyet, 13 June 1993). After the state authorities urged them to do so, they announced in 1994 that they would definitely construct a filtration facility in the mining site for detoxifying the tailings to reduce the cyanide in the solution to minimum levels (Yeni Asır, 3 December 1996).

Besides changes in the mining project, the company also engaged in some other activities, such as organizing a trip to journalists to the mining site (Hürriyet, 20 June 1992), lobbying the members of the Turkish parliament (Cumhuriyet, 9 November 1993) and the Prime Minister (Cumhuriyet, 20 November 1993; Hürriyet, 26 October 1993; Hürriyet, 17 November 1993), organizing and financing a trip for journalists to a gold mine in New Zealand (Özay, 2006) and to three gold mines in Spain and France (Hürriyet, 27 June 1995; Cumhuriyet, 30 June 1995), and opening a public relations office in Bergama (Milliyet, 26 August 1995). In order to convince the local people that their operations would not be harmful, the company also declared in 1993 that it would insure the local people and the natural environment paying 800 billion Turkish liras (Yeni Asır, 5 December 1996).

Despite all its efforts, however, the company could not become successful in appealing to the local people. According to the results of a public opinion survey that a public relations company conducted in Bergama in 1995 for Eurogold, 99.02% of the local people were believing that the operation of the mine would pollute underground waters and the air, while 99.81% were believing that it would pose a serious threat to the public health (Milliyet, 7 April 1995). The mining company was supported only by some academics, mining engineers, a mining NGO (*Yurt Madenciliğini Geliştirme Vakfı*), some politicians, and some newspapers (Hürriyet, 17 August 1992; Yeni Asır, 17 August

1992; Cumhuriyet, 3 February 1995). However, in spite of its failure in convincing the local people to the benefits of the mine, the company was also supported by the state and accordingly obtained the permissions to operate the mine.

### **7.5. The Position of the Turkish State in the Hegemonic Battle**

Before examining the role of the Turkish state in this hegemonic struggle, it should be noted that the state is not considered in this study as a monolithic entity because, as it has been mentioned in Chapter 4, the responses and reactions of state agencies to a movement may differ, making the state simultaneously supporter and antagonist of a movement (Jenkins and Klandermans, 1995). In fact, as it will be revealed in this study, this is exactly what happened in Bergama case. While some state authorities lent their support to the protesters, some others took place on the other side of the hegemonic battle supporting the company. In line with the formal structure of the Turkish state, the study will consider the responses of the three main branches of the Turkish state, the executive, legislative, and judiciary, separately. In considering the role of the executive, which is composed of the president and the government, it will be particularly, though not exclusively, focused upon the role of government.

As mentioned before, the Turkish state had not been concerned with informing the local people about the mining project before the mobilizations emerged. After the initial discontent became apparent in Bergama, particularly by the mobilizations of the Bergama peasants, some state authorities, such as İzmir governor, some government members and some bureaucrats in the related ministries, began concerning with the issue. While İzmir governorship concerned with some minor formal procedures and with maintaining order in Bergama area, government members and bureaucrats dealt with the issue of allowing the gold mine without offending the local people.

In line with its commitment to neo-liberal policies, the overall position of the government was characterized by the support that it gave to the mining company. More precisely, from the very beginning the government and the company formed a 'pro-mining bloc' against the Bergama protesters. However, in lending its support to the company, the government did not attempt to impose the mining project forcefully, but rather tried to win the consent of the Bergama protesters to it. In fact, it can be said that particularly some government members, trying not to offend the Bergama protesters, trod a fine line in supporting the mining company. This, however, was not an easy task,

because an antagonistic struggle between the company and the Bergama protesters had already started. Therefore, although the government tried to appear as a neutral mediator in between the two parties of the struggle, and attempted to consider some demands of the Bergama protesters, in the final instance it sided with the company in the hegemonic battle between the Bergama movement and the mining company.

It should be noted that the frequent government changes between 1990 and April 1996 did not create a considerable difference in the general attitude of them toward the Bergama struggle. Although six different governments were formed by different political parties<sup>90</sup> in the emergence phase of the Bergama struggle, all of them to a great extent followed the same policies in key issues of the country in general (Çınar, 1997), and adopted a similar attitude against the Bergama struggle in particular, displaying only some minor differences in the specific ways through which they dealt with the Bergama movement. This is also true for those governments that came to power in the following years of the struggle. Thus, with no exception, successive governments have been eager to authorize the gold mining company to operate in Bergama.

The government members began giving responses to the Bergama struggle in 1992 because at that time the media attention to the issue was highly increased due to the increased activities of the protesters to prevent the grant of the environmental permission to the mine. The first responses of the government members were highly supportive of the mine. In fact, being on the same side, they were using the same claims that the company officials used. for instance, in 1992, the then Environment Minister was stating that there was no need to be doubtful about the cyanidation process because it was used in different industrial sectors in Turkey, and also in all gold mines in the world (Cumhuriyet, 28 June 1992). He was also stating that ‘environmental fanaticism’ was wrong, and that this issue should not be used for political career ambitions (Milliyet, 28 August 1992).

Despite these responses, however, the related authorities hesitated to grant a quick environmental permission to the company. Although the company applied for this

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<sup>90</sup> The six different governments formed in the emergence phase of the Bergama struggle were: The government of Yıldırım Akbulut (09.11.1989-23.06.1991); the first government of Mesut Yılmaz (23.06.1991-20.11.1991); the seventh government of Süleyman Demirel (21.11.1991-25.06.1993); the first government of Tansu Çiller (25.06.1993-05.10.1995); the second government of Tansu Çiller (05.10.1995-30.10.1995); and the third government of Tansu Çiller (30.10.1995-06.03.1996).

permission in January 1992, it was not granted until October 1994. While the formation of a new government in the meantime was one factor affecting the delay of the grant of that permission, another, and the more important, factor was that the new government tried to find a way to convince the protesters to the operation of the mine. In spite of the statements of some of its members on the contrary (Hürriyet, 13 December 1993), the new government, granted the permission in October 1994<sup>91</sup>. However, the permission was granted by the Environment Ministry on condition that a filtration system should be built in the mining site. The government hoped that in this way, that is, with building of the filtration system, the protesters would be convinced to the operation of the gold mine.

In fact, the government members, deliberately or not, framed the Bergama movement as a struggle only for 'the protection of environment' in Bergama. In so doing, they focused only on the particular environmental impact of the operations of Eurogold in Bergama, and ignored the other demands voiced by the Bergama protesters. After urging the company to take additional measures to prevent negative environmental impact of gold mining, they began claiming that it would be groundless to oppose to the operation of Eurogold. Therefore, after granting the environmental permission to the company, the government members largely turned a blind eye to the demands of the protesters.

However, as mentioned before, the protesters did not convince with the additional safety measures, and, as it will be demonstrated more fully in the next chapter, began putting more pressure to the government in the following years, particularly in 1997 and 1998, to force it to consider their demands. In fact, with this move of the government, that is, with the grant of the environmental permission, the protesters began turning against the government, too. Regarding the filtration system only a window-dressing step, they immediately applied to the court in order to overrule the environmental permission. However, at first, they did not get the support of the courts. In March 1996, the İzmir Administrative Court rejected stay of execution for the environmental operation permit, which was one of the three demands of the protesters from the court (Cumhuriyet, 31 March 1996).

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<sup>91</sup> The new government was formed with the coalition of the True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi- DYP*) and the Social Democratic Populist Party (*Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti- SHP*). Although, the social democrat partner of this coalition declared that they would not allow gold mining with cyanide (Hürriyet, 13 December 1993), the other partner lent a considerable support to the mining company (Cumhuriyet, 20 November 1993; Hürriyet, 26 October 1993; Hürriyet, 17 November 1993).

The decision of the İzmir Administrative Court in favor of the company became a turning point in the trajectory of the Bergama movement. Upon this decision, the protesters decided to intensify their efforts for the prevention of the operation of the mine (Akşam, 4 April 1996; Cumhuriyet, 4 April 1996). As a result of their increased activities, the movement consolidated and produced important outcomes in favor of the protesters. The following chapter deals with the consolidation of the movement.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE BERGAMA MOVEMENT: THE PEAK OF MOBILIZATIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COLLECTIVE IDENTITY (April 1996- November 1998)**

The period between April 1996 and November 1998 marked a qualitatively different phase in the trajectory of the Bergama movement both from the period before April 1996 and from the period that covers the years between November 1998 and 2005. It differed from the preceding period mainly due to two factors. First and foremost, the Bergama movement consolidated in this period in the sense that it strengthened with the participation and support of the new social groups to the movement, and that it united different protesting social groups producing a ‘collective identity’ among them. Second, the movement produced some important intended outcomes, getting a court decision in its favor, and thereby forcing both the government and the company to take its claims into consideration. It, on the other hand, differed from the following period which experienced the weakening of the movement. It is ironic that as the Bergama movement succeeded to extend its support base, and began seriously forcing for some changes in line with its demands, both the company and the state intensified their efforts in favor of the gold-mining, leading decisive turns in the unfolding of the movement.

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the second phase, the consolidation phase, of the Bergama movement. It will first examine the expansion of the constituency and the support of the Bergama movement through the popularization of the issue by means of the use of different forms of collective action by the movement actors, as well as through the expansion of the protest discourse by means of the articulation of some unfulfilled social demands together with those that had already been articulated in the emergence phase of the movement. It will proceed examining how a collective identity among different social groups, who involved in the movement around different social demands, was constructed by the Bergama movement. After providing an account of the hegemonic attempts of the mining company the chapter will examine the responses and reactions of the state agencies to the struggle in the second phase.



### 8.1. The Expansion of the Mobilization

Any examination of the trajectory of the Bergama movement reveals that the support of the movement considerably increased in the years between 1996 and 1998. In addition to those who had already identified with the movement in its emergence period, some other individuals and social groups participated to it in this second period, which, as a result, led to a considerable expansion in the mobilization against the gold mine. It will be argued, and sought to indicate in this chapter, that two factors played critical roles in the attraction of the new recruits to the Bergama movement. One was the increase in the public appearance of the movement resulting from the intensive use of the different forms of *collective action* by protesters, particularly among them the use of direct action forms, and the other was the expansion of the boundaries of the protest discourse in a way to contain some new social demands in addition to those that had been articulated in the emergence phase of the movement. These two factors together led to an increase in the power of the movement expanding its support base.

As explained in the fourth chapter, the constituency or the support base of a movement can be expanded through the expansion of the equivalential chain articulated in and through its discourse in a way to contain some other unsatisfied social demands. In that way, the discourse of a movement functions as a surface of inscription for some other demands too, besides the initial ones, which leads to the attraction of some other groups to the movement. Thus, insofar as the emergent discourse of a movement, the ‘myth’, turns into an ‘imaginary horizon’, which functions as a surface on which a great number of different demands can be inscribed, multiple groups are attracted to the movement.

The expansion of the discourse of a movement, however, might not be sufficient, although necessary, to attract new recruits to the movement, if the movement cannot succeed to attract the attention of the people who are not aware of its existence. As it has been well documented in the social movements literature, a movement should attract the attention of the general public via attracting the attention of the mass media, if it is to expand its support base. In other words, it should increase the public visibility of the movement and thereby attract the attention of those who are not aware of the existence of the movement. While the public appearance of a movement can be realized in different ways, it is usually through the use of different collective action forms that movements gain a public visibility.

Before turning toward the empirical illustration of the main argument of this chapter stated above, it should be noted that although both of these factors, namely the inclusion and articulation of some new demands within the protest discourse and the increase in the public visibility of the movement through the use of different action forms, are critical in the expansion of the constituency of social movements, it seems that in the Bergama case it was especially the latter that became effective in attracting new recruits to the movement. This is so because new groups were participated to the Bergama movement, both around the new demands and around the already articulated ones, only after the movement gained a public visibility through the use of different action forms, particularly among them the use of direct action. In the section that follows, an account of both of these factors will be provided, focusing particularly on their role in the expansion of the mobilization. First, the action forms that the actors of the Bergama movement actually employed will be examined, and then, the expansion of the Bergama protest discourse through the articulation of the interests and demands of some other social groups will be dealt with.

#### **8.1.1. Action Forms of the Bergama Movement in the Second Phase**

In the second phase of the movement, the actors of the Bergama movement strategically engaged in a number of different forms of actions to voice their claims against the authorities, as well as to expand the mobilization and to win the sympathy of the bystander public which would help it achieve its goals. Put it in the terms social movement scholars use, through the use of different forms of action the actors of the Bergama movement strategically attempted to increase their resources both through recruitment of people into the movement and through the formation of alliances and coalitions with powerful individuals and groups, which can play important roles in furthering their causes. As a result of these attempts, the Bergama movement largely succeeded in the period between April 1996 and November 1998 in popularizing the issue and thereby in mobilizing some new groups which either identified with the movement or established short-term alliances through providing material or non-material support.

Although it was not intended and decided by anyone, a kind of division of labor was spontaneously developed among the movement actors. While the mayor and his team in the municipality maintained their appeal and networking activities for providing national and also international support to the movement, the lawyers, in addition to using appeals

particularly within their pre-existing environmentalist networks, led the legal struggle through litigation process which had been intensified in the second phase of the movement. The professional groups also engaged in appeal activities by means of preparing specific scientific reports on the harmful effects of gold mining with cyanidation process. The Bergama peasants<sup>92</sup>, on the other hand, engaged in a number of demonstrative and confrontational activities, staging innovative and therefore highly interesting public protests in this phase of the movement. Thus, all the main actors of the movement actively involved in voicing and popularizing their claims.

While the emergence phase of the Bergama movement was to a great extent the ‘latent’ phase in the formation of the movement, the second phase became the ‘visible’ (Melucci, 1989 as cited in della Porta and Diani, 1999) phase of the movement. As pointed out above, among the different forms of action that the movement actors engaged, it has been particularly the direct actions engaged mainly by the peasants that became the most effective in increasing the public visibility of the movement. Besides increasing the sympathy of the bystander public through sympathetic media coverage, the direct actions of the peasants also led to the extension of the support base of the movement. This is so because although the Bergama movement offered a discursive space for the articulation of some unsatisfied social demands in the emergence phase, it was after the movement gained a public visibility through the protests that the people became aware of the presence of such a discursive space, which eventually led to the participation of some to the movement.

The ‘division of labor’ among the movement actors can be explained with two factors. One is related with the ‘availability of resources’ to the movement actors, and the other pertains to the ‘extent of the dislocation’ that the movement actors experienced with the proposition of the gold-mining project. As to the former, what della Porta and Diani (1999: 285) points out concerning the choice of action forms, that is, it mainly depends on “the cultural and material resources available to particular groups”, is also relevant for the Bergama movement. The use of ‘appeal’ activities by the academics and local politicians, the use of ‘procedural’ activities by the lawyers, and the use of

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<sup>92</sup> Most of the peasants in the surrounding villages mobilized against the gold mine, as the referendum that was held in Bergama on January 1997 indicated. 2866 people, 89 % of the eligible (Turkish Daily News, 17 February 1997), from eight villages voted against the operation of the gold mine (Turkish Daily News, 14 January 1997).

‘demonstrative’ and ‘confrontational’ activities by the peasants were highly linked to the resources at their disposals.

Due to his administrative position and education level, Taşkın, for instance, was able to carry out appeal activities, such as lobbying, and establishing national and international ties, that had been crucial in providing technical information and support for the movement. Likewise, due to their scientific knowledge on the various aspects of the gold-mining issue, the academics also carried out appeal activities, such as holding seminars, and preparing reports, which became valuable in increasing the credibility of the movement discourse. The lawyers, on the other hand, carried out procedural activities, like initiating the litigation process.

It is also in this respect that the use of public protests<sup>93</sup> by the peasants should be explained. Unlike the local politicians, academics and lawyers, the peasants did not have the necessary resources to carry out appeal or procedural activities. As it has been pointed out by social movement scholars (Tarrow, 1998; della Porta and Diani, 1999), when activists lack access to institutional channels of claim-making, staging public protests remains as the only way for voicing their claims and for attracting the attention of the general public. In this sense, public protests become very valuable political resources for those who do not have any other types of resources (Lipsky, 1965 as cited in della Porta and Andretta, 2002: 67). In their attempt to voice their claims and thereby to prevent the operation of the mine in their settlement area, the Bergama peasants, therefore, started using protests in the form of direct action, while some of them were demonstrative some of them were confrontational. It is important to note that the ‘material’ resources of most of the peasants who actively involved in the movement were sufficient enough to allow them to invest the required time and money to the protests. As Arsel (2005a) also points out, the most active villages in the protests, such as Narlıca and Çamköy, are relatively prosperous due to profitable agricultural activities.

In addition to the availability of resources, however, the extent of dislocatory experiences of the different movement actors also played a role in their engagement to different forms of action. As explained in the preceding chapter, the extent of the dislocation for the peasants was much larger than that of the other groups. As being the most directly affected group from the operations of the mine, most of the peasants were

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<sup>93</sup> Public protests have been predominantly undertaken by the Bergama peasants. Although different movement actors such as academics, professionals, and local politicians also engaged in some protests, the peasants have been the main and unchanging actors of the all protests.

highly determined to do something to prevent the mining project, as the following quote indicates: “we were fed up with seminars and meetings, and we wanted to do something concrete to prevent the operation of the mine” ( Reinart, 2003). Therefore, they did not hesitate to carry out even risky activities, and engaged not merely demonstrative activities but also confrontational ones, which, unlike the other forms of action, bears certain risks, such as subjection to imprisonment and bodily harms as a result of repression and the use of force by the police.

Another factor that also played a role in peasants’ engagement to direct action throughout the second phase was that they observed the important role public protests played in attracting the attention of the general public and authorities. As they succeed in voicing their claims through public protests, they became more motivated and determined to stage more protests. As one of the peasants remarked concerning the mobilizations in the second period of the struggle, ‘our hope and energy peaked at those years’ (Bektaş, in Reinart, 2003: 113).

Having explained the rationale behind the engagement of the movement actors to certain forms of actions, the study now turns to analyze the action forms themselves, focusing both on the meanings that the movement actors endeavored to disseminate with them, and the impact of these actions on the company, the government, the news media, and the general public. Concerning particularly the public protests, the responses of the social control agencies to different forms of protests will also be examined.

In examining the actions of the Bergama protesters, it is also necessary to consider the activities that the rival party and its supporters carried out because as Melucci states:

...any analysis of collective action should take its lead from the examination of a relationship, even if we were to study only one of the many components of that action; for it is only by including in the account the actions of the adversary and of the other actors in the field that the behavior of the actor can become meaningful (1996: 301).

The analysis of the actions of the Bergama protesters in this manner reveals that most of the activities that Bergama protesters carried out were strictly linked to the activities of the other parties, mainly among them to those of the state and the company. When examined in its chronological order, as given in Table 8.1, it becomes evident that the frequency of engaging in actions was considerably high in 1996 and 1997.

One factor behind the intensification of the protests in these years was the decision that, as mentioned before, the protesters took in April 1996 to intensify their efforts upon the first decision of the İzmir Administrative Court in favor of the mining company. In July 1997, the İzmir Administrative Court took another decision in favor of the company, rejecting to cancel the environmental permission granted to the company by the Environment Ministry.

Although the protesters further appealed to the Council of State for overruling the decision of the İzmir Administrative Court, the state authorities did not wait for the finalization of the litigation process for granting the other permissions to the company<sup>94</sup>. Another factor behind the intensification of the protests was the start of the construction activities in the mining site. By the end of 1996, the company obtained all the necessary permits from different ministries for its project, and started its operations first cutting 3000 pines and 1500 olive trees in the mining area to clear the land for mining operations (Taşkın, 1998). The Bergama protesters, particularly the peasants, began staging public protests towards the end of the 1996 which highly intensified in 1997. As it was stated by the protesters (Reinart, 2003), the main reason behind the start of the public protests was the start of the construction activities of the mining company in the mining site. The clearance of the mining site by the company increased the tension in the area, indicating the peasants that ‘mining’ was no longer only a project, and that mining company was no longer a distant enemy but turned into a concrete reality, and thereby triggered the start of the public protests. In fact, it became clearer to the peasants with the court decisions and with this event that both the state and the mining company were determined to operate the mine. It also became clearer that the state was not with them but with the company. The following quote is an example to this:

If we cut only one tree the state officials would punish us imprisoning five or ten years, but the same state allowed the company to cut thousands of trees. We witnessed the unfair treatment of the state with this event. Therefore, we have been opposing to the mine (Kurhan in Reinart, 2003: 52).

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<sup>94</sup> The Council of the State is the highest administrative court in Turkey at which the decisions of regional administrative tribunals can be appealed (Ovacık, 1999).

**Table 8. 1.****Forms of Action of Bergama Protesters in Chronological Order (Apr 1996- Nov 1998)**

Year	Actions of Protesters
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting in İzmir</li> <li>• Sending a petition to 550 members of the Turkish Parliament</li> <li>• Visiting Environment Ministry</li> <li>• A Panel in Bergama</li> <li>• Issuing a declaration</li> <li>• Sending a petition to the President, Prime Minister, and the Minister of Forestry</li> <li>• Meeting in Çamköy</li> <li>• Appealing to the Council of the State</li> <li>• The blockage of Çanakkale- İzmir highway for six hours upon the clearing of the mining site</li> <li>• Marching and meeting in Bergama</li> <li>• Half-naked marching in Bergama</li> <li>• A fact-finding trip to an old mine in Lefke, Cyprus</li> </ul>
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A picnic in the hills where the company planned to extract gold</li> <li>• Symbolic referendum participated by three thousands of peasants against the mine</li> <li>• Several meetings in European countries</li> <li>• Demonstration only by women upon the use of explosives in the mining site by the company</li> <li>• Participating to a meeting on the issue in the Turkish Parliament</li> <li>• Demonstration in Bergama</li> <li>• Marathon from Bergama to İzmir</li> <li>• Visiting a closed mine in Lefke, Cyprus</li> <li>• Occupation of the mining site (half day long)</li> <li>• Visiting political parties in Ankara and the Turkish Parliament</li> <li>• A picnic in Çamköy to celebrate the decision of the Council of the State</li> <li>• Demonstration in İzmir</li> <li>• Surrounding the mine twice</li> <li>• Several meetings with political parties in Ankara</li> <li>• Meeting with politicians in İzmir</li> <li>• Interrupting the press conference of Australian embassy</li> <li>• Press conference</li> <li>• Staging a sit-in on the pedestrian walkway of the Bosphorus Bridge in Istanbul</li> <li>• Staging a sit-in on the road to the mining site (all the day and night)</li> <li>• Visiting a closed mine in Balıkesir</li> <li>• Refusing to be counted in the national census conducted by the government</li> <li>• Sending a petition to the Interior Ministry</li> <li>• Sending a petition the President of Turkey</li> <li>• The İzmir Bar demanded from the İzmir governorship to apply the ruling of the Court of Appeal.</li> <li>• The lawyers of the protesters demanded to apply the ruling of the court from the Environment of Ministry.</li> </ul>

1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying to the military authorities for the withdrawal of the gendarme from the mining site</li> <li>• More than 300 protesters launched a suit against government officials for disregarding the court decision</li> <li>• Half-naked Marching in İstanbul</li> <li>• A petition campaign against goldmining and multinationals</li> <li>• Participating to a conference in METU</li> <li>• Demonstration in Ankara</li> <li>• A youth festival in Bergama in support of the protesters</li> <li>• Demonstration in the highway between İzmir and Çeşme</li> <li>• Publishing books</li> </ul>
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Source: Cumhuriyet 1996- 1998; Hürriyet 1996- 1998; Milliyet 1996- 1998; Turkish Daily News, 1996-1998

Thus, realizing that litigation process, lobbying and press conferences alone would not be sufficient to prevent the operation of the mine, Bergama peasants began staging public protests after the clearance of the mining site in order to pressure the state officials for respecting their claims. They staged their first disruptive protest as a response to the clearing of the mining site, blocking the nearest highway, Çanakkale- İzmir highway, for six hours (see, Appendix A, picture 2) (Turkish Daily News, 16 November 1996). This was followed by a demonstration in Bergama which was staged as a reaction to the Council of the State's approval of the first decision of the İzmir Administrative Court (Cumhuriyet, 22 December 1996). The determination of the peasants to stage public protest to prevent the operation of the mine was even furthered with the trial explosives which were started by the company in the mining site in January 1997, two months later after the clearance of the mining site (Turkish Daily News, 21 January 1997). Another factor that also played an important role in the peasants' decision to maintain public protests was that they saw with their first direct action that they could make their voice heard by the authorities through public protests because the governor of Bergama district (*kaymakam*) came to the area and listened the demands of the peasants upon the blockage of the highway (Reinart, 2003). The protest ended after six hours when the governor gave the protesters the permission to hold another meeting at another time (Turkish Daily News, 21 November 1996).

Being highly inexperienced in staging protests, the Bergama peasants thought that they needed someone to lead and coordinate them in their actions (Reinart, 2003). Upon the



demand of peasants, Oktay Konyar, who was then the local chair of the main oppositional party, Republican People Party, involved in the struggle to lead the peasants in their protests. Since then, almost all of the public protests have been tailored and led by Konyar. After Konyar's involvement, in an attempt to stage protests effectively, the protesters organized establishing an informal organization called Bergama Environmental Executive Board, which composed of the representatives of the Bergama municipality, the heads of 17 villages, the local branches of a union (*Kamu Emekçileri Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, KESK), an NGO (*Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği*, ADD), and the local chairs of some political parties, namely Freedom and Solidarity Party (ÖDP), Democratic Left Party (DSP), People's Democracy Party (HADEP), Welfare Party (RP), Republican People Party (CHP), and Workers' Party (İP) (Cumhuriyet, 12 January 1997; Yeni Yüzyıl, 13 January 1997). Committees consisting of ten people were also set up in each of the 17 villages. Each of these committees was led by a peasant (Reinart, 2003). As the Table 8.1 shows, the Bergama Environmental Executive Board organized many protests in the years from 1996 to 1998, ranging from conventional to unconventional and familiar to innovative. Before, however, organizing public protests, a considerable number of teach-ins had been held by the Bergama Environmental Executive Board, through which the peasants were trained on staging protests, and taught about the rules and regulations and individual rights concerning public protests (Reinart, 2003).

While the start of the construction activities of the mining company in the mining site was the main reason behind the start of the public protests in 1996, the outcomes of the continuing litigation process became the main reason behind the further intensification of the protests in 1997. As mentioned, in 1996, the İzmir Administrative Court had ruled in favor of the mine, rejecting the three lawsuits brought to the court against the operation of the mine by the Bergama protesters, which was then further appealed to the Council of State by the lawyers of the movement. In May 1997, the Council of State ruled in favor of the protesters deciding that there is no public benefit in the operation of the mine, which was followed by a lower court, İzmir Administrative Court, decision that canceled the environmental operation permit of the mining company (see, Table 8.3). As it will be explained later in more details, the decision of the Council of the State became highly influential in the Bergama struggle. It did not merely led to an increase in the public protests but more importantly it crucially influenced the trajectory of the Bergama struggle. With the ruling of the Council of the State, the motive and determination of the protesters increased and they began putting more pressure on the government for the

implementation of the court order, which became evident with the considerable increase in the number of protest actions in 1997. But after the litigation process was finalized in 1998 with the other related court decisions in favor of the protesters, the protests began diminishing. The peasants, for instance, highly reduced the demonstrative and confrontational activities in 1998 and began waiting for the implementation of the court orders. They did not engage in any direct action between March 1998 and March 1999. The lawyers, professionals, and local and national politicians, on the other hand, engaged in some procedural and appeal activities in 1998 to pressure the government authorities for the implementation of the court verdicts.

Not only timing of the activities of the protesters but also the type of the action forms that the protesters adopted were shaped through the strategic interaction of the protesters with the company and the state. In addition, some structural factors played a role in the choice of the forms of actions, too. When action forms are aggregated into the categories of 'conventional' and 'unconventional' actions, as in the Table 8.2, it is seen that Bergama protesters used more of conventional forms of action than unconventional ones. The predominance of conventional action forms in the Bergama case can be explained both with, as mentioned, the resources that the protesters had at their disposals, and with the low risks that conventional actions carry in comparison to unconventional actions. Yet, the movement actors also engaged in considerable number of unconventional actions. Most of the unconventional form of actions, which was adopted particularly by the Bergama peasants, was a reaction to an unexpected move of the company and the state. As mentioned, when the company began cutting trees in the mining site, the protesters reacted blocking the nearest highway for six hours. In a similar way, the protesters reacted to the operations, that was ongoing in the mining site despite the court rulings on the contrary, staging a sit-in on the road to the mine and surrounding the mining site in June 1997. They also reacted to the government's ignorance of the court orders staging a sit-in on the Bosphorus Bridge in İstanbul. The most interesting reaction of the protesters, however, came with their refusal to be counted in the national census conducted by the government in November 1997. On 21<sup>st</sup> of November 1997, the legal time period given to the company by the courts to stop its operations was expired. However, instead of implementing the court verdicts, the Minister of Environment requested a reassessment of the decision of the İzmir Administrative Court from the Court of Appeal (Turkish Daily News, 27 November 1997). In addition, the state authorities transferred a large number of security forces to the area for protecting the

**Table 8.2**

**Types and Forms of Action of Bergama Protesters (April 1996- November 1998)**

Types of Action		Forms of Action	Date
CONVENTIONAL (INSTITUTIONALIZED) ACTION	Appeal Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting in İzmir</li> <li>• Sending a petition to 550 members of the Turkish Parliament</li> <li>• Visiting Environment Ministry</li> <li>• A Panel in Bergama</li> <li>• Issuing a declaration</li> <li>• Sending a petition to the President, Prime Minister, and the Minister of Forestry</li> <li>• Meeting in Çamköy</li> <li>• A fact-finding trip to an old mine in Lefke, Cyprus</li> <li>• Symbolic referendum participated by three thousands of villagers against the mine</li> <li>• Several meetings in European countries</li> <li>• Participating to a meeting on the issue in the Turkish Parliament</li> <li>• Visiting political parties in Ankara</li> <li>• Meeting with politicians in İzmir</li> <li>• Sending a petition the President of Turkey.</li> <li>• Sending a petition to the Interior Ministry</li> <li>• Applying to the military authorities for the withdrawal of the gendarme from the mining site</li> <li>• Participating to a conference in METU</li> <li>• A petition campaign against goldmining and multinationals</li> <li>• Publishing books</li> </ul>	<p>Apr 1996</p> <p>Apr 1996</p> <p>Apr 1996</p> <p>June 1996</p> <p>Aug 1996</p> <p>Oct 1996</p> <p>Oct 1996</p> <p>1996</p> <p>Jan 1997</p> <p>Feb 1997</p> <p>Mar 1997</p> <p>May 1997</p> <p>Aug 1997</p> <p>Dec 1997</p> <p>Dec 1997</p> <p>Jan 1998</p> <p>Mar 1998</p> <p>Mar 1998</p> <p>1997-1998</p>
	Procedural Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lawyers appealed to the Council of the State</li> <li>• The İzmir Bar demanded from the İzmir governorship to apply the ruling of the Court of Appeal.</li> <li>• The lawyers of the protesters demanded to apply the ruling of the court from the Environment of Ministry.</li> <li>• More than 300 protesters launched a suit against government officials including the then prime minister and some ministries, and the İzmir governor for disregarding the court decision and demanded compensation.</li> </ul>	<p>Nov 1996</p> <p>June 1997</p> <p>July 1997</p> <p>Jan 1998</p>
	Demonstrative Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marching in Bergama</li> <li>• Half-naked marching in Bergama</li> <li>• A picnic in the hills where the company planned to extract gold</li> <li>• Demonstration only by women</li> <li>• Marathon from Bergama to İzmir</li> <li>• Visiting a closed mine in Lefke, Cyprus</li> <li>• Demonstration in Bergama</li> <li>• Visiting political parties in Ankara and the Turkish Parliament</li> <li>• A picnic in Çamköy to celebrate the decision of the Council of the State</li> </ul>	<p>Nov 1996</p> <p>Dec 1996</p> <p>Jan 1997</p> <p>Mar 1997</p> <p>Mar 1997</p> <p>Mar 1997</p> <p>Apr 1997</p> <p>May 1997</p> <p>May 1997</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstration in Izmir</li> <li>• Visiting a closed mine in Balıkesir</li> <li>• Half-naked Marching in İstanbul</li> <li>• Demonstration in Ankara</li> <li>• A youth festival in Bergama in support of the protesters</li> <li>• Demonstration in the highway between İzmir and Çeşme</li> </ul>	June 1997 Sep 1997 Feb 1997 Mar 1998 Jul-Aug 1998 Aug 1998
UNCONVENTIONAL (NONINSTITUTIONALIZED)	Confrontational Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The blockage of Izmir-Canakkale highway for six hours</li> <li>• Occupation of the mining site (half-day long)</li> <li>• Surrounding the mine (protesters staged a symbolic war against the mine with some agriculture tools)</li> <li>• Surrounding the mine</li> <li>• Interrupting the press conference of Australian embassy</li> <li>• Staging a sit-in on the road to the mining site (all the day and night)</li> <li>• Staging a sit-in on the pedestrian walkway of the Bosphorus Bridge in Istanbul and blocking the traffic for two hours</li> <li>• Refusing to be counted in the national census conducted by the government</li> </ul>	Nov. 1996 Apr 1997 May 1997  June 1997 June 1997 June 1997  Aug 1997  Nov 1997

mining site where the company maintained its operations (Cumhuriyet, 25 November 1997). Upon this, although it was subject to punishment to refuse to be counted, the Bergama peasants decided not to allow the officials to count them in the national census that was going to be conducted on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1997, stating that ‘we do not let the government, which does not show any respect to our demands, count us’ (*Bizi saymayanlara [bize saygı göstermeyenlere] biz de sayılmayız*), and also stating that ‘the state is behaving as if we did not exist, therefore we are not going to be counted’ (*Madem devlet bizi yok sayıyor biz de sayımda sayılmayacağız*) (Yeni Yüzyıl, 27 November 1997; Gazete Ege, 26 November 1997).

It should be noted that all of the unconventional actions were confrontational, or disruptive, but never violent. Although the protesters used the threat of violence through the disruptive forms of action they employed, such as the occupation of the mine, the surrounding the mining site, and the sit-ins that they engaged in different places, they never employed violent forms of action. Moreover, they mostly engaged in legal forms of action. This is not surprising when the ‘rights’ rhetoric used in the discourse of the movement, as well as the demand for the ‘rule of law’, which began to be articulated in this second phase of the movement, is considered. As mentioned, it was emphasized in the movement discourse, particularly by the lawyers, that the Bergama peasants defend

their constitutionally granted rights, such as the ‘right of life’ and the ‘right to healthy environment’, through their struggle. The Bergama protesters, in fact, have never acted with the logic of ‘ends justify the means’, which as della Porta and Diani (1999) point out characterizes most of the contemporary social movements. The actors of the Bergama movement have been careful in employing those forms of action which do not contradict with their aims. That is, as citizens defending the basic rights of Bergama peasants granted by the Constitution, and demanding the rule of law, they mostly acted within the boundaries of the law. Although Bergama protesters adopted those actions that can be considered as ‘civil disobedience’, like refusing to be counted in the national census, they believed civil disobedience is a ‘right’ that can be used against the state when the state fails to respect the rights of individuals (Interview No.5, 2004).

In terms of the impact of these actions, it can be said that the use of unconventional actions has been more effective in attracting the attention of the media, the general public, and the state agencies. For instance, after the occupation of the mining site, or sit-ins in the Bosphorus Bridge in İstanbul, the media coverage was high, and the authorities were more attentive to the demands of the protesters (see, Appendix A, picture 3). This is not surprising because the use of such disruptive actions forces opponents, bystanders, or authorities to attend to protesters’ demands obstructing their routine activities (Tarrow, 1998). Moreover, they draw authorities into a private conflict posing a risk to law and order through blocking traffic or interrupting public business (Tarrow, 1998).

When the conventional and unconventional types of actions of Bergama protesters are further classified using the four action categories as in Table 8.2, it is seen that the most frequent action in the second phase of the movement consisted of the public protests in the form of the demonstrative and confrontational activities. While the appeal activities, which was the most frequent form of action in the emergence phase of the movement, had been widely used until November 1996 when the construction activities in the mining site was started, after that date public protests began to be frequently and predominantly employed. This means that most of the actions of the protesters in the second period were staged mainly by the peasants. The following section will examine each of type of the actions that protesters employed focusing on their particular aims and outcomes.

#### **8.1.1.1. The Appeal Activities of the Bergama Protesters**

While in the emergence period of the movement the appeal activities had been mainly carried out by the local politicians and the so-called İzmir-Bergama hand-in-hand movement, besides these actors national chambers of professionals and peasants also carried out some appeal activities in the second phase of the movement, such as press conferences, publishing books, a symbolic referendum, a visit to political parties in Ankara, a meeting with politicians in İzmir, participation to a conference in a university, and so on<sup>95</sup>. Although all of the appeal activities adopted by the protesters drew the attention of the media, it was particularly the symbolic referendum that was seen as highly newsworthy by the media.

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, at the beginning the protesters demanded from the state authorities to conduct a referendum in the area and decide to allow the operations of the gold mine according to the results of the referendum. Upon the ignorance of that demand by the authorities the protesters decided in a meeting, attended by about 1500 protesters, to hold a referendum on their own (Cumhuriyet, 19 December 1996; Milliyet, 8 January 1997; Yeni Yüzyıl, 8 January 1997). The referendum was held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 1997 under the monitor of some notaries and some international observers from UN. 2866 people, the 89% of the eligible, from 8 villages participated to referendum and all voted ‘No to gold with cyanide’ (Gazete Ege, 13 January 1997; Cumhuriyet, 13 January 1997; Radikal, 13 January 1997; Yeni Yüzyıl, 13 January 1997; Milliyet, 13 January 1997). As Konyar remarked one of the aim of the referendum was to prove that the protesters did not consist only of a few politicians as the company and its supporters claimed (Cumhuriyet, 12 January 97). The results of the referendum were sent to prime minister, president, and related ministries (Yeni Yüzyıl, 8 January 1997).

On the other hand, both the domestic and the foreign, particularly German, actors of the ‘transnational advocacy network’ already established in the emergence phase of the movement on the issue of gold-mining, also carried out some appeal activities. The Bergama mayor visited some European countries, such as Germany and Belgium, to gather international support to the movement (Turkish Daily News, 12 February 1997). Moreover, in an attempt to pressure two German companies, Metalgesellschaft, one of

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<sup>95</sup> The protesters also attempted to voice their claims in this period through a number of books and articles. Exemplary in this regard was the works of professionals and local politicians (see, Taşkın, 1997; Turan, 1998; Duman, 1998; Taşkın, 1998; Alevcan et al., 1998).

Eurogold's partner, and Eurofol, the company which would supply cyanide to Eurogold, meetings were organized in Germany Giessen, where the headquarters of both of the companies are located (Turkish Daily News, 17 February 1997). Although these meetings were organized by the German actors of the transnational advocacy network, domestic actors also participated to them. In addition, some German scientists, who study on the issue of mining with cyanide, and some German Greens visited Turkey and declared their support to the Bergama protesters through meetings or through press releases (Turkish Daily News, 8 June 1997). As a result of the activities carried out by the actors of the transnational advocacy network the Bergama protesters also attracted the attention of the German news media. More importantly, as noted before, German Dresdner Bank withdrew its financial support from Eurogold's project (Yeni Asır, 6 December 1996; Turkish Daily News, 28 December 1996), and Metalgesellschaft sold its shares in Eurogold to Normandy Poseidon. The German Greens and public were influential in the selling of the shares of Metlallgesellschaft to Normandy Poseidon (Interview No.1, 2004). On the other hand, the Food First Information Network (FIAN), maintained its active support, requesting the governor of Izmir to halt the operations of Eurogold until the legal process is completed (Turkish Daily News, 30 January 1997).

#### **8.1.1.2. The Procedural Activities of the Bergama Protesters**

As in the emergence phase of the movement, the procedural activities carried out in the second phase mainly by the environmentalist lawyers group. In addition to maintaining the litigation process that had been started in the emergence phase of the movement, they also started a litigation process against government authorities who did not execute the requirements the of the court judgment. It should be noted here that apart form the cases brought to the courts against government authorities, all the cases that were brought to the courts by the Bergama protesters were against the permissions granted by the 'administration' to the company. Therefore, they were all brought to the administrative courts.

As it is shown in the Table 8.3, which summarizes the litigation process in the second phase of the struggle, upon the ruling of the İzmir Administrative Court against the three cases that lawyers brought in 1994 to that court, the protesters further appealed to the Council of the State in 1996. In May 1997, the Concil of the State took a groundbreaking decision in favor of the protesters ruling that the mining operations in Bergama area unfairly infringed the local residents' right to live in a healthy

environment, and right to protect the environment<sup>96</sup>. The former refers to Article 56 of the Turkish Constitution, which reads ‘[e]veryone has the right to live in a healthy, balanced environment. It is the duty of the state and citizens to improve the natural environment, and to prevent environmental pollution’, and the latter refers to Article 17 which reads ‘[e]veryone has the right to life and the right to protect and develop his material and spiritual entity. The physical integrity of the individual shall not be violated except under medical necessity and in cases prescribed by law; and shall not be subjected to scientific or medical experiments without his or her consent. No one shall be subjected to torture or ill-treatment; no one shall be subjected to penalties or treatment incompatible with human dignity’<sup>97</sup> (TBMM, 2006).

As it is seen from the ruling of the court, footnote 96, the judges underlined the privilege of the human life over the economic benefits. As such, the ruling of the court was quite in line with one of the demands articulated by the Bergama movement, an intended outcome to use the language of social movement scholars, and therefore, meant a considerable victory for the movement. Although all the activities carried out by movement actors, particularly the public protest staged by the peasants, might have been influential on the judges in deciding in favor of the protesters, the technical competence

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<sup>96</sup> It was stated in the ruling of the Council of the State that ‘[i]t is critical that human life, which is the most significant form of natural life, is sustained in a healthy, balanced and unspoilt environment. Since the protection of human life has primacy, the protection and enhancement of the natural bases of human life are necessities and environmental protection is an indispensable dimension of human life....[c]oncerns resulting from the operating method of the gold mine impact directly and indirectly upon human life. Therefore, the judicial assessment of the executive decision in question needs to consider public welfare, as well as the priorities within this conceptualization of public welfare, in light of the said constitutional and legal articles.

Presumption of good will by the investor and of meticulous inspection of the precautions notwithstanding, *if the economic benefits arising from the operation were to weighed against the direct and indirect damage to human life and nature that would result from the realization of the risks, it would be natural to privilege human life in the interpretation of public welfare.* Moreover, in the context of cyanide leaching, the propensity of the realization of the risks is independent of management or inspection.

Gold mining with cyanide leaching is certain to have a negative impact on human life directly or indirectly, through environmental damage, if the risk factors that are also acknowledged by the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and by expert witness reports are realized. Therefore, in the light of the above technical and legal determinations and apropos the right to life and the obligation of the state to protect ecological health, to prevent environmental pollution, and to ensure everyone can maintain their lives in good mental and physical health, the executive decision in question is not compatible with public welfare (Arsel, 2005a: 270, translated by Arsel, italics are added).

<sup>97</sup> Although the lawyers claimed that the operation of the mine violates the Article 56 of the Turkish Constitution, the Council of the State decided that it also violates the Article 17 (Özay, 2003).



**Table 8.3**  
**The Litigation Process and its Outcomes (1996-1998)**

<b>July 2, 1996</b>	The İzmir Administrative Court rejected all the appeals of the Bergama protesters. Upon this, the lawyers of the movement brought the cases to the Council of the State.
<b>May 13, 1997</b>	Upon the application of the Bergama protesters the Council of State ruled in favor of the protesters.
<b>June 26, 1997</b>	The İzmir Bar demanded from the İzmir governorship to apply the ruling of the Council of State
<b>June 27, 1997</b>	The İzmir governorship replied the İzmir Bar stating that ‘there is no court ruling on the issue’.
<b>July 29, 1997</b>	The lawyers of the protesters demanded from the Environment of Ministry to apply the ruling of the court.
<b>August 18, 1997</b>	Environment Ministry replied that the ruling of the Council of State cannot be applied.
<b>October 15, 1997</b>	In application of the judgment of the Council of the State, the İzmir Administrative Court set aside the decision to grant the mine the environmental permit on 15 October 1997, stating in its final verdict that “allowing the operations of a gold mine that utilizes the cyanide-leaching method is not consistent with the public interests. For this reason, the court decided unanimously on October 15 to ban the process subject to this case”
<b>October 17, 1997</b>	The ruling of the İzmir Administrative Court was sent to İzmir governor.
<b>October 22, 1997</b>	The ruling of the İzmir Administrative Court was sent to the Ministry of Environment.
<b>October 23, 1997</b>	Environment Ministry ordered all the related authorities to re-evaluate the permits of the mining company in line with the ruling of the court.
<b>March 12, 1998</b>	Bergama protesters sued four Ministers of the government, together with the Prime Minister, and İzmir governor for not implementing the court orders.
<b>April 1, 1998</b>	The Council of State upheld the judgement of the İzmir Administrative Court.
<b>May, 1998</b>	The company and the state appealed to the Council of the State for reevaluation of its approval.
<b>September 25, 1998</b>	The protesters applied to the European Court of Human Rights filing a case against the Turkish state.
<b>November 11, 1998</b>	The Council of the State rejected the appeal of the company and the state. With this rejection the order of the courts for ‘not allowing the operations of a gold mine with the use of cyanide’ became definite ( <i>muhkem kaziye</i> )

Source: Özay, 2003; Reinart, 2003

of the lawyers on the environmental issues also played a crucial role. As noted in the preceding chapter, the lawyers were experts both in environmental issues and in environmental law, and highly experienced in filing lawsuits on environmental issues. Moreover, they invested considerable time and energy to the Bergama movement. After the issuance of the order of the Council of the State in May 1997, the lawyers tried to accelerate the process whereby the court orders should have been implemented by the government.

#### **8.1.1.3. Demonstrative and Confrontational Actions: Public Protests of the Peasants**

As stated above, the public protests consisted of demonstrative and confrontational activities. Almost all of the public protests were designed and orchestrated by Konyar who, as mentioned, involved in the movement in the second phase. As he told in the interview, he inspired from the struggle of Gandhi against imperialism (Interview, No 5, 2004). Drawing parallels between Gandhi's struggle and the Bergama struggle, which he believed is a struggle against a different form of imperialism, he adopted Gandhian tactics in staging protests. As such, he deliberately avoided using violent forms of action, which, he remarked, 'are not approved by the Turkish society' (Interview, No 5, 2004). Konyar defined the Bergama protests as a form of 'civil disobedience' because in most of the protests they did not get the required prior permission from the related authorities<sup>98</sup>. In designing the public protests, Konyar gave the utmost importance to the attraction of the attention of the general public to the protests. As he stated he did not only concern with drawing the attention of the news media, which is often not sufficient,

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<sup>98</sup> Although it is stated in the Article 34 (before it was amended on October 17, 2001) of the Turkish constitution, which regulates the right to hold meetings and demonstrations, that '[e]veryone has the right to hold unarmed and peaceful meetings and demonstration marches without prior permission', the exercise of this right is effectively restricted with the second, third and fourth statements that follow this initial one, which read:

(2)The competent administrative authority may determine a site and route for the demonstration march in order to prevent disruption of order in urban life.

(3) The formalities, conditions, and procedures governing the exercise of the right to hold meetings and demonstration marches shall be prescribed by law.

(4) The competent authority designated by law may prohibit a particular meeting and demonstration march, or postpone it for not more than two months in situations where there is a strong possibility that disturbances may arise which would seriously upset public order, where the requirement of national security may be violated, or where acts aimed at destroying the fundamental characteristics of the Republic may be committed. In cases where the law forbids all meetings or demonstration marches in districts of a province for the same reasons, the postponement may not exceed three months.

though necessary, to draw the attention of the public, but also, more importantly, with attracting the attention of the public to the ‘protest news’ in the media (Interview, No 5, 2004).

#### 8.1.1.3.1. The Logic of Public Protests

As noted before, the actions movements engage form an important part of their discourse because protesters try to send several messages to different audiences in the field of the struggle, such as adversaries, news media, the greater public, and state agencies, both through the slogans that they use in the protests and through the specific forms of protests that they stage. The examination of the messages of the Bergama protesters will be started with the slogans of the protesters, which they expressed in protests both through chanting and through carrying banners and signs, and proceed through the forms of actions that they employed.

**Table 8.4**  
**The Slogans of the Bergama Protests**

- “These are our lands; we don’t want the cyanide-using company in our lands” (*Bu topraklar bizim; bu topraklarda siyanürcü şirketi istemiyoruz*)
- “The cyanide-using company, get out of Bergama!” (*Siyanürcü şirket Bergama’yı terket*)
- “Turkey won’t be Africa! Eurogold will go; this job [struggle] will end!” (*Türkiye Afrika olmayacak! Eurogold gidecek bu iş bitecek*)
- “This is our land, our country, our police and our military! Eurogold get out of our country” (*Toprak bizim, vatan bizim, polis bizim, asker bizim, Eurogold defol*)
- “Cyanide-using people, get out of our country” (*Siyanürcüler ülkemizi terkedin*)
- “The sixth fleet get out of our country” (*Altıncı filo defol*)
- “Don’t dig our graves” (*Mezarımızı kazmayın*)
- “The cyanide will bring gold to Eurogold, but only death to us” (*Siyanür Eurogold’a altın bize ölüm getirecek*)
- “Yes to Bergama, No to cyanide” (*Bergama’ya evet siyanüre hayır*)
- “Everywhere is Bergama, all of us are from Bergama” (*Her yer Bergama hepimiz Bergama’lıyız*)
- “Land with cyanide is not homeland” (*Siyanürlü toprak vatan değildir*)
- “The real gold of Bergama is the tobacco and cotton that it produces” (*Bergama’nın gerçek altını tütün ve pamuktur*)
- “Respect court orders” (*Yargı kararlarına uyun*)

With the slogans they used in the protests, the protesters attempted to disseminate the meanings constructed in the discourse of the movement in a condensed form. It is therefore possible to discern in the slogans most of the main themes of the discourse of the protesters and some of the main rhetorical strategies that they employed. For instance, the ‘anti-imperialist’ stance of the movement was expressed particularly with the first six slogans given in the Table 8.4. It was underlined through the slogans that the mining company is a foreign company attempting to operate in ‘our lands’, bringing death to ‘us’. Since ‘we’, the protesters, are the real owners of these lands, ‘we’ do not allow the company to exploit ‘our country’ and to turn it into a colonized country like some African countries. In this respect the sixth slogan in the Table, ‘the sixth fleet get out of our country’ (*altıncı filo defol*), is particularly interesting. This slogan had been widely used in the 1960s by the leftist groups against the American sixth fleet that came to İstanbul in 1967 and 1968, considering it as part of the ‘imperialist’ politics of the USA. In the use of the Bergama protesters, the slogan in fact referred not only to the imperialists but also to those who ‘produce and sell gold’ since the word ‘altıncı’ means in Turkish both ‘the sixth’ and ‘those who produce and sell gold’. There is also a ‘nationalist’ flavor in some of the slogans of the protesters which is, as it will be explained below, related with the anti-imperialist stance of the movement.

The adverse environmental affects of gold-mining, on the other hand, was attempted to be pointed out through stressing ‘cyanide’ in the slogans. As it is shown in the Table 8.4, one of the main rhetorical strategies of the protesters was to *name*, and thereby constitute, the company as ‘cyanide-using company’. Naming the company in this way, the protesters attempted to convey the message that the mining company is the one which poisons and kills the people and the environment.

Both underlining the ‘foreignness’ of the company and naming it as ‘cyanide-using company’, the protesters attempted to extend the antagonistic relation that they established with the company to all those who live in this country. While with the emphasis on the foreignness of the company they tried to draw a boundary between the people of this country and the company through externalizing the company as a foreign imperialist power, with the emphasis on cyanide they pointed out the threats that the company would pose to the people of this country, and thereby, attempted to construct the company as the ‘enemy’ of the people of this country. Moreover, with the slogan ‘everywhere is Bergama and we are all from Bergama’, which was one of the most

frequently used slogans, the protesters tried to tell the general public that everywhere in Turkey is under threat of ‘exploitation’ of foreign companies.

In an attempt to weaken the claims of the company, the protesters also attempted to undermine the supposed economic contribution of gold-mining through the slogans they used in the protests which referred to the richness of the Bergama area in terms of agricultural production. Finally, the protesters called the government to ‘respect the court orders’ with the slogans used in the protest. This particular slogan was started to be used after the Council of the State decided in favor of the protesters in May 1997.

As to the messages that the protesters sought to transmit through their actions, it can be said that multiple messages were encoded in the actions of the Bergama protesters with the aim of addressing different parties, such as antagonistic forces, the state agencies, the news media, and the general public. Specifically, with regard to the antagonistic forces, mainly the company, the protesters endeavored to display their ‘determination’ to prevent the operation of the mine through repeatedly staging public protests. Moreover, they engaged in a number of actions to express their ‘commitment’ to their cause. The demonstrations that the Bergama protesters staged in bad weather, such as those marches staged in 1996 in Bergama under very heavy rain (Cumhuriyet, 26 November 1996), the visible participation of old people, particularly old women, to protests, and those action forms that demand sacrifice, such as waiting all the night around the mining site (Milliyet, 29 June 1997), protesting half-naked despite the cold weather (Cumhuriyet, 22 12 1996) and walking kilometers from Bergama to Çanakkale (Yeni Yüzyıl, 28 August 1997), were all designed to show the protesters’ commitment to their cause. Furthermore, the activists tried to demonstrate the numerical strength of the support of the movement through providing the participation of large numbers of protesters to the public protests. In this way, they attempted to draw the attention of the company and the state to the fact that considerable number of people in the area opposes to the operation of the mine - what della Porta and Diani (1999: 174) calls ‘the logic of numbers’ in protests. For instance, thousands of protesters participated to the first direct actions staged in 1996 (Cumhuriyet, 26 November 1996; Turkish Daily News, 26 November 1996), more than four thousand peasants occupied the mine (Cumhuriyet 23 April 1997; Turkish Daily News, 23 April 1997), and around one thousand protesters visited political parties in Ankara (Yeni Asır, 8 May 1997).

As to the news media, the protesters sought for a sympathetic media coverage that might, in turn, increase public awareness, sympathy and support. As McAdam (1996b) points out, the news media can become a key vehicle for movements in mobilizing the support of the greater public and in influencing authorities through that support. The tactics adopted by the Bergama protesters to draw the attention of the news media varied from the use of innovative actions to staging protests at different places. Although the Bergama protesters employed some action forms from the existing ‘repertoire of action’ (Tilly, 1978), they made some modifications on them introducing some innovations. An effective modification they made was to stage demonstrations with half-naked male protesters (see, Appendix A, picture 4). As remarked by one of the local politicians, Birol Engel, who involved in the struggle from the very beginning:

We have been trying to tell our problems for seven years but nobody has listened to us. We have tired to attract the attention in many different ways but we could not succeed. But this [naked] action attracted the attention of everybody (Cumhuriyet, 1 January 1997).

The female protesters, on the other hand, participated to protests always dressing their traditional clothes. Moreover, the protesters staged protests not only at the villages of Bergama or in the downtown but at different cities, such as İstanbul, Ankara, Çanakkale, Mersin, İzmir, and so on. All of these tactics contributed to increase the public visibility of the Bergama movement, drawing the attention of the news media to the protests.

After peasants began staging protests adopting these tactics, the movement rapidly popularized, drawing the attention of both the local and the national news media. Even those demonstrations that were simple and fully conventional, like a march, were seen as newsworthy and therefore extensively covered by the media. It was particularly the participation of the peasants to innovative demonstrations that made the protest activities newsworthy. That is, it was regarded interesting to see people from the most ‘traditional’ part of the society, as signified by the traditional dressing style of the peasant protesters, in staging peaceful ‘modern’ forms of protests, which had never taken place before. Unsurprisingly, the disruptive or confrontational actions had a higher news value, such as the sit-in in the Bosphorus Bridge and the occupation of the mine. Due to their novelty in the eyes of the mass media, several front-page stories and editorials on the movement appeared in major national newspapers in 1997. As it was the case in the emergence phase of the movement, most of the news appeared on newspapers in the second phase of the Bergama struggle were supportive of the protesters.

Concerning state agencies, on the other hand, it was very important for the movement actors, in addition to effecting the policy changes they wanted, to prevent the repression by the police force of the state through limiting the control options of the state actors. As it will be indicated at greater length in the section that follows, adopting a number of influential tactics, the Bergama movement actors have been highly successful in avoiding the repression of the Turkish state. It was embedded in the ‘peaceful’ and ‘non-violent’ actions of the protesters that they respect laws and act within the bounds of laws. That is, they transmitted the message through their actions that they were neither rebels nor insurgents but just the ordinary citizens seeking to defend their constitutionally granted rights through the use of their democratic rights of protests. This is true even for those actions of the protesters that rest on the logic of ‘civil disobedience’ because Bergama protesters believed that engaging in ‘civil disobedience’ is one of the basic rights that citizens use to defend their constitutionally granted rights when the state fails to respect these rights (Interview No.5, 2004).

#### **8.1.1.3.2. The Protest Control and Counter-Tactics of the Protesters**

As mentioned one of the challenges a social movement faces after its emergence is the actions of the social control agencies of the state against the movement. State authorities, particularly the police, can use different repressive strategies to control protests, ranging from ‘overt behavior of police toward public protesters’ to ‘covert strategies of policing’, the latter include those police actions such as undercover surveillance and harassment of leaders (Earl et al., 2003: 582). Whatever the form it takes the state, as the guarantor of ‘law and order’, almost always take some measures to control social movements (della Porta and Diani, 1999: 209). In staging public protests, therefore, a movement attempts not merely to increase the awareness and support of the bystander public to the movement but also to limit the social control options of the state. The tactics that the protesters use for the latter are usually developed through the process of interaction between the protesters and state control agencies. In accounting for the movement tactics, therefore, it is important to understand the dynamic interplay of action-reaction between the state control agencies and protesters.

The manner in which the authorities sought to control the Bergama movement during the peak of the protests in the years between 1996 and 1998 was shaped by the general attitude of the Turkish state towards the dissident groups. As it has been explained at greater depth in the Chapter 6, Turkish state has a long tradition of repression of dissent

voices. Due to its authoritarian structure, the Turkish state has usually conceived oppositional groups as ‘enemies to be destroyed’, and therefore, established an *antagonistic relation* with them. In other words, envisaging the existence of opponents as a threat to the existence of the state, the state has not established legitimate political channels for the expression of dissent. Accordingly, the ‘repertoire of action’ of the social control units of the state, which they use against the protesters, has been developed on the basis of a strategy of ‘repression’ not ‘accommodation’ (della Porta and Diani, 1999). They, therefore, usually overreact to public protests, often being prone to use violence against the protesters.

As to the police response against the Bergama protesters, it can be said that the police attempted to maintain the same intolerant and repressive attitude and sought to suppress the Bergama protests, taking a number of measures against the protesters. However, the Bergama protesters considerably succeeded in preventing the suppression of the police developing and adopting a number of effective tactics. Although there have been instances of severe and brutal suppression of protests by the police, and even forceful prevention of some of the protests, the Bergama protests, in general, drew a much more tolerant response from the police compared with similar protests by other dissident groups.

The social control of the Bergama protesters has been held both by the police and by the gendarmerie. This is because some of the protests were staged in the villages of Bergama, which as being rural areas are the spheres of gendarmerie’s responsibility, whereas some others were staged in urban areas, which are within the responsibility of the police<sup>99</sup>. In all of the protest events either the police or the gendarmerie was present<sup>100</sup> (see, Appendix A, picture 5). Most of the police or gendarmerie action was directed to the prevention of the protests from being staged. The state intensified controls after the protesters occupied the mine in April 1997. After this protest event, the gendarmerie established a station in the mining site, placed a number of gendarmes there,

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<sup>99</sup> Within the Turkish civilian administrative system, while urban areas are under the jurisdiction of the police, rural areas are under the jurisdiction of the gendarmerie (Cerrah, 2006). Unlike the police, the gendarmerie is a military institution and although theoretically it operates under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in practice it operates under the command of General staff of Turkish Armed Forces (Sarıbrahimoğlu, 2006). Moreover, the 80% of the staff of gendarmerie consists of those who are under compulsory military service.

<sup>100</sup> Unlike more liberal-democratic contexts, police attendance to protests is fixed in Turkish context.



and began closely observing the villages around the mining site<sup>101</sup>. As the protests were intensified as a response to the ignorance of the court orders both by the company and the state, the security measures in the villages were further increased toward the end of the year 1997.

It is worth noting that the relation between the police repression and the type of protest action is weaker in Bergama case than is suggested by some social movement scholars. Contrary to the claims of the movement scholars (e.g., McAdam, 1982) who argue for a relation between police repression and threatening or confrontational protest actions, some of the most confrontational protest actions adopted by Bergama protesters, such as the surround of the mining site, and the sit-in staged at Bosphorus Bridge, did not spark much police repression. However, interestingly enough, some peaceful demonstrative actions faced severe police repression, such as the attempt to visit a closed mine in Balıkesir, and the attempt to visit some government authorities in İzmir. However, although they sometimes used force against the protesters, overall, the police or the gendarmerie mostly avoid using force in their attempts to prevent the public protests of the Bergama protesters.

The reasons behind the more tolerant treatment of the Bergama protesters by the police are manifold. There was for one thing the attention of the media and the sympathy of the general public to the Bergama protesters. The police would have been overreacted by the general public if they had used severe repressive force, for instance, against old women villagers. Second, both the composition and demands of the Bergama protesters were something new for the police for they largely consisted of peasants, both men and women, old and young, demanding the prevention of a gold mine in their area. The Turkish police, who is used to deal with more ‘marginalized’, and even militant, groups staging protests on ethnic, religious, or human rights issues, did not have any ‘repertoire’ for dealing with ‘peasants’ who protest the operation of a gold mine. The Bergama protesters, therefore, more safely engaged in protests actions in comparison to the above-mentioned groups.

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<sup>101</sup> In an attempt to instill fear into the peasants, the gendarmerie at first started to carry out daily training activities in the center of the villages. During these training activities a number of half-naked and armed gendarmes were singing and chanting in the middle of the villages. Upon the reaction of the peasants who were enraged by these activities, particularly by the half-nakedness of the gendarmes which they conceived as an assault to the honor of the women, the gendarmerie eventually ceased to do these training activities in the villages (Konyar in Reinart, 2003).

Finally, the tactics that the protesters adopted have been influential in limiting the control options of the police. As noted above, although the Bergama protesters at times violated the law attempting to stage protests without getting a prior permission from the related authorities, they mostly acted within the limits of the laws<sup>102</sup>. Moreover, as a strategic choice they did not engage in any violent action (Interview No.5, 2004). Although there have been moments of tension during protests, which in fact usually leads to the emergence of violence, the protesters deliberately avoided resorting to violence. The rationale behind the use of only non-violent action is explained by Konyar as follows:

Turkey has experienced much violence since the 1960s, which is not something approved by the general public.....What is to be done under these conditions? We need to resist without resorting to violence, we need to organize without using violence, and we need to make our voice heard without engaging in violent actions (Interview No.5, 2004).

Had the protesters used violence, they would not have won the sympathy of the general public on the one hand, and they would have been more easily controlled and repressed by the state on the other hand. The use of only nonviolent form of action as a strategic choice became very effective in the Turkish context in the 1990s where people were oversensitive to violence because of the war-like situation in the country in the 1970s and because of the then ongoing violent struggle between the Kurdish insurgents and the Turkish state. The public exposure of the movement through peaceful and mostly lawful protests made it a legitimate movement in the eyes of the general public, which discouraged coercive intervention on the part of the police and the gendarmerie. Furthermore, it prevented the state agencies to conceive and/or to frame the movement as an 'illegal' or 'terrorist' movement, which could have provided the most legitimate rationale for the state repression of the movement in general, and the use of brutal measures in the protests against the protesters in particular.

Engaging in nonviolent action, however, does not always guarantee the protesters a tolerant policing in Turkish context where sometimes even peaceful and non-confrontational demonstrations are suppressed by the police through the use of excessive force. Besides not engaging in any violent action, therefore, the protesters adopted some other tactics as well, that were also critical in limiting the control options of the police

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<sup>102</sup> In fact, this was in itself a tactic of the movement actors (Interview No.5, 2004). If they had attempted to get prior permission for the protest activity, the related authorities could have effectively prevented the protests, or they could have reduced the efficiency of the protests permitting to only a limited number of protests in definite places.

forces. First, as noted above, the protesters were trained, particularly about their legal rights, before staging the protests. They, therefore, knew how to act without committing crime when they were staging the protests. They, for instance, knew that they should stop those protest activities which were started without permission, after the police announced them to do so three times (Interview No.5, 2004). This knowledge made the protesters confident before the gendarmerie or the police during the protests. When they were threatened by the police, even when they were actually taken into the custody, they easily defended themselves stating that they did not commit any crime but just acted within the limits of the law in order to defend their basic rights (Interview No.5, 2004).

Second, the media attention to the protests was effectively used. The protesters were informing the media in advance about where and when to stage public protests. The presence of journalists in protests was one of the factors preventing the police from brutally treating the protesters. Third, all the protests were carefully designed in advance and staged through the effective orchestration of the leadership. Using body language, and some passwords for communication, Konyar led the protests in a way to give rapid and unexpected responses to the police, which made it difficult for the police to control them. "It is extremely important to respond to the police during the protests within a very short time. If protesters could not do this, the police easily suppress protests" (Interview No.5, 2004).

Fourth, the decisions concerning the organizations of the protests were increasingly taken at the top by Konyar, without much involvement of the peasants, so as to prevent the police to hear the place and time of the protests from 'the men' of the intelligence units in the villages. While at the beginning committees from each village were participating to decisions, their task eventually turned to organize the people for public protests. Secrecy has become increasingly important as the police and the gendarmerie directed their actions to prevent the public protests from being staged (Interview No.5, 2004). Konyar was not explaining the peasants where and how they would stage protests. It was even forbidden for the protesters to use mobile phones during the protests, or to use public phones when they were on the way to a protest (Konyar in Reinart, 2003: 82). This is because when they called home and told where they were, the police were easily hearing the place of the protesters and preventing the protests.

Fifth, old peasants, particularly women, were usually placed at the fronts in the protests in order to prevent the suppression of the protests by the police or gendarmerie through

the use of force. As Konyar stated, the use of violence against these people would have led to the reaction of the public (Interview No.5, 2004). Finally, the protesters staged protests at different places in different cities and began using different roads other than the main road of the villages to go to the protests after the gendarmerie began blocking the main road to the protesters.

Despite all these tactics, however, the protesters were harshly treated in some protests<sup>103</sup>. When, for instance, they attempted to visit a closed mining site in Balıkesir in 1997, the gendarmerie stopped them on their way to Balıkesir and instructed them to go back to Bergama. Upon the refusal of the protesters to go back, the gendarmerie first used physical force against them, and then took some of them into custody. Interestingly, however, the use of violence against the protesters, engendered rage and increased the determination of the peasants to continue to public protests. As one of the peasants stated:

The violent treatment of the gendarmerie increased our anger and determination. In the protests we staged we never resorted to violence against the gendarmerie, nor did we curse them. But the same gendarmerie did not hesitate to beat our 70-year old grandmas, and 80-year old grandpas, which made us much more determined (Duran in Reinart, 2003: 107).

Nevertheless, it is fair to say that on the whole the Bergama protesters did not receive a brutal treatment by the police. The instances of the use of force against the protesters by the police, as the one mentioned above, were therefore exceptions.

So far, the study has considered only the actions of the Bergama protesters which, as indicated, played a crucial role in attracting the attention of different audiences to the movement, and thereby mobilizing the support of some groups. As it has been pointed out before, the expansion of the protest discourse, in a way to articulate some other unfulfilled social demands in addition to the initial ones, became as important as the

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<sup>103</sup> During some of the protests the protesters were also taken into custody. After the occupation of the mining site by the protesters in 1997, the protesters were accused of damaging the equipment of the mine and 38 of them, including Konyar, the Bergama chairman of the Freedom and Solidarity Party, and the Bergama chairman of the Peace Party were taken into custody and 36 stayed there for two days, while two were arrested for resisting security forces (Turkish Daily News, 4 July 1997). The protesters were accused for overturning two trucks, burning an ambulance, breaking chairs, computers and other furniture in the offices of the company in the mining area. It was also claimed that banners with illegal pronouncements were found in some vehicles of the protesters (Turkish Daily News, 4 July 1997). The protesters, however, claimed that they were not involved in any vandalism, and all of these claims were fabricated by Eurogold.

actions of the protesters in the mobilization of new social groups. In the section that follows, the expansion of the Bergama discourse will be examined.

### **8.1.2. The Expansion of the Equivalential Chain of the Social Demands**

During the trajectory of movements, the boundaries of their discourses, together with their equivalential components, permanently fluctuate. This is so because the hegemonic strategies of social movements are constantly reformulated both to expand mobilization and to compete with rival projects. The expansion of mobilization becomes possible with the construction and articulation of some new demands other than the initial ones. Put differently, the participation of some new groups to the movement becomes possible with the articulation of their demands in the protest discourse. The transformation of the emergent discourse of the movement (myth) into a wider discursive space, in which some other demands can also be inscribed, then, is a necessity for movements in order to widen the constituency of the movement. The transformation of a myth, on the other hand, to a surface of inscription for some other social demands too, requires that it should not be strongly tied to the dislocatory experience of a particular group (Laclau, 1990).

From the very outset, in fact, the Bergama protest discourse has not been strongly tied to the dislocatory experiences of the local people. Rather, it had the capacity to provide a principle of reading both to the dislocations that Bergama peasants experienced with the mining project, and the dissatisfactions that the other groups experienced with the existing broader structures in the country. As it has been shown in the preceding chapter, the emergent discourse of the Bergama protest movement did not only articulate the particular social demand of the Bergama locals but also the demands of some other social groups. From the beginning, therefore, the Bergama protest discourse acted as a surface of inscription for other social demands, and therefore, contained the possibility of expansion.

In the second phase of the movement, the protest discourse further expanded through the inclusion and articulation of some demands other than those that had already been articulated within the protest discourse in the emergence phase of the movement. As it has been indicated in the preceding chapter, the emergent discourse of the Bergama movement constituted through the equivalential articulation of the demand for the 'prevention of the operation of the gold mine in Bergama', the demand for the

‘protection of environment’, the demand for the ‘prevention of the operation of gold mines’, and the demand for the ‘prevention of the operation of foreign companies in Turkey’. In the second phase, the demand for the ‘rule of law’, the demand for more ‘democracy’, and the demand for the respect for ‘human rights’ were also added to these demands. More specifically, the protesters demanded from the state authorities to comply with the decisions of the courts, and to respect democratic rights of people, such as the right of the political participation of the people to the decisions that concern and affect them, as well as to respect ‘human rights’, such as the right to live, and the right to live in a healthy environment. In 1998, for instance, the Chamber of Environmental Engineers initiated and coordinated a petition campaign called ‘Everywhere is Bergama, We are all from Bergama’, which clearly expressed the demands for democracy and for the rule of law. In a nutshell, it was stated in the petition that:

In spite of the eight-year long struggle of the local people, and the reactions from the general public and academic circles, as well as the decision of the Council of the State for the cancellation of the permission given to Eurogold, the attempt of Eurogold to operate the gold mine in Ovacık-Bergama using cyanidation process is still continuing. This situation makes it questionable whether the Turkish Republic is a *democratic* state in which the *rule of law* prevails.....when the agricultural activities and tourism in Bergama is considered, it is seen that mining would harm the area both environmentally and economically while bringing profit only to Eurogold. If gold mining is allowed in Bergama, then 560 more places in our country will be under threat of gold mining. Therefore, we demand the prevention of the operation of the Eurogold and all other multinational companies in other places of the country (Cumhuriyet, 11 March 1998, italics are added).

Similarly, upon the reluctance that the government authorities displayed in implementing the court orders Taşkın stated that:

This issue reached a point beyond the peasants of Bergama. To defend *democracy* and the *rule of law* cannot be seen as the task of only Bergama peasants....the rule of law is important for everybody. Even the Environment Ministry will need the rule of law (Cumhuriyet, 25 November 1997, italics are added).

As it was the case with those demands that had been articulated in the emergence phase of the movement, the demands that were added to the chain of equivalence in the second phase of the movement were not passively conveyed through the discourse of the movement, but rather they were constructed within the movement discourse through their expression in it. Since this point will be explained in the following sections at greater depths, suffice it to mention here that the floating signifiers ‘democracy’, ‘human rights’, and ‘rule of law’ acquired a partially fixed meaning only through their articulation within the Bergama protest discourse.

Concerning the question of why specifically these particular demands were included to the equivalential chain constructed within the Bergama discourse, it can be said that, first and foremost, it was the position of the government and some other state authorities in this hegemonic struggle and their actions toward the protestors that became influential to some extent for the construction and articulation of the demands for the ‘rule of law’, ‘democracy’, and ‘human rights’<sup>104</sup>. As noted above, after the ruling of the Courts, the mine was not immediately closed due to the reluctance of the state authorities to do so. This prepared the ground for the construction and articulation of the demand for the rule of law within the Bergama discourse. That is, as the Turkish state refused to comply with the decisions of the courts and actively backed the company, the protestors began demanding from the state to respect the court rulings. As stated by the mayor, “Bergama people defend the rule of law and demand from the state to respect the court orders” (Cumhuriyet, (23 November 1997). Likewise, the state authorities’ ignorance of the demands of the Bergama protestors was influential on the articulation of the ‘democracy’ and ‘human rights’ demands. As the state authorities turned a blind eye to the demands of the protestors, privileging the interest of the company over the demands of the protestors, the protestors began demanding ‘democracy’, i.e., respect for the demands of the ordinary people, and ‘human rights’, i.e., respect for the right to live and the right to healthy environment.

Second, the composition of the Bergama protestors and the ideological resources at their disposal was influential in the articulation of the ‘rule of law’, ‘democracy’, and ‘human rights’ demands. The articulation of ‘rule of law’, and ‘human rights’, for instance, owed much to the presence of lawyers among the protestors, who increasingly turned to define the Bergama struggle as a ‘legal struggle’ (Özay, 2003; Interview No.4, 2004). Similarly, Konyar, who as mentioned was the Bergama chairman of a social democrat party, repeatedly underlined that Bergama movement is not only an environmental movement but ‘a human rights and democratization movement’ (Interview No.5, 2004; Konyar, 1999: Konyar in Reinart, 2003: 115), emphasizing the right of ordinary people to participate to the decision-making processes.

Third, the availability and credibility of the signifiers of ‘rule of law’, ‘democracy’, and ‘human rights’ was influential in their adoption and articulation within the Bergama

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<sup>104</sup> It is important to note here that this is in no way to say that there is a necessary link between the position of the state and the demands articulated within the Bergama discourse.

discourse. With the neo-liberal transformation of the world, the issues of democracy, rule of law, and human rights have appeared as the most legitimate issues within the last two decades<sup>105</sup>. Due to their legitimacy they usually resonate well, both in national and international arena, when used in expressing dissidence. It was such a credibility that also led the Bergama protesters, in addition to other factors, to adopt and use these signifiers in voicing their demands.

Last, the relation of contiguity between these signifiers, that is, between the issues of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, contributed to their articulation together within the Bergama discourse. As being the most legitimate issues in politics within the last two decades, the signifiers democracy, rule of law, and human rights have usually been articulated together in different discourses, which made these issues contiguous to one another. The existence of such a relation between these issues made it easier for the Bergama protesters to extend the Bergama discourse. For instance, once the demand for the rule of law began to be articulated in the protest discourse, the articulation of the demand for democracy almost naturally followed it. The same is also true for the demand for human rights. As if there was a natural link between them, the demand for democracy and the demand for human rights began to be simultaneously articulated in the Bergama discourse.

It is highly important to emphasize here that in articulating these new demands in the protest discourse, an *equivalence* was constructed between these new demands and the already articulated ones. The equivalence between all these demands was constructed through constructing a *new frontier* and thereby positing all the demands of the protesters against a new common enemy. More precisely, with the incorporation of the new demands into the equivalential chain a new space of representation was constituted through constructing a new frontier. In fact, the expansion of the equivalential chain destabilized the initial frontiers of the Bergama protest discourse, leading to the displacement of them. This is an important point and therefore needs further clarification.

While in the emergence phase of the movement the outside of the protest discourse, its *constitutive externality*, had been mainly the company and its supporters, in the second

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<sup>105</sup> Those institutions, such as the World Bank and OECD, and Western countries, such as the US, France, and Britain, that actively promote neo-liberalism, has increasingly emphasized the necessity for democratization and the respect for human rights and the rule of law since the second half of the 1980s (Aydın, 2005a).



phase of the movement the state was also explicitly constructed as the enemy of the protesters. As the Bergama peasants remarked, “we have always engaged in moderate actions, but the state did not side with us, although it should be concerned about the health of its people” (Cumhuriyet, 25 November 1997). Accordingly, the Bergama movement became a “struggle of people, environment, and law against the state, government, multinational companies and their supporters”, as it was stated by one of the leading figures of the movement (Interview, No. 2, 2004). In the emergence phase, the protestors had directed their activities to the state to force it to meet their demands. Although they were articulating demands in opposition to the environmental and foreign direct investment policies of the state in particular and neo-liberal policies in general, they had not constructed neither the state in general nor the government in particular as an antagonist since they were still regarding the state as the actor that would make changes in these policies in a way to satisfy their demands. But as the position of the governments in this hegemonic struggle became clearer towards the end of the emergence phase, and as the state as a whole failed to implement the court decisions in the second phase of the movement, the protesters began articulating the demands for democracy, human rights, and rule of law. The constitution of the new space of representation through the inclusion of these demands to the equivalential chain became possible with the inclusion of the state to the category of enemy along with the mining company. In fact, with the inclusion of these new demands to the equivalential chain, the state was necessarily expelled from the discourse of the movement because the new demands pointed to what lacked in the then existing institutional political structure, namely ‘democracy’, ‘human rights’, and ‘rule of law’. Regarding the state as the main actor who was responsible for these ‘lacks’, the protesters constructed an antagonistic relation with the state, which led them to directly challenge the state. Accordingly, they began calling upon the state authorities to regulate the economic activities not in the name of the narrow interests of large corporations, but in the name of the interests of the general public on the one hand, and to respect the demands of the people, the rights of the protesters as well as to act in accordance with court orders on the other hand.

Hence, the Bergama protest discourse took a new shape with the equivalential articulation of the new social demands and with the construction of a new boundary which radically externalized not only the company but also the Turkish state. Broadly speaking, two forms of ‘relation of subordination’ that had existed within the Turkish social structure in a differential way were transformed into an ‘antagonistic relation of

oppression' within the discourse of the Bergama movement in the second phase of the struggle. One was the subordination of the local people, as well as the natural environment, to the interests of the international capital created by the ongoing processes of liberalization and globalization, and the other was the subordination of society, or citizens, to the authoritarian rule of the Turkish state which, as explained in Chapter 6, was created through the years after the establishment of the Turkish republic. While the resistance to the former was expressed through the articulation of demands for the prevention of the operation of the mine in Bergama, the prevention of gold-mining, the protection of environment, and the prevention of the investments of foreign capital, the resistance to the latter was expressed through the articulation of demands for the rule of law, for democracy, and for human rights. All these demands were articulated through the principle of their equivalence against the multinationals, and the state which ascribes a privilege to multinationals at the expense of local communities, environment, the rule of law, and democracy. Through the constitution of a chain of equivalence among these demands a new 'we', different from the initially constructed one, was constructed. The new 'we' comprised of not only those who resist the domination of the capital through those demands such as 'prevention of the operation of gold mines', 'protection of environment', and 'prevention of the operation of foreign companies' as in the initial phase of the movement, but at the same time those who resist the domination of the state over the society demanding the 'rule of law', 'democracy' and the respect for 'human rights'. As it will be explained later, the equivalential articulation of these demands, does not mean that an alliance between different interests was established but rather their identities were modified.

In regard to the construction of the state as an *antagonistic force* in the discourse of the protesters, an important word of caution and clarification is required. The responses and reactions of the different branches of the Turkish state to the Bergama movement differed in the second phase of the struggle. While the executive branch of the Turkish state, particularly the governments, increasingly turned against the protestors, the judiciary seemed supportive of the movement issuing court orders in line with the demands of the protestors. Moreover, some members of the Turkish parliament engaged in the struggle lending their support to the protesters. However, in spite of the support of some state actors, the protesters still constructed the state as a whole as an antagonist. This is so because, as it has been noted above, not only some branches of the state but the state as a whole was seen by the protesters as responsible from the existing relations

of subordination. In other words, the Turkish state with its all branches was regarded as responsible both from the neo-liberal structuring of the Turkish economy and from the authoritarian structure of the Turkish state. Furthermore, as the governments ignored the court orders it became clearer to the protesters that it is the structure of the Turkish state that prevents them from achieving their ends<sup>106</sup>. What the Bergama mayor stated concerning the safety measures in the mining site well illustrates this point:

This is not a problem of safety but a problem of environment. This is a broad issue that went beyond the [concerns of] Bergama people. It should lead all the lawyers, intellectuals, and politicians of Turkey to debate *the structure of the Turkish state*. If the people of this country, who pay taxes, perform military service, and obey the prevailing rules and regulations, cannot urge the state to implement the court orders, then this issue should be seen as something well beyond gold mining with cyanidation process (Cumhuriyet, 25 November 1997, italics are added).

The enemies of the Bergama protesters, however, were not limited only to the state and the company. A new social division was also instituted within the minor social space of the Bergama villages between those who oppose the mine and those who do not oppose the mine. The peasants who did not oppose to the mine were increasingly turned into ‘enemies’. After the first confrontational direct action that the peasants staged as a reaction to the clearance of the mining site in November 1996, the division in the villages between those who oppose the mine and those who support the mine became much clearer and sharper. The peasants who support the mine were isolated by the others. They were not allowed to enter to coffee houses, and to participate to social gatherings such as weddings and funeral ceremonies. As one of the peasants stated:

After the first action that we engaged blocking the nearest highway, we decided to break up all the relations we had had with those peasants who supported the mine. We decided even not invite them to the wedding ceremonies and not to participate to their funerals (Özyaylalı in Reinart, 2003: 58)

In some Alevi villages, the peasants who oppose the mine even broke up their relations with traditional religious leaders, called *dede*, because of the latter’s support to the mine. They, for instance, rejected the participation of *dedes* to funeral ceremonies, which are traditionally performed under the leadership of *dedes*, inviting in place of them Sunni religious leaders who oppose to the mine (Interview No. 5, 2004). Thus, a new division was set up between the peasants in the Bergama villages, which replaced the existing traditional community structures in the villages.

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<sup>106</sup> As explained in chapter 6, in the Turkish state structure the power of the executive is very high in comparison with the power of both legislature and judiciary.

With the inclusion of the Turkish state and some peasants into the category of enemy, an equivalential relation between the 'Others' was also constructed. This is to say that the 'mining company', 'multinationals', the 'state', 'the peasants who support the mine', and all the others who support the mine, such as some academics, politicians, and professionals were all seen as equivalents in terms of being the enemy of the protesters. That is, a chain of equivalence was also established between the excluded identities and meanings that turned them into a common 'Other' for all those who involved in the Bergama movement, though a hierarchy between these groups was instituted.

Although the Bergama movement has always been beyond the narrow concerns of the local residents, and therefore never been a particular struggle, with the articulation of the new demands within the Bergama protest discourse, the *populist* appeals of the movement have further increased. The protesters sought to forge chain of equivalences between all those who would be adversely affected from the operation of the gold mines, all those who privilege the environment over economic interests, all those who have been adversely affected from the neo-liberal transformation, and all those who demand the rule of law, respect for the human rights, and more democracy. As such, the movement offered an alternative social imaginary, in which economic investments are not privileged over the local communities and the environment, the state authorities respect the rights of people, and also the rule of law, and take into account the demands of the people in the decisions that affect them.

With the expansion of the protest discourse through the construction and articulation of new demands, the number of those who identify with the protest discourse considerably increased. In turning into a discursive space for the articulation of a number of demands, and thereby mobilizing multiple social groups, the *dual function* that the Bergama protest discourse had played a central role. As it will be explained later in this chapter, besides providing a particular solution to the dislocation of the Bergama peasants, and the dissatisfaction of the other groups, the Bergama protest discourse also represented for these groups, metaphorically, the possibility of achieving *fullness* which was absent due to their having unsatisfied demands. In other words, the subjects, as being the subject of lack which became apparent to them due to their having unfulfilled demands, aspired to the *fullness* through their identification with Bergama discourse. These are not two different meanings that the protest discourse contained but rather two different functions that it had. It was also this characteristic of the Bergama discourse, in fact, that led to the participation and support of some groups to the Bergama movement.

### 8.1.2.1. Rhetorical Strategies of the Protesters

In addition to articulating new demands and thereby expanding the discourse of the movement, the Bergama protesters also adopted a number of rhetorical strategies in an attempt to attract more groups to the movement, some of which have already been mentioned. One of the rhetorical strategies, as mentioned, was that they *named* the company as cyanide-company (*siyanürcü şirket*)<sup>107</sup> so as to underline the environmental threats that the operation of the mine poses. Second, in expressing their demands the protesters increasingly employed ‘nationalist’ themes, underlining that ‘our’ land and ‘our’ country were attempted to be exploited by a ‘foreign’ company, as the following quotes illustrate:

These are our lands, we saved them with our bloods but now they are taken by foreigners. These lands were inherited to us from our ancestors who saved these lands with their bloods. In the future, our children [not foreigners] will use these lands (Özyaylalı in Reinart, 2003: 91).

These lands belong to us. We owned them through our labor. But a foreigner came and attempted to pollute our lands for its own profit (Interview No.6, 2004).

The protesters also drew parallels between the occupation of some Turkish regions after the First World War and the inflow of foreign companies after neo-liberal transformation. Likewise, they drew parallels between Turkish liberation war and the Bergama struggle, framing the struggle as a new form of national liberation struggle. As Konyar stated:

Enemies in the past used to attack with rifles and guns, and today it’s with gold mines and nuclear power stations. We as Bergama residents don’t let them do that. We won’t let them to poison our soil (Turkish Daily News, 14 November 2000).

The use of nationalist rhetoric, in fact, was in no way surprising because nationalism has been one of the dominant and credible ideologies in the Turkish context. Besides, due to the contiguous relation between nationalism and anti-imperialism, they are usually conceived as equivalents by the leftist circles, and therefore, articulated together. Moreover, the strategies of the company and the state have been influential in protesters’ use of nationalism as an ideological resource. As the state and the company referred to them as those who betray the country (*vatan haini*), due to their opposition to an economic investment which would supposedly contribute to the development of Turkey,

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<sup>107</sup> The title of a book written by Sefa Taşkın is, for instance, ‘Cyanide-Octopus’(Taşkın, 1998). The name was chosen to indicate that the gold-mining company ‘poisons’ many places through its subsidiaries and branches in several countries.

the protesters began using ‘nationalist’ frames. Thus, with the use of nationalist themes in the protest discourse the protesters tried to offset the claims of their opponents, legitimate their opposition to gold-mining, mobilize some new groups, and win the sympathy of the general public.

Third, the protesters endeavored to discredit the claims of the company that the mining project would contribute to the local and national economy, and that gold-mining industry would contribute to the Turkish economy in general. Concerning the supposed economic contributions of the gold mine to Bergama area, it was argued by the protesters that the land in Bergama is highly fertile that it would be irrational to pollute it. As to the alleged contributions of gold-mining to Turkish economy, the protesters argued that the economic benefits that would be gained from the mining operations would be very low compared to the adverse affects of cyanide leaching method on the environment (Milliyet, 1 August 1997). They pointed out the fact that only 10% of the profit of mining companies was required be paid to the state as tax by the mining law, which, they argued was not worth bearing the environmental risks that gold mining poses (Taşkın, 1998). As stated by Taşkın:

The gold mining companies destroyed and ruined Guyana, Chile, Papua New Guinea, and Congo, using the cyanidation process. The multinational companies now chose Turkey. They want to poison first of all Bergama with cyanide, arsenic, and cadmium using the outdated old technology that they brought Turkey. This mine would not contribute to the economy of the region. The 24 tons of gold would not bring back the ruined environment and killed people (Cumhuriyet, 13 November 1996).

Moreover, they argued that as being capital-intensive investments gold mines, contrary to the claims of the mining company, could not generate much amount of jobs. Even those that are actually created by the gold mines would be short-term jobs because of the limited life of mines.

Fourth, with the aim of attracting the support of the people in other regions, the protesters emphasized that if the state allows the operation of the gold mine in Bergama, it will be followed by the operation of 560 more gold mines in other places. One of the academics who involved in the struggle, İsmail Duman, remarked that Bergama “is a gateway” and therefore “if it is permitted, the whole country will turn into a tailings pond where poisonous tailings of goldmining is stored” (Cumhuriyet, 17 September 1996).

Finally, the protesters stressed that apart from the specific content of the demands that they voiced, the Bergama struggle, as a struggle of ordinary people like peasants, is a

‘democratic’ struggle. That is, the Bergama movement is in itself framed as an exercise of democratic rights. The Turkish Physicians Association, for instance, awarded the Bergama peasants the ‘labor and democracy’ prize for their ‘democracy struggle’ (Türkiye, 17 5 1997). With this strategy, the protesters sought to get the support of all the democratic forces, and all those who try to further the democracy in the country.

### **8.1.3. The Support Mobilized by the Bergama Movement**

As a result of both the expansion of the discourse of the movement, and the activities carried out by the protesters, the popularity and the support base of the movement was widened on the one hand, and the protesters, as explained above, won the judgments of the related courts over the issue in their favor from the courts on the other. A number of local and national politicians, activists, and organizations mobilized in this second period in support of the Bergama movement. Put it in more details, all the local unions, some national unions, the local organizations of political parties, some members of the Turkish parliament, the leaders of some political parties such as Workers’ Party, Republican People Party, and Freedom and Solidarity Party, some environmental NGOs such as The Association for Protecting Environmental and Cultural Values (ÇEKÜL), The Environment Foundation of Turkey, the Civil Initiative against Chemical Mining (KİMDAKSİ), Greenpeace Mediterranean Office, the Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA), Green Party members, SOS Mediterranean, Environment Club of Bosphorus University, the Environment Passengers, SOS Environment Platform, Borderless Environment Travelers, and some other NGOs such as the Human Rights Association, the Union of Turkish Travel Agents (TÜRSAB), Environment Protection Platform consisted of 60 unions, associations, and chambers in Ankara, Anti-Mai organization, Turkish Pen Club, German Travel and Tour Operators Union, Aegean Municipalities Union, Contemporary Lawyers Association, Balıkesir Bar, Contemporary Journalists Association, all the women NGOs in İzmir, and some academics from Middle East Technical University, Dokuz Eylül University, and Aegean University, and some other universities began supporting the Bergama movement in its second phase<sup>108</sup> (Gazete Ege, 24 April 1996;

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<sup>108</sup> This is not an exhaustive list because it did not include many individuals who also lent their support to the movement, such as professionals, journalists, environmentalists, and students. For instance, thousands of students and activists from environmentalist organizations, labor unions, and some political parties participated to the youth camp organized by the Bergama municipality in Bergama in 1998 in support of the Bergama protesters.

Gazete Ege, 25 April 1996; Gazete Ege, 20 December 1996; Hürriyet 24 April 1996; Hürriyet, 17 October 1996; Milliyet, 17 October 1996; Cumhuriyet, 11 January 1997; Cumhuriyet, 12 January 1997; Yeni Yüzyıl, 11 March 1997; Cumhuriyet, 11 March 1997; Cumhuriyet, 6 March 1997; Radikal, 5 March 1997; Cumhuriyet, 29 May 1997; Cumhuriyet, 14 May 1997; Yeni Yüzyıl, 13 May 1997; Milliyet, 9 May 1997; Radikal, 6 May 1997; Milliyet, 28 August 1997; Yeni Yüzyıl, 15 August 1997; Cumhuriyet, 23 November 1997; Yeni Asır, 25 November 1997; Cumhuriyet, 3 December 1997; Cumhuriyet, 31 December 1997; Yeni Asır, 5 March 1998; Cumhuriyet, 6 March 1998; Hürriyet, 21 March 1998; Cumhuriyet, 24 March 1998).

While some of these groups, such as The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA), Green Party members, SOS Mediterranean, Environment Club of Bosphorus University, the Environment Passengers, SOS Environment Platform, and some local politicians declared their support on the basis of environmental concerns (Turkish Daily News, 11 January 1997), some others, such as the Human Rights Association, Bergama-based labor unions, and Turkey's second biggest labor confederation (DISK), declared that they support the struggle of 'democracy' of Bergama protesters (Turkish Daily News, 6 June 97). Moreover, some other groups, such as Anti-Mai organization, the Civil Initiative against Chemical Mining (Kimdaksi), and Labor Party (EMEP) supported the Bergama movement for resisting capitalist globalization. Still some other groups, such as İzmir, Ankara, and İstanbul Bars, and the Union of Bar Associations, supported the movement for the rule of law. These groups supported the movement in a number of ways, such as directly engaging in some protest activities, participating to the protests activities of the Bergama protesters, giving some prizes to the protesters, and so on.

In addition to these groups, some members of the Turkish parliament, such as Işın Çelebi, Aydın Güven Gürkan, and Ali Rıza Bodur, also engaged in the struggle. They actively supported the movement participating to some meetings of the protesters (Gazete Ege, 16 October 1996; Hürriyet, 17 October 1996; Milliyet, 10 October 1996; Yeni Yüzyıl, 16 October 1996), visiting Environment Ministry together with the protesters (Gazete Ege, 24 April 1996; Hürriyet, 24 April 1996), and bringing the Bergama case to the agenda of the Turkish parliament (Cumhuriyet, 17 October 1996).

As to the support of the media, on the other hand, it can be said that it further increased in the second phase of the struggle. This, of course, does not mean that all newspapers



and journalists supported the movement but rather the number of those who supported the movement was much higher than those who supported the mine. Except two national newspapers, *Zaman* and *Türkiye* (see, *Zaman*, 23 April 1997; 21 August 1997; 28 August 1997; *Türkiye*, 31 July 1997; 16 August 1997), and a few journalists (see, Hıncal Uluç, *Sabah*, 25 August 1997; Necati Doğru, *Sabah*, 10 August 1997; Tayfun Talipoğlu, *Yeni Yüzyıl*, 25 July 1997) who lent their support to the mining company, all national newspapers were supportive of the protesters.

As it has been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the Bergama movement strengthened not only with the mobilization of new groups provided through an increase in the public visibility of the movement, and through expansion of the boundaries of the movement discourse, but also with the unification of different groups around a collective identity. Having examined the expansion of mobilization, the study now turns to examine the constitution of the collective identity in and through the discourse of the Bergama movement.

## **8.2. Symbolic Unification of the Equivalential Chain: The Constitution of a Collective Identity between Different Groups of Protesters**

As explained before, the constitution of a new discourse is realized through a process whereby different social demands are articulated in an equivalential way in opposition to a series of others, which are simultaneously created in the same process. Although necessary, however, the equivalential articulation of different demands is not sufficient for the constitution of a discourse because, as Laclau (2005a: 93) remarks, “equivalential relations would not go beyond a vague feeling of solidarity if they did not crystallize in a certain discursive identity which no longer represents democratic demands *as* equivalent, but the equivalential relation *as such*”. This is to say that the plurality of links constituted through the equivalential articulation should be turned into a singularity through the constitution of a collective identity. Hence, the consolidation of the equivalential relations between different particular demands can only be possible with their symbolic unification around a collective identity which is, as Laclau (2005a: 77) states, “more than the simple summation of the equivalential links”.

The constitution of a collective identity, on the other hand, requires the condensation of particular demands around some signifiers which represent the equivalential chain as a whole. Put differently, in the constitution of collective identity, one particular demand

within the equivalential chain becomes central and embodies the totality of the demands. In this way, the particular demand becomes privileged in the sense that it becomes hegemonic signifier, or 'point de capiton' to use a Lacanian notion, which structures the ensemble of a discursive formation (Laclau, 2005a). With this hegemonic operation all the differential demands that have equivalential links are crystallized around this common denominator.

In the process whereby the Bergama protest discourse was constituted, the demand for the 'prevention of the operation of the mine', which in fact eventually became a demand for the 'closure of the operating mine', has acquired a centrality over the other demands. In other words, the particular demand for the prevention of the gold mine in Bergama area identified itself with the whole, and turned to represent the totality, that is, all the other demands articulated within the Bergama discourse. As such, that particular demand began signifying something more than its literal meaning. It, in fact, became internally split, being a particular demand on the one hand, and signifying something beyond itself on the other hand. In addition to signifying itself, it signified the demands for the prevention of the operation of the multinationals in Turkey, the protection of the environment, the prevention of gold-mining in Turkey, the rule of law, human rights, and democracy. Put differently, embodying the totality of the demands, the demand for the closure of the mine represented equivalential chain. Accordingly, the 'Bergama' movement signified a resistance not merely to a specific mine in Bergama, but also to neo-liberal globalization, to operation of 'polluting' companies, to privileging of multinationals over the local community, to violation of the rule of law, to violation of human rights, and to undemocratic decision-making process.

As the demand for the prevention of the operation of the gold mining multinational in Bergama area turned to represent other demands, and 'Bergama' movement signified a resistance to all of the above-mentioned ones, 'Bergama protester' became a *collective identity* uniting all the different groups involved in the movement. That is, all the different social groups identified with the movement around different particular social demands regarded themselves as 'Bergama protesters', be their demands strictly linked to the closure of the mine in Bergama or not. It is for this reason that those groups other than the Bergama peasants used the slogan 'everywhere is Bergama, and we are all from Bergama' in carrying out different activities to further the cause of the movement.

However, although it has been the demand for the closure of the mine in Bergama that held all the different groups together in Bergama movement, that particular demand was attributed different meanings by different groups. Therefore, it simultaneously signified different demands for different groups in the movement. While it signified for the Bergama peasants the protection of peasants' interests and identities, it signified for the environmentalists the protection of the environment, for the professionals the prevention of the operation of the gold mines, for the leftist circles the prevention of the investment of foreign companies in Turkey, and so on. With its representation of the whole, the demand for the closure of the gold mine in Bergama gradually dispossessed itself, to some extent, from its original particularistic content. In fact, as the chain of equivalence that it represents expanded in the second period, that particular demand became emptied from its particular content and turned into 'a name without a concept' to some extent, though not totally. With the liberation of the signifier, the closure of the mine, from the signified in this way, the particular demand for the closure of the mine in Bergama almost began to function as *empty signifier*, which crystallized the different demands in the equivalential chain in a unified entity. It turned into a common goal for all the groups in the movement, through which it became possible to articulate different particular demands, such as the demand for the protection of the environment, for the rule of law, for the respect of the democratic rights, and the demands against neo-liberalism and the globalization that accompanies it.

Likewise, the collective identity of 'Bergama protesters' was also to some extent emptied from its particular content. As it represented all those groups involved in the movement, not merely the protesters who are actually from Bergama, it also turned into an 'empty signifier', dispossessing from its particular content. Put differently, as those who are not actually from Bergama *named*, and as such constituted, themselves as 'Bergama protesters', the contingent link between the 'signifier' Bergama protestors and the 'signified' loosened, and in this way the signifier became gradually emptier.

The production of the identity of the 'Bergama protesters' as a new mode of identification involved the simultaneous creation of a number of 'others', which, as mentioned, comprised of the mining company, the multinationals, the Turkish state, particularly the government, the other peasants, and so on. Thus, the 'Bergama protesters' as a political identity, as a form of identification, constituted the protesters as 'citizens who act to defend their constitutionally guaranteed rights, their lands, their countries, the rule of law, and democracy' against those who attempt to take over their

lands, exploit the natural resources of the country, as well as those who privilege narrow economic interests of big companies over environment and local communities at the expense of violating the rule of law, and at the expense of democracy. Here the land does not only refer to the land of the peasants but to the land of the whole nation. That's why it is repeatedly underlined that 'everywhere is Bergama'.

After assuming the function of representing the whole, the materiality of the particular demand, the closure of the mine, turned into a 'source of enjoyment' for those who identify with the movement. That is, with the transformation of the particular demand for the closure of the mine into hegemonic and empty signifier, the aspiration of the subjects, who identify with the protest discourse, to the unachievable *fullness* was also transferred to that particular demand. It seemed possible to these subjects to achieve *fullness* through the satisfaction of that particular demand due to its embodiment of the whole. In this way, the particular demand for the closure of the mine turned into the 'source of enjoyment', Lacan's 'objet petit a', for these subjects. It is in fact in this sense that particular demand became the signifier of all the other demands.

With the fulfillment of the hegemonic demand, that is, with the prevention of the operation of the mine in Bergama area, the different demands of those who identify with the Bergama resistance discourse would be satisfied to some extent. Specifically, the closure of the gold mine in Bergama would partly satisfy the demand for the protection of the environment, the demand for the prevention of gold-mining, the demand for the prevention of the investments of foreign capital, the demand for the rule of law, and the demand for more democracy. This is so because, as mentioned, the meaning and content of the other demands were imposed to some extent by the hegemonic demand. That is, due to its centrality, or its hegemonic position, the demand for the closure of the mine endowed all the other demands with a new meaning. However, although the fulfillment of the hegemonic demand would partially satisfy all the other demands, it would inevitably fail to provide the *fullness* to subjects, that is to say that it would fail to eliminate the *lack* in the subject. Thus, as soon as the hegemonic demand is satisfied, the subjects would realize that they get only a partial enjoyment.

It is important to underline that it is, in no way, claimed here that the demand for the closure of the gold mine is predestined to function as a whole due to its materiality. That is, it does not *essentially* contain all the other demands. Its turning into a hegemonic signifier was completely contingent, and therefore subject to change. Although

contingent and not essential, however, it acts as if it was the ‘foundation’ of all other demands insofar as it serves as hegemonic signifier. This is so because the ‘meanings’ of other particular demands articulated within the Bergama discourse were imposed to some extent by the hegemonic signifier. More precisely, the meanings of the other demands were modified with their articulation in the equivalential chain which is constructed through the Bergama discourse and is signified as a whole by the hegemonic demand for the closure of the mine. This point is important and therefore needs to be unpacked.

Both in the preceding and the present chapter, it has been claimed that the demands articulated within Bergama movement discourse did not pre-exist their articulation but were constructed with their articulation within this discourse. This, in fact, does not mean that those signifiers such as the protection of environment, rule of law, human rights, democracy, anti-imperialism, and so on, did not pre-exist. They pre-existed before their articulation in the Bergama movement discourse but not in the form they acquired in the Bergama discourse. They existed just as proto-ideological *elements*, or as *floating signifiers*, in the sense that they did not have a fixed meaning and were attributed different meanings in different discourses. These *elements* were transformed into *moments* with their inscription in Bergama discourse. In other words, these pre-existing floating signifiers acquired a partially fixed and a specific meaning through their articulation within the Bergama discourse. Hence, the rule of law took the specific meaning of ‘the state’s respect for the court orders’, the protection of environment meant ‘the prevention of the pollution of land by the use of chemicals’, human rights referred to ‘the right to live and the right to a healthy environment’, democracy meant ‘the participation of the ordinary citizens to decisions affecting their lives’, anti-imperialism meant ‘the prevention of the operation of the multinationals’, and so on<sup>109</sup>. What gave these specific meanings to these demands within the Bergama discourse is the hegemonic position that the demand for the closure of the mine enjoyed in the Bergama discourse, which at the same time differentiates the Bergama discourse as a whole from other discursive forms that also articulate the same signifiers.

On the other hand, the dominance of the demand for the closure of the mine in Bergama over the other demands in the Bergama movement discourse can be explained both with

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<sup>109</sup> The same signifiers can acquire considerably different meanings in other discourses. The articulation of human rights and democracy, for instance, might refer to the recognition of a specific cultural group in the discourse of an ethnic movement. Likewise, the rule of law might refer to citizens’ obligations in a state discourse.

the fact that the movement initially emerged as a particular response to the operation of a gold mine in Bergama area, and with the fact that the particular group that voiced this particular demand, that is Bergama peasants, acquired a power through the public protests over the other social groups in the movement. As explained above, the public protests that peasants staged were very effective in drawing the attention and winning the sympathy of the general public, and drawing the attention of the authorities to the issue. Due to their popularization of the Bergama movement with public protests, the peasants became the symbols of the movement, which led their particular demand to acquire a centrality within the movement discourse.

The Bergama movement considerably strengthened with its capability of unifying a multiplicity of different interests and demands through its discourse, which eventually led to intensification in the efforts of the pro-mining bloc which, as mentioned before, consisted of mainly the mining company and the state. As it will be explained below, however, the actions of the company and particularly the government were to a great extent reactionary to that of the protesters throughout the second period of the struggle.

### **8.3. The Hegemonic Attempts of the Mining Company**

Throughout the second phase of the struggle, the company maintained to emphasize the potential economic benefits of the operation of the mine both to local and national economy as well as the safety of its technology on the one hand, and to claim that the protesters were provoked by a few number of local politicians on the other hand. At the beginning of this period, before the Courts decided in favor of the protesters, the company officials were quite confident that they would operate the mine. In addition to emphasizing that they would start extraction and production of gold towards the end of 1997, they were also underlining the support of the Turkish state, as the following quote illustrates:

Gold for any country is a symbol of wealth and economic standing, and modern technology has enabled the successful mining of gold reserves throughout developed and developing nations with no danger whatsoever to human health, animals, plant life, the ecology or environment.....Our international track-record and integrity, together with the confidence and assurances of Turkish government, has unfortunately not prevented some people to resort to the courts of law to stop the Ovacık project.....in the light of modern science and technology, both the Turkish state and Turkish law had given its final verdict, and the debate on the Ovacık project must come to an end (Turkish Daily News, 29 December 1996).

As mentioned, the company officials maintained to claim that the local politicians were provoking the peasants against the gold mine for their own interests (Hürriyet, 11 January 1997; Yeni Yüzyıl, 22 January 1997; Yeni Asır, 16 January 1997). In fact, with the aim of both not offending the local people and indicating the protests as the activities of only a few number of people, the company officials always directed their claims just to a few leading figures:

In Kutahya, 600 tons of cyanide has been used. There is no environmental problem, and environmentalists do not protest there. I wonder why it has been exaggerated in Bergama where only 240 tons of cyanide will be used in a year ...the leaders (of the protesters) disseminate incorrect information for their own political aims. Their biggest duty is to educate the villagers of that region in the right way. If cyanide were dangerous wouldn't the United States, Canada and European countries prohibit it? We obtained the support of 600 top officials and the president. However, the mayor and one party's provincial chairman are trying to implement their ideas by force, and they are committing a crime. We give importance to the opinions of the villagers in the region (Turkish Daily News, 6 June 1997).

After the protesters occupied the mining site, the company officials also began claiming that:

These assaults are not part of an innocent environmentalist mentality, they are deliberate, ideological, political operations. If the environment were the essential reason, it would have been mounted in Kütahya where Etibank silver facility has been operating for ten years (Turkish Daily News, 5 July 1997).

Due to their support to the protesters, the company also began blaming the media for provoking the peasants by using wrong information about gold mining. Upon the intensification of the protests in 1997, the company also mailed letters to the President and to some government members stating that the mayor of Bergama and the local chair of RPP were provoking the Turkish peasants through maintaining a disinformation campaign against Eurogold. It was also stated in these letters that the government should be more determinate on the issue (Zaman, 25 April 1997).

As to the potential economic benefits of the operation of the mine, the company generalized the issue to the whole mining sector and to the whole national and international investment with the aim of increasing the importance of the operation of the mine for the country. Claiming that the gold mine sector in Turkey would gain at least \$1.5 million annually and create employment opportunities for hundreds of thousands of people, and that protesters had been threatening investments in general and foreign investments in particular, and in this way blocking the economic development of both

their region and the country as a whole, the company officials stated that such an important economic activity should not be a victim of a few people's political show (Turkish Daily News, 7 July 1997). It was also emphasized by the officials of the company that other foreign firms were viewing the Bergama project as a test case for future foreign investments in Turkey's mining sector; and if Turkey did not allow the project, this would be a big disincentive for other foreign investments (Turkish Daily News, 16 May 1997). The company officials also began asserting that due to Eurogold's case, Turkey's international standing as a country worth investing in was being re-examined (Turkish Daily News, 5 July 1997).

In fact, in this period the company realized that it was difficult for it to convince the local people to the operation of the mine. The company officials even admitted that the protesters became successful. In this period, almost all public relations companies in İstanbul rejected to work with Eurogold. The manager of the one which agreed to work with Eurogold, on the other hand, stated that Eurogold should work in an hostile environment because there was no hope that peasants would be with the company (The Wall Street Journal as cited in Milliyet, 5 May 1997). Still, with the aim of convincing the peasants the company engaged in a number of promotional activities, such as offering trips to abroad, to build road, water facilities, wedding hall, and mosques to the nearest villages, and presenting some gifts to the peasants (Akşam, 4 April 1996; Turkish Daily News, 23 August 1996; Gazete Ege, 24 October 1996). The company at first made a tactical mistake. Due to the leading role of the mayor of Bergama, they largely oriented their promotional activities to the Bergama proper and neglected the villages (Interview No.1, 2004). However, upon the mobilization of the peasants against the mine, the company directed its activities to the peasants. In an attempt to convince the peasants to the safety of the mine, the general manager of the company sent a brochure of the company and a personal letter to every family in Ovacık village, which stated that 80% of gold-mining in the world employs the cyanidation process, and that 130,000 tons of sodium cyanide is produced in the US each year, of which 90% is used in the mines and there have been no deaths from the cyanide in the US (Turkish Daily News, 23 August 1996). In addition, although at the beginning the company announced that it would employ 150 people, it later changed it to 340, emphasizing that peasants would have the priority to work in the mine (Turkish Daily News, 31 December 1996).

After the Council of the State ruled in favor of the protesters, the company accelerated the construction activities in the mining site on the one hand, and increased its efforts to



convince the general public on the other hand (Hürriyet, 6 August 1997). In its attempt to convince the general public to gold mining, the company directed its activities to the media, giving job ads, and sending a video cassette and press bulletin to journalists, putting more emphasis on the economic losses that Turkey would have if gold mining was not allowed in the country. In cassettes, it was stated that it would be a great economic loss for Turkey not to allow the use of cyanidation process in gold mining. There were also interviews conducted with some peasants who were stating that they were for the mine. It was also stated that the production would be controlled by the İzmir governorship and the state. Moreover, all those who oppose the operation of the mine were criticized for making a political show (Radikal, 28 May 1997).

At the end of the year 1997, the construction of the gold mining facilities was completed (Normandy, 2004a). Despite the court rulings for the cancellation of the operation permits of the mine, the company even started an advertisement campaign at the beginning of the year 1998, giving ads to local and national media using slogans ‘Turkey is entering into the gold era’, or ‘Someone is preventing the production of gold in Turkey’ (see, Appendix A, picture 6). The sayings of Atatürk and the Turkish flag also appeared in these ads. While in some of these ads a statement of the academic staff of the mining engineering department of the Middle East Technical University on gold mining was used<sup>110</sup> (Milliyet, 14 January 1998; Yeni Asır, 14 January 1998; Yeni Yüzyıl, 14 January 1998), in some others it was stated that the company constructed the safest gold mine in Bergama (Cumhuriyet, 8 January 1998). Yet in some others it was stated that “the gold mining in Turkey is prevented by the alliance of some groups such as local politicians, socialist parties, European parliaments, and European Greens” (Hürriyet, 28 January 1998). As mentioned, when these ads appeared on newspapers, the courts, not only the Council of the State but also the İzmir Administrative court, had already ruled against the operation of the mine in Bergama.

In addition to newspaper ads, the company’s ads also appeared in billboards in İzmir. Moreover, the company offered free *iftar* meals (see, Appendix A, picture 7), distributed some gifts, and mailed letters to local people in Bergama (Akşam, 27 January 1998; Hürriyet, 20 January 1998; Hürriyet, 27 January 1998; Hürriyet, 17 February 1998). It was stated in the letters that “a holding and some local politicians cooperate with external forces in order to prevent the development of Turkey” (Hürriyet, 20 January

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<sup>110</sup> The academics later announced that the company used their names without taking their permission for this (Milliyet, 16 1 1998).

1998). The company also mailed letters to some journalists and to members of the Turkish parliament (Cumhuriyet, 21 February 1998; Radikal 21 January 1998). The most interesting activity, however, that the company carried out for convincing the public to the operation of the mine was the swimming of three company officials in the tailings pond in order to prove its safety (see, Appendix A, picture 8) (Hürriyet, 20 March 1998). More importantly, however, the company used cyanide for the first time in an experimental test without having a license for experimental production in 1998. When the local authorities discovered that cyanide was being used, they intervened and stopped experimental production (Turkish Daily News, 7 March 98).

In spite of the determination of the company and the government, the litigation process on the permission of the Environment Ministry was ended in November 1998 with the ultimate victory of the protesters (Hürriyet, 29 November 1998). The final decision of the Courts on the issue marked a turning point in the trajectory of the hegemonic battle between the protesters on the one side, and the government and the company on the other side. This is so because after the final decision, while the activities of the protesters were reduced, the activities of both the government and the company gained a momentum with the aim of permitting the mine again on the one hand, and winning the support of the media and the general public on the other hand. It might be said that the company and the government developed a new plan for the operation of the mine after the litigation process was finalized. As early as April 1998, after the Council of the State's approval of the decision of the İzmir Administrative court in favor of the protesters, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources stated to the media:

The Council of the State had issued temporary restraining orders to Eurogold. But the Environment Ministry might ask for new conditions so that Eurogold would not harm the environment. Eurogold can continue its activities if the procedure is completed (Turkish Daily News, 15 April 1998).

This was exactly what the company did after the ultimate court verdict was issued. After the final court decision, the company re-applied to the government to continue its operations, and demanded from the government to carry out another environmental risk assessment claiming that it took new measures and 'changed some techniques that were perceived as dangerous and that have been subject to Council of State rulings' (Turkish Daily News, 27 November 1998). The company officials also stated that they had changed 'a lot of things in Ovacık' and now they had the best safety systems in the world (Turkish Daily News, 27 November 1998).

#### **8.4. The Responses and Reactions of the Turkish State**

While in the emergence phase of the struggle, the protesters had not mobilized the support of the state authorities, in the second phase they succeeded to get the support of the judiciary and some members of the Turkish parliament. However, despite the support of these state authorities, the governments that came to power in the years from 1996 to 1998 seemed highly determined to operate the mine<sup>111</sup>. As noted before, after granting the environmental permission to the company on the condition of building a filtration system in the mining site, the government did not much concern with the demands of the protesters. Although in the second phase of the struggle the government began concerning again with the demands of the protesters after the protesters intensified the pressure through popularizing the issue, its concern did not go beyond paying a lip service to them. It can be said that the government members maintained almost the same attitude that they had adopted against the protesters in the emergence phase of the struggle. That is, in spite of their determination to allow the operation of the mine, they tried not to offend the protesters. Therefore, both the statements and the actions of the government members concerning the Bergama case were characterized by an ambivalence in the second phase of the struggle.

The ambivalent attitude of the government members can be best discerned in the statements of the different ministers of the cabinet. As an outcome of the increasing opposition to the mining project, the Environment Ministry declared in November 1996 that the permission that was granted to Eurogold would be handled again and a final decision about the operation of the mine would be taken after the mining project was examined in details (Cumhuriyet, 13 November 1996; Yeni Asır, 13 November 1996). But while the Environment Ministry was stating this, another Minister of the Cabinet, the State Minister who was responsible from mining, was stating that:

The gold will be extracted, it has been formally approved. ....The operation of Eurogold can be stopped [after gold production is started] if a negative environmental impact of cyanide is diagnosed during the production process. But now it is out of question to stop the operations of Eurogold. This company was given an environment prize (Radikal, 15 January 1997).

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<sup>111</sup> The three different governments that were formed in the second phase of the Bergama struggle were: the second government of Mesut Yılmaz (06.03.1996-28.06.1996); the government of Necmettin Erbakan (28.06.1996-30.06.1997); and the third government of Mesut Yılmaz (30.06.1997-11.01.1999).

In fact, it became gradually apparent in the statements of government members on Bergama struggle that they began worrying not only about the particular impact of the Bergama struggle on the gold mine in Bergama area but also about its possible impact on some 'wider' issues, such as gold mining, inflow of foreign investments, and state authority. In other words, while the government framed the Bergama movement as a struggle only for 'the protection of environment' in Bergama, and ignored the other demands voiced by the Bergama protesters in the early years of the movement, with the expansion of the mobilization and with the intensification of the protests, their interest on the issue began going beyond that narrow concern. Although they maintained to claim that it was groundless to oppose Eurogold because it would take all possible measures to protect environment, they at the same time began underlining that such an opposition would harm gold mining and inflow of foreign direct investment in Turkey. A speech of the above-mentioned State Minister, which was delivered in a seminar on gold mining and environment held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1997, is revealing in this respect. After remarking that Bergama movement had almost blocked gold mining in the whole country, he maintained that, given the changes in the mining project, there was no point in furthering the opposition. As he stated:

As an outcome of the Bergama struggle, which was right at the beginning, the Environment Ministry demanded from the company to add a filtration system to its project. The Environment Ministry granted the company the environmental permission only after the company added a filtration system to its mining project. Then a committee, which consisted of the representatives of the different state institutions related with environment and public health, was established to monitor the operation of the mine. Although invited, the mayor of Bergama did not participate to this committee. ....We are searching for scientific truths. If all scientists oppose it, let's oppose it altogether. But if it would not be harmful, *for the national interests and for the macro interests of our country, let's refrain from engaging in those actions that would frighten away particularly foreign capital from investing in [not only gold mining sector but] all the sectors* (Yüce and Önal, 1998: 12-3, author's translation, italics are added) .

It was also stated by the bureaucrats of the above-mentioned Ministries in the same seminar that the main factor behind the mobilization of the local people was 'lack of objective information' on the issue. The media and the local politicians in Bergama were considered as providing 'wrong' and 'biased' information on gold mining in general and on Eurogold in particular (Yüce and Önal, 1998: 194- 250). That is, although 'there was no technical and economical problem' concerning the operation of the gold mine in Bergama, they believed 'there was a problem of informing people in a right way' (Yüce and Önal, 1998: 194- 250). Accordingly, it was seen by these state officials that 'the only

thing to do' was to 'inform Bergama people and the general public' about the 'truths' (Yüce and Önal, 1998: 194- 250).

On the other hand, it was also started to be emphasized by the government members concerning the protest events, that 'the protests stem from the lack of authority in the region', and that 'local people was provoked to engage in protests'. Concerning particularly the referendum that was held in Bergama villages by the protesters, the statements of the State Minister who was responsible from mining, is particularly interesting in terms of revealing how the protests were evaluated by the state authorities.

*Some political circles provoked the people and forced them to engage in protests. ....The referendum held in Bergama cannot change the decision of the operation of the mine that has already been taken. The protest events in Bergama stem from the lack of authority. In the following days, me, the Minister of Forestry, and the Minister of Environment will go to the region and give the message to the people that they should rely on us (Radikal, 15 January 1997, italics are added).*

It is also interesting that the visit of the Ministers to Bergama that the Minister stated was delayed later on the grounds that it is not safe for the Ministers and bureaucrats to go to Bergama. As it was explained by the Environment Minister:

*There is something like an insurgency in the region. Protests are being staged, the shops are being closed, and the banners are being carried. I have to provide the safety of the bureaucrats (Yeni Asır, 28 January 1997, italics are added).*

The responses of some state authorities to the refusal of the protesters to participate to national census were also revealing in understanding how the protest actions were conceived by them. Upon the refusal of the protesters, at first, the governor of Bergama district visited the villages and tried to convince the people to participate the census, stating that "you are doing a big mistake, you have to participate the census, do not oppose the state" (Yeni Asır, 1 December 1997). The İzmir governor also considered this refusal as "a big mistake", as "something that can never be approved" (Cumhuriyet, 7 November 1997). He also stated that:

*Everybody in Turkey saw [with the refusal of the protesters to participate to census] that this is not an innocent environmental movement. Everybody realize that it has a political and ideological dimension (Cumhuriyet, 2 December 1997).*

After the Council of the State decided in favor of the protesters, the ambivalence in the responses and reactions of the state authorities became much more dominant. While the then president of the country, Süleyman Demirel, sent a letter to Eurogold in an attempt

to assure the company that the ‘problems’ would be solved (Çoban, 2004), the members of the Turkish cabinet and bureaucrats began trying to find a way out of this ‘impasse’ for them. The government authorities made conflicting explanations on the issue: they were on the one hand saying that they would consider the view of villagers and would not allow any operation that is harmful to the environment and human health but on the other hand saying that “they worry that the gold mining industry in Turkey will be in trouble” if this mine is halted (Turkish Daily News, 3 June 1997). The state authorities did not worry only about gold mining but also about foreign investments in general, as expressed by one of the Ministers:

The fields have been prepared. If they halt this mine, we worry that the gold mining industry in Turkey will be in trouble. It will be a bad message for foreign investors. All of these issues will be taken into consideration when making a decision on the issue (Turkish Daily News, 3 June 1997).

Upon the increased pressures from the protesters after the ruling of the Council of the State in their favor, and also their supporters in the Turkish Parliament, the government took the issue into its own agenda in 1997 and spent considerable time not to offend the protesters in solving the issue in favor of the mining company. Despite all its reluctance to stop the operations of the company, the cabinet decided to demand from the company to halt its operation until the litigation process was finalized (Yeni Yüzyıl, 26 July 1997). Interestingly enough, instead of ordering the company to do so, the Environment Ministry just requested from the company to halt its operations. But the company refused this request and maintained its operations despite the court rulings on the contrary (Cumhuriyet, 7 August 1997; Milliyet, 7 August 1997). While the lawyers of the protesters claimed that the Environment Ministry had the authority to close the mine, the Environment Ministry claimed that they did not have such an authority, and if they close the mine Turkey would have to pay a high amount of compensation to the company (Yeni Yüzyıl, 17 August 1997; Yeni Asır, 9 August 1997).

It should be noted that the demand of the government from the company to halt the operations of the mine was nothing other than a cosmetic measure to the increased pressures of the protesters. The government in fact did not intend to stop the operations of the company. This became evident both in the interventions that the government made to the litigation process, and in the explanations the related ministries made on the issue. The government appealed against all the verdicts that were upheld by the courts in favor of the protesters, and in this way tried both to slow down the litigation process and to

turn decisions in favor of the company. On the other hand, before the litigation process was finalized, the related ministers began stating that “Eurogold can operate if the necessary measures are taken” (Turkish Daily News, 15 April 1998).

The litigation process was finalized towards the end of the 1998. All the court decisions that were taken between May 1997 and November 1998 were in favor of the protesters. More precisely, the courts definitely ordered the cancellation of the environmental permission of the company. But still the government authorities did not stop the operations of the mine. After the final decision of the Council of the State, the position of the government against the Bergama protesters turned into a hard-line position and the government became the main actor of the pro-mining bloc in the following period actively involving in the hegemonic battle both through the use of different forms of ‘force’ against protesters and through seeking to convince the general public to the importance and necessity of gold-mining for the Turkish economy. The active involvement of the government to the struggle upon the final decision of courts is in no way surprising given the meaning that the ‘prevention of the operation of the gold mine in Bergama’ acquired in the process of the struggle. As it has been explained above, the ‘prevention of the operation of the mine’ did not only signify itself but also signified the other demands articulated within the resistance discourse. The satisfaction of that demand, that is the prevention of the mine, therefore, also meant a victory against ‘foreign investment’, ‘polluters of environment’, and ‘all the other gold-mining companies’. This is so because in addition to actually preventing the operation of the other gold mines in Turkey, the court order also indicated that it would be possible to prevent the operation of the ‘polluting’ companies through a litigation process. It also indicated that it would be possible to prevent the entrance of foreign capital in general through protest movements, and that the ordinary people can oppose to the state elites who violate the rule of law and do not care about the demands of these people. More importantly, however, the success of the Bergama movement meant that it is possible to change something through waging a resistance movement. That is, besides the concrete outcomes that the protesters achieved with the court orders, the success of the movement also represented the possibility of challenging top-down governing style of the Turkish state.

However, as the Bergama movement began posing a challenge to the neo-liberal order, and some of the relations of subordination that it imposes on the one hand, and to the ‘state authority’ over the ordinary people, representing the possibility of effecting

changes in state policies on the other hand, those state agencies that had supported the movement in the second phase, such as the judiciary and some members of the parliament, began turning against the movement afterwards. Accordingly, as it will be explained in greater length in the following chapter, the different agencies of the Turkish state started to give almost a uniform response to the Bergama movement.



## **CHAPTER 9**

### **THE WEAKENING PHASE OF THE BERGAMA MOVEMENT: THE WANING OF MOBILIZATIONS (December 1998- 2005)**

The years from 1999 to 2005 experienced the gradual weakening of the Bergama movement. While the mobilizations against the mine had gradually expanded up until 1999, they began gradually waning afterwards. On the contrary, while those who are for the mine had been rather reactionary and weak both in terms of numbers and in terms of proposing an alternative discursive space to that of the protesters up to that point, they began strengthening after that point. This chapter will argue that while there were also a number of structural and movement-related factors, it was the expansion of the pro-mining bloc that became the most critical factor behind the decline of the Bergama movement in these years. In making this argument, this chapter will particularly look at how the appeal of the pro-mining discourse, which had been constructed since the beginning of the 1990s as an alternative discursive space to that of the protest movement, increased while simultaneously the appeal of the discourse of the Bergama movement decreased.

Unlike the preceding chapters of the analysis of the Bergama movement, this chapter will not begin with the examination of the anti-mining discourse of the Bergama movement, but with the examination of the discourse of the pro-mining bloc. This is because, in sharp contrast with previous periods, in the last period of the struggle the pro-mining bloc became more pro-active, while the anti-mining bloc was largely reactive to it. The chapter, therefore, will begin with examining the hegemonic interventions of the pro-mining bloc and proceed with an examination of the responses of the anti-mining bloc.

#### **9.1. The Hegemonic Interventions of the Pro-Mining Bloc**

As mentioned before, the final order of the courts for the closure of the mine became highly influential in the unfolding of the hegemonic struggle because the efforts of those

who are antagonized by the protest discourse gained a momentum after that order. Both the company and various state agencies intensified their efforts for promoting the mine and for convincing the general public to the meanings that they attributed to the issue. As the efforts of these main actors of the pro-mining bloc intensified, some new actors also involved in the struggle against the Bergama protesters, such as some politicians, academics, journalists, and a mainstream newspaper. The 'pro-mining bloc' constituted through the coalition of all these actors against the Bergama protesters, articulated a discourse not only in favor of the gold mine in Bergama but also in favor of neo-liberal economy, and accordingly in favor of gold-mining and foreign investments in general. Moreover, through a number of strategies and tactics, the pro-mining bloc effectively antagonized the Bergama protesters and posed serious challenges to the anti-mining discourse of the protesters. The hegemonic efforts of the pro-mining bloc did not only consist of winning the popular consent to the operation of the gold mine but also consisted of repressing the movement actors through various measures. In this section, focusing upon the hegemonic practices of the main actors of the pro-mining bloc, the shape that the pro-mining discourse took in the years between 1999 and 2005 will be demonstrated. In examining the pro-mining discourse it will be particularly focused upon the elements as well as the forms of identification articulated in and through that discourse.

The form and content of the pro-mining discourse did not highly differ in the last period of the struggle. As it was the case in the preceding periods, 'economic development' became one of the main elements that were articulated in the pro-mining discourse. The operation of the mine in Bergama in particular, and gold mining in general, as well as foreign direct investments were maintained to be represented as crucial for the economic development of Turkey. The protesters, on the other hand, were maintained to be represented in the pro-mining discourse as those who oppose to economic development of the country.

However, in an attempt to increase the appeal of the pro-mining discourse for the general public, the actors of the pro-mining bloc adopted a number of new rhetorical strategies in the last period of the Bergama struggle. First and foremost, they began to speculate about the gold reserves in Turkey so as to increase the importance of gold mining for Turkish economy. Second, with the aim of undermining the credibility of the anti-mining discourse and diminishing protests, they claimed that an 'external force' had planned and orchestrated the Bergama movement for its own interests. Third, they increasingly

named the protesters, particularly the leading figures, as those who work against the national interests and the authority of the Turkish state for the interests of an external force. Finally, they used a deep ethnic cleavage in the Turkish society in order to antagonize the peasant protesters. It should be noted that along with the neo-liberal ideology the nationalist ideology, that is Turkish nationalism, became one of the main discursive sources in the hegemonic attempts of the pro-mining lobby. It should also be noted that the mining company became the most influential actor of the pro-mining bloc in the sense that it was the company that first developed some of these strategies. The other actors of the pro-mining bloc, in fact, mostly followed the company in their hegemonic interventions through adopting the strategies and tactics of the company. However, while the company was the most influential in developing strategies, the other actors became more effective than the company in influencing the public opinion and in diminishing the protests. In what follows, it will be first focused upon the hegemonic practices of the company, and then those of the other actors of the pro-mining bloc.

#### **9.1.1. The Hegemonic Practices of the Company**

The counter-actions of the company gathered momentum after the final order of the courts for the closure of the mine. More precisely, after the finalization of the litigation process in favor of the protesters the company considerably changed its strategies and the tactics, waging a pro-active and more aggressive campaign against the protesters. The changes in the executive board of the company in 1999 became also influential in adopting new strategies and tactics against the protesters. The company replaced the overseas members of its executive board with domestic members in 1999, after the Normandy Poseidon purchased the shares of the other partners and became the sole owner of the company (Turkish Daily News, 9 December 1999). The new domestic members became more influential than the former ones in increasing the appeal of the pro-mining discourse through developing new strategies.

The first change in the strategies of the company was that they attempted to increase the importance of gold mining for the national economy. As demonstrated in the preceding chapters, from the very beginning the company officials reiterated over and over again that gold mining would contribute to Turkish economy and create employment opportunities for hundreds of people. Although the company maintained to emphasize economic benefits of gold mining, it began to speculate about the existing gold reserves in Turkey. After re-applying to the government to continue their operations in Bergama,

the company officials began speculating that there are ‘6,500 tons of gold reserves’ in Turkey waiting to be extracted, having a value of about ‘\$70 billion’ (Hürriyet, 3 April 1999; Turkish Daily News, 20 May 1999)<sup>112</sup>. In line with this claim, the company also generalized the Bergama issue not seeing it as specific to the operation of the gold mine in Bergama, but regarding as a matter of allowing the operation of gold mines all over the country. Towards the end of 1999, the company official Orhan Güçkan, a member of Eurogold’s executive board, stated that Turkey should decide whether it will give permission to gold-mining or not. In his words:

Turkey must immediately make its decision about gold mining for its future, and the main question is ‘will Turkey give permission to mine gold or not?’ because more than 6,500 tons of gold are waiting to be extracted, having a value of about \$70 billion. This has huge importance for the development of the country, and other things can only be discussed after this main question is answered (Turkish Daily News, 9 December 1999).

Despite the court orders, the company officials also seemed quite confident that they would operate the gold mine in Bergama using the cyanide technology, as the following quote illustrates:

Every year Turkey goes through 3,000 tons of cyanide in various industries. Upon clearance from the relevant Turkish government authorities, we will begin to use it, employing the safest methods ever utilized even in the most advanced economies, including the United States, Canada and Australia. As regards cyanide, which is already in widespread use in Turkey without detriment to the environment or human health, a double standard is being applied against Eurogold. Additionally cyanide is not a new phenomenon; it is used all over the world as well as in some regions of Turkey, such as Kutahya (Turkish Daily News, 9 December 1999).

Another change in the strategies of the company was related with the way that the protesters were constructed in the pro-mining discourse. The company maintained claiming that the protesters were organized by ‘external forces’. Although it was not the first time that the company directed such claims to protesters, this claim was taken a new meaning in this period. When taken together with the claims that Turkey has a high amount of gold reserves, it became that ‘external forces, which do not want Turkey to be a prosperous country, organize the local people to prevent gold mining’. This is exactly what was stated by the company officials, “villagers were organized or supported by

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<sup>112</sup> When it is considered that the company aims at producing 24 tons of gold through eight-year long operation, it becomes clear that 6,500 tons of gold is a huge amount.

external forces who did not want Turkey to mine its rich gold sources” (Turkish Daily News, 22 October 2000).

As to the interests of ‘external forces’, the company officials claimed that those countries that export gold to Turkey try to prevent gold mining in Turkey:

There are numerous external forces supporting the villagers, who number just 25-30 people, because gold-mining in Ovacık will earn Turkey \$70 billion and do away with the need to import gold (Turkish Daily News, 22 October 2000).

Furthermore, the company officials imputed a specific meaning to the court orders and represented them in a way to justify the operation of the mine on the basis of some technical improvements in the mining site. In response to the pressures of the protesters for the closure of the mine in line with court verdicts that ruled against the operation of the mine with cyanide-based technology, the company officials insistently claimed that the courts have never banned the use of cyanide in the operation of the mine. As it was put in the monthly bulletin of the company, the company underlined that “the use of cyanide in Turkey was not banned by the decision of the court”, and that “[t]he decision of the court stated that *unless the possible risks that the use of cyanide creates are removed*, there is no public benefit in allowing the mine” (Normandy, 2000). Thus, in an attempt to open the way for the operation of the mine with cyanide technology, the company put an emphasis on the ‘risks’ which were referred to in the decision of the courts, attributing a completely different meaning to it. Representing the decision of the courts in a different manner, it became possible for the company officials to claim that they can operate the mine eliminating the risks. It became also possible for them to claim that they obeyed the decision of the courts. As it was stated by a company official:

Since the court’s verdict to stop the mine’s operation, there has been no action in the mine. The verdict was based on the risks of the mining process. We have eliminated these risks by using the most up-to-date technology. (Turkish Daily News, 23 June 2000).

With the aim of convincing the local people to its claims, the company engaged in some actions in this last period, too, such as distributing leaflets door-to-door, moving the company houses and offices from Dikili to Bergama in order to be close to the locals of Bergama and to make peace with them, publishing a monthly bulletin called *Ovacık 2000*, organizing tours to the mining site, organizing *iftar* dinners for the Bergama people, offering a trip to the gold mines abroad to the head of the villages, and distributing calendars full of Atatürk’s sayings and pictures (Turkish Daily News, 20

May 1999; *Hürriyet* 23 December 1999). While some of these activities, such as distributing leaflets, publishing a bulletin, organizing tour to the mining site were directed to convince the local people that the mine would not pose a threat to them, some others, such as *iftar* dinners and trips abroad, appealed to the narrow individual interests of the peasants. Moreover, with the use of Atatürk's pictures and sayings, the company attempted to increase its legitimacy in the eyes of the local people.

Towards the end of 2000, all the required permissions were given again to the company by the related ministries (Turkish Daily News, 22 October 2000). Even after getting the permissions, the company officials maintained claiming that they have taken every possible measure to eliminate the risks, and that there were some people who attempted to block gold mining for their own interests. They also contended that the objective of the protesters was not to prevent the use of cyanide but to prevent gold-mining in Turkey which would contribute 300 billion dollars to Turkish economy (Normandy, 2000). It should be noted that the company officials were careful enough for not offending the peasants. They never directed these claims against the peasants but to the leading protesters. As the general manager of the company stated:

My villager brothers and sisters, dear neighbors, you questioned Eurogold company, particularly because of its foreign origin, for many things. You asked whether it would pollute the land, air, and water, whether it would store nuclear waste in the tailings ponds, whether it would take the produced gold to abroad, and whether it would contribute to the development of the region. I believe all these questions have been answered. The fact that your land, air, and water will not be polluted has been underlined by the highest scientific council of the country. We have taken every measure. ....Now it is the time for questioning something else. Do those people who have been interested in you really care about you? Who would benefit from the prevention of gold-mining in Turkey? (Karahan, 2000).

After obtaining the permissions to start trial production, the company adopted some new strategies. First, it changed its name to Normandy Mining from Eurogold in an attempt to relieve itself from the bad reputation that the latter had (*Hürriyet*, 9 May 2001). The company used this new name until 2005. Although the ownership of the company changed twice after its name changed, the new owners did not change its name again<sup>113</sup>. Second, through giving job ads to newspapers, it attempted to indicate the general public that it would contribute to Turkish economy with the employment opportunities that it created (*Hürriyet*, 10 March 2001). Finally and more importantly, the company used

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<sup>113</sup> In February 2002, Normandy Mining Co. was taken over by the American mining company *Newmont*, and in August 2004 it was purchased by the Canadian *Frontier Pacific*.

‘employment of local people’ in the mine as a strategy to fragment opposition in Bergama villages. It appealed to the narrow interests of the peasants giving a priority to the employment of people from Bergama villages, particularly from those in the immediate environ of the mine which had been the most active villages against the mine.

In this last period, the company also began mobilizing its workers against the court verdict that ordered the closure of the mine. For instance, upon a court order that cancelled the license of the mine for the trial production, the company’s workers together with workers from the nearest factory and with their families demonstrated in support of the mine, screaming, “don’t touch my bread”. Similarly, after the mine was re-closed in 2004, the workers of the company staged a demonstration in İzmir, and declared that they would continue to carry out protest activities until the mine is opened again (Hürriyet, 25 August 2004; Hürriyet, 2 September 2004; Radikal, 1 September 2004).

#### **9.1.2. The Hegemonic Practices of the Turkish State and the Other Actors**

As mentioned, the claims of the company both about the gold reserves of Turkey and about the protesters were adopted and used by some other actors. The most influential ones among these actors have been the different branches of the Turkish state, some academics, some journalists, and a mainstream newspaper. Although the hegemonic interventions of these actors did not go much beyond following and repeating the hegemonic practices of the company, their involvement in the struggle against the Bergama movement did produce a highly important effect on the course of the hegemonic struggle.

As it has been demonstrated in Chapter 8, the responses and reactions of the branches of the Turkish state to the Bergama movement differed in the second phase of the struggle. While the executive branch of the Turkish state, particularly the governments, had supported the company, some members of the judiciary and the Turkish parliament had been supportive of the protesters. The situation, however, considerably changed in the years between 1999 and 2005, concerning the role of the Turkish state in the Bergama struggle. The support of the judiciary to the protesters gradually weakened in these years, whereas some members of the Turkish parliament actively engaged in the struggle in support of the mining company. Thus, the Turkish state with its all branches became an important and effective actor of the pro-mining bloc in the last phase of the struggle.

After the issuance of the court orders in favor of the protestors, the impartiality of the government in this struggle became much clearer. Up to that point, the government tried to appear as a neutral mediator in between the two parties of the struggle, and therefore, was relatively tolerant to the protests. However, upon the prevention of the gold-mining with the court orders, the government actively involved in the struggle making a tight coalition with the company, and thereby decisively affecting the trajectory and the outcomes of the Bergama struggle. This was because with the court order in their favor, the protesters posed a challenge to the policies of the Turkish government not only in the fields of mining and environment, but also in the field of foreign direct investment, which became evident with the decrease in the number of foreign companies that attempted to invest in gold mining in Turkey. While there were 12 mining companies that had attempted to invest in gold mining in Turkey since 1984, nine of them left the country by 1998 (Yüce and Önal, 1998).

As to the involvement of some state authorities from the other branches of the Turkish state in the struggle in favor of the mining company, it should be stated that they ceased their relatively tolerant attitude towards the protesters in the last period of the struggle, and involved in the struggle against the Bergama movement, as the set of demands voiced by the movement actors expanded, which posed a challenge not only to the economic policies of the state but also to the structure of state-society relations. Accordingly, the support of the judiciary gradually weakened, the repressive measures of the state control apparatuses increased, and some members of the parliament actively supported the company. With the involvement of these actors in the struggle besides the government, the Turkish state, almost as a whole, turned into an actor of the pro-mining bloc. Thus, although almost all social movements come into contact with state agencies, particularly with the state apparatuses of social control (Tilly, 1978; Tilly, 1990; Jenkins and Klandermans, 1995; della Porta, 1995; della Porta, 1996; Melucci, 1996), in the case of Bergama movement, the state did not only concern with controlling collective action for maintaining public order, but became one of the important actors, if not the most important, of the struggle. In fact, the Turkish state at times used the state apparatuses of the social control, particularly the public prosecutors and the police force, not for controlling the public protests, but for discouraging the protesters and diminishing the protests altogether.

Hence, there were two main reasons of the involvement of the Turkish state to the ongoing struggle in an active way: first and foremost the opposition of the Bergama



protesters to the much valued neo-liberal policies that the state highly committed, and to a lesser degree the challenge that the protesters posed to the authoritarian relations of the Turkish state with the society. In addition to influencing the position of the Turkish state in the Bergama struggle, these two factors, that is, state's unconditional commitment to neo-liberal principles and its authoritarian structure, also shaped the discourse of the state on the issue. It is a contention of this study that although both of them have been influential in the partiality and active involvement of the state in this struggle, it was particularly the authoritarian structure of the Turkish state that determined the specific ways through which the state engaged in the hegemonic battle against the Bergama protesters.

As mentioned, after the finalization of the litigation process in favor of the protesters the activities of the government members gained a momentum to authorize the company again for the operation of the mine. Upon the re-application of the mining company for the operation permits, the government commissioned a state-funded scientific council, the Turkish Institute of Scientific and Technical Research (*TÜBİTAK*) to undertake a detailed risk assessment of the mine<sup>114</sup> (*Hürriyet*, 13 July 2000; TMMOB, 2003). Delivering a report to the government which stated that the risks referred by the Council of the State had been totally eliminated or reduced far below acceptable maximum limits with the additional safety measures the company took in the mine, *TÜBİTAK* suggested that the operation of the company would be economically beneficial for the country (*Turkish Daily News*, 13 July 2000). Despite the court orders on the contrary, on the basis of the *TÜBİTAK* report the undersecretary of the Prime Ministry instructed the related ministries in April 2000 with a circular to give the necessary operation permissions to the company. It was underlined in the statement that the prevention of the operation of the mine would block further potential foreign investments into the country (*Turkish Daily News*, 14 June 2000). Accordingly, a number of ministerial decisions to issue or renew operating permits were taken and the mine was given one-year trial production permission. On 13 April 2001 the company started trial production using 657 kilograms of cyanide a day (*Hürriyet*, 28 May 2001).

In the meantime, in an attempt to diminish protests, other state authorities, such as the military and the judiciary, began taking some repressive measures against the protesters. In September 2000, giving a secret indictment, the Bergama Gendarmerie Command

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<sup>114</sup> It was the then president Süleyman Demirel who urged the Prime Ministry to commission *TÜBİTAK* for the assessment of the risks of the operation of the mine (Özay, 2002).

asked the Bergama public prosecutor's office to start an investigation about Bergama protesters. The rationale was that the villagers could not possibly have organized protests on their own and must have been helped by other groups. More precisely, it was alleged in the indictment that "the protesters, consisting of some people from Bergama district who are against the Ovacık gold mine operated by Eurogold, have organized illegally and are controlled by illegal Marxist organizations" (Turkish Daily News, 16 September 2000). The indictment is revealing in terms of both how these authorities conceived and framed the protests activities of the peasants, and how an investigation was started on the basis of 'feelings' without having any evidence:

Taking into consideration some e-mail that reveals that the *illegal activities* staged in Bergama by villagers have been supported by some illegal organizations, such as the Revolutionary People's Liberation/Front (DHKP/C) and the Turkish Workers' and Peasants' Liberation Army (TIKKO), because the Bergama villagers cannot organize these activities and cannot financially afford the expenses, it is *felt* that the activities are financially supported by these illegal organizations and *supporters abroad* (Turkish Daily News, 16 9 2000, italics are added).

The indictment also indicates that the protest activities of the movement actors were considered by these state authorities as a threat to the Turkish state because it was also stated in the same indictment that:

The members of the [Bergama] Environmental Activity Committee and the heads of public committees and their members have *organized against the integrity of the state*. In order to prevent demonstrations that could cause more problems in the future, those people who are members of illegal organizations should be charged (Turkish Daily News, 16 September 2000).

It should be added that the Bergama Gendarmerie Command sent some newspaper clippings on Bergama protests as evidence of these allegations. That is, the protest activities, which as explained before mostly peaceful and legal, were regarded as evidence of 'organizing against the integrity of the Turkish state'. In this regard, it is also interesting to note another investigation which was started by a governor about the manager of *Çanakkale Öğretmenevi*, a state-owned guesthouse. The rationale of the investigation was the stay of the protesters in *Öğretmenevi*. Although the protesters stayed there paying the required fee, the manager was alleged by the governor for allowing "those who protest the Turkish state to stay in a state-owned institution" (Hürriyet, 6 December 2000).

The hegemonic interventions of the pro-mining bloc gained a further momentum in mid 2001. At this date, it also became apparent that the pro-mining lobby considerably

expanded with the involvement of some new actors in addition to the above-mentioned ones. A new court decision in favor of the protesters became critical in the involvement of some other actors to the struggle against the protesters. As an outcome of the new litigation process, which was started by the protesters to cancel the circular of the Prime Ministry that ordered the related ministries to grant the operation permits to the company, the İzmir Administrative Court decided in favor of the protesters. The court cancelled the permissions that were given due to the circular of the Prime Ministry, on the grounds that the circular changed the definite court decisions and hence violated the rule of law (Cangı, 2002).

Following this court order, a newspaper, some journalists, some academics, and some politicians started a range of, and seemingly highly coordinated, counter-hegemonic practices against the protesters. First of all, two politicians, Erol Al and Hasan Özgöbek, and a mainstream newspaper, *Milliyet*, which had been quite supportive of the protesters in the first and second phases of the struggle, began supporting the company in particular and gold mining in general. The politicians, who were members of the Democratic Leftist Party (DSP) which was then one of the partners of the coalition government, began disseminating the speculations of the company on the gold reserves of Turkey. Giving place to these speculations too, *Milliyet*, on the other hand, made a number of first-page news in favor of gold mining. It was contended in the news that Turkey has one of the biggest gold reserves in the world which, if used, would be a great source of revenue that would help Turkish economy to overcome the economic crisis it faced in February 2001. It was also underlined that the decisions of the courts prevent Turkey to use its natural resources. As it was put by a columnist:

The Prime Minister believes that ‘gold mining project’ will be a reliable and a permanent source of revenue for Turkey. But the decision of the İzmir Administrative Court, which had cancelled the operation permits, posed a risk to the existing investment attempts on gold mining. .... According to the reports on gold mining that were presented to the Prime Minister, Turkey has the second biggest gold reserves in the world after South Africa.....While South Africa, that has the biggest gold reserves in the world, produces 447 tons of gold a year, the USA produces 340 tons, Canada produces 158 tons, and Australia produces 300 tons of gold, Turkey, in spite of having the second biggest reserves, does not produce any gold. According to the scientific reports presented to the Prime Minister, Turkey can use its reserves to overcome its economic hardships. According to studies, the minimum value of Turkey’s gold reserves is about 400 billion dollars. ....If all reserves are opened to production, it would create employment opportunity to 25 thousands of people (Bila, *Milliyet*, 30 June 2001).

The politicians and the columnist adopted the mining company's claims not only concerning the gold reserves of Turkey but also concerning the protesters. As mentioned before, the company alleged that the protesters were being supported by some 'external forces'. The columnist furthered this claim pointing out the nationality of the 'external forces':

According to the information that presented to the Prime Minister, the campaign, which was waged for protecting public health and environment against gold production with cyanidation process, was supported by German FIAN foundation. Germany's gold export to Turkey, which is about 800 million dollars a year, is seen as the reason that lie behind the support of German institutions to the protesters. ....The reports on gold reserves of Turkey and their possible contribution to Turkish economy, which were presented to the Prime Minister, seem worth of taking into consideration. Moreover, it seems beneficial to consider both the aim of the campaign against gold mining and its sources of support. Ankara should focus on gold mining (Bila, Milliyet, 30 June 2001).

In the following days and weeks, similar news appeared on the same newspaper. For instance, in a coverage that appeared one day later from the article quoted above, it was stated that "there are insistent claims that Germany had financed the resistance in Bergama", while in another one it was stated that "mining engineers and academics believe that it is meaningless to oppose to gold-mining" (Milliyet, 1 July 2001). Two weeks later, another coverage, which appeared with the title that "Bergama mine proudly presents", stated that gold production was being made in Bergama with high safety measures (Milliyet, 12 July 2001). This was followed one day later by other news on the issue entitled "Opinions were changed after the gold production", which stated that the protesters gave up resisting and began supporting the mine after they saw the gold produced by the company (Milliyet, 13 July 2001).

Meanwhile, the company on the one hand, and some academics on the other organized press conferences, which also attracted coverage of Milliyet. On 14 July 2001, the company officials organized a press conference and, after claiming that they used the best technology in the world to protect the environment, swam in the tailings pond of the mine and drank the water taken from the tailings pond in an attempt to prove that the tailings of the mine would not pose a threat to human health and environment (Miliyet, 14 July 2001). Again in the same day, Milliyet announced another press conference, which was organized by 18 academics from the mining departments of different universities to support the mine, with the headline that 'Turkey will overcome economic crisis through gold mining' (Milliyet, 14 July 2001). In this press conference, the

academics also voiced the same claims about the gold reserves of the country and about Germany's gold export to Turkey (Milliyet, 14 July 2001). In the following weeks, Milliyet daily maintained its support to gold mining through those news that emphasized that if Turkey does not allow gold mining in Bergama, the company can bring the case to international arbitration, which would cost millions of dollars to Turkey (Milliyet, 29 July 2001), and that if Bergama is allowed, other places in Turkey where gold reserves exist, which is about 560, will also overcome poverty (Bila, Milliyet, 24 August 2001).

One of the immediate effects of the pro-mining campaign became a court order in favor of the company. Towards the end of July 2001, upon the appeal of the Prime Ministry, the Council of the State ordered a stay of execution to the decision of the İzmir Administrative Court on the grounds that "the Prime Ministry's circular was not something to be judged in the Administrative Court" (Turkish Daily News, 30 July 2001). It was also stated in the decision of the Council of the State that the objection of Bergama protesters would be handled at the general board of the Council of the State (Turkish Daily News, 30 July 2001). Although the Council of the State invalidated the verdict of İzmir Administrative court on the basis of a procedural issue, this decision became highly influential on the trajectory of the Bergama struggle because it, in effect, allowed the operation of the mine on the basis of the circular of the Prime Ministry. With this decision, the Council of the State, in a sense, also approved the violation of the rule of law by the government. Although it cannot be contended only on the basis of this decision that the judiciary sided with the company, when this decision is considered together with the eventual slowing down of the litigation process it can at least be claimed that the judiciary's support to the protesters was weakened in the last period of the struggle. As it will be indicated later, the protesters further appealed this decision but they could not get response from the Council of the State for years.

The counter-hegemonic attempts of the pro-mining bloc did not end with this court decision. It, in fact, was maintained through the same claims about the gold reserves of Turkey on the one hand, and about the external support of the protesters on the other hand. The actors of the pro-mining bloc did not give up using these claims even after the Mining Exploration Institution (MTA) announced that the gold reserves of Turkey was only about 300 tons (Radikal, 31 July 2001). In August 2001, an academic from Ankara University, Necip Hablemitoglu, published a book on the Bergama case putting forth the same claims, which was widely distributed free of charge (Interview, No. 4, 2004). Written with nationalist overtones, the book was on the 'external support' of the

Bergama protesters. The main contention of the book is that as part of a plan of Germany to prevent Turkey from extracting its rich gold reserves, German foundations encouraged the leading protesters to mobilize the three *Alevi* villages in Bergama against the mine on environmental grounds (Hablemitoğlu, 2003).

Overall, the book details the claims that Germany attempted to prevent gold mining in Turkey through German foundations in Turkey, and that all the protests were planned and organized by German academics or NGOs (2003: 57- 114). As the reason behind Germany's alleged prevention of gold mining in Turkey, Hablemitoğlu shows Germany's gold export to Turkey (2003: 70). It was also claimed that the leading protesters, Sefa Taskin, Oktay Konyar, Birsal Lemke and Senih Özay, "deliberately or not", worked for Germany for their own narrow individual interests, receiving support from some German foundations in Turkey to prevent gold mining in Turkey. The international activities of the mayor, and the international support to the movement were used as evidence of the 'betray' of these actors to their own country. (2003:115-132; 151). According to Hablemitoğlu, these leaders, who work in the service of Germany against the national interests of their own country, directed three *Alevi* villages in Bergama to oppose the mine. Therefore, the Bergama movement, 'which prevented gold mining in Bergama and in all country', consisted only of four leading figures, some people from three *Alevi* villages of Bergama 'who were motivated by the leading figures', and some environmentalists 'who did not know anything about gold mining' (Hablemitoğlu, 2003: 115). In fact, almost all those who supported the Bergama movement are portrayed in the book as working against the national interests of Turkey in the service of Germany (Hablemitoğlu, 2003: 106). It was also claimed that most of these actors did not know that they were used by Germany (2003: 134).

Although mostly employed the claims of the company, Hablemitoğlu added two new rhetorical strategies to them. One is the use of nationalist themes in supporting the company and gold mining, as well as in antagonizing the protesters, and the other is the use of an ethnic cleavage in the Turkish society in antagonizing the protesters. Interestingly enough, he defends the investment of a multinational company employing a 'nationalist' rhetoric, which leads to clear contradictions in his contentions. On the one hand, he opposes globalization and accuses some domestic NGOs for being pro-globalization, and therefore, for being 'collaborators' of some countries that, he believes, attempt to eliminate all the obstacles to the free movement of capital. But, on the other hand, he claims that all companies, either Turkish or foreign, that would contribute to

Turkish economy should be welcomed (Hablemitoğlu, 2003: 5-9;13; 133). Despite this clear contradiction in his arguments, however, he insistently calls the nationalist circles to support the mining company. For instance, referring to a European Parliament's resolution on Turkey, which include Bergama gold mine besides some other issues such as Kurdish issue and the issue of Cyprus, he remarks that:

If you say with a natural reflex 'I am not an occupying power in Cyprus, I do not give Cyprus' or 'I do not deliberately contribute to the process of establishment of a separate Kurdish state', then you should oppose to the demands of European Parliament on thermic power plants and on gold production in Bergama. It is not enough to be determinate only against political demands, you should show the same determination also against economic demands. This is exactly the point that our country experiences a dilemma. While showing a determination on political issues, Turkey is following a politics of obedience in economic issues (Hablemitoğlu, 2003: 6, author's translation).

Besides portraying the leading protesters as those who work against the national interest of Turkey, Hablemitoğlu, as noted above, claimed that only *Alevi* villages opposed to the mine. This claim is not empirically valid because among the 17 villages that opposed to the mine only three of them are *Alevi* villages. Moreover, one of the most active villages against the operation of the mine has been the *Sunni* village Çamköy. Hablemitoğlu's deliberate misrepresentation of this empirical fact was a strategic move. He implicitly attempted to use the ethnic cleavages between *Sunni* and *Alevi* people in order to antagonize the protesters. More precisely, he appealed to the prejudices that the *Sunni* majority had about *Alevi* minority in the construction and perception of the protesters as the 'Others'. Through appealing to the *Sunni* majority in this way, he attempted to decrease the public sympathy to the protesters.

Although some of the claims of the book, that there were rich gold reserves in Turkey and that the protesters were supported by German organizations, were nothing new, it attracted a considerable public attention. On the basis of the claims in this book, Erol Al brought the Bergama issue to the agenda of the Turkish Parliament. He demanded an investigation on the activities of German foundations in Turkey remarking that there were serious claims about these foundations that they prevent economic development of Turkey preventing the operation of the mines, and that they provoke masses for civil disobedience and resistance against public order and state authority (Hürriyet, 29 September 2001). Moreover, some TV programs were made on the issue in October 2001 with the participation of the author of the book and the above mentioned politicians (Cevizoğlu, 2003). Although Oktay Konyar and some representatives of the German

foundations also participated to the TV programs, the views of Hablemitoğlu and politicians became the ones that were mostly emphasized (Cevizoğlu, 2003).

It became eventually apparent that the claims of Hablemitoğlu about Bergama protesters and about gold mining were adopted not only by some politicians but also by some state authorities and some columnist in the mainstream news media. Adopting the same claims, these actors began actively supporting the mining company in particular and gold mining in general. For instance, a military official, the then air force commander, upon a question about Afghanistan said to journalists:

You should look at Turkey. We have the richest gold reserves in the world. But they cannot be extracted because Germany, which exports gold to Turkey, prevents it through lobbying activities (Star, 2 October 2001).

Some other military officials, on the other hand, showed their support to the mining company through a visit to the mining site. In October 2002, a group of military officials including Aegean Army Commander and 48 high-ranked military officials visited the mining site and gave a plaque to the officials of the company to show their gratitude for the service of the company to the country (Cumhuriyet, 28 October 2002).

Some columnists in the mainstream newspapers, who are considerably influential in affecting public opinion, also lent their support to the company using the same claims. For instance, criticizing a court order in favor of the protesters, a columnist claimed that there was no environmental risk in the production of gold with cyanidation process. After giving the same claims about the gold potential of Turkey, he also claimed that the protests were planned by some ‘professionals’ to prevent gold mining in Turkey. In his words:

Whatever its reason, the protests are preventing the use of our natural resources which could change the fate of Turkey. As you can guess, I am talking about the play that was staged for 13 years.....The peasants, who are most likely unaware about the concept of environment, are protesting in the name of environment. They are coming to Ankara and engaging in protest marches in the name of resisting imperialism, a term perhaps they have never heard of it before. And the people of this country are becoming stupid enough to believe that all these are ‘an innocent peasant reaction’ (Ekşi, Hürriyet, 18 October 2002).

In another article, the same columnist, implicitly approving the violation of the rule of law by the government, stated that there was no country in the world which did not produce gold despite having some gold reserves. Giving the Greece as an example to those countries that produce gold, he again criticized the protesters for preventing gold



mining in Turkey (Ekşi, Hürriyet, 19 October 2002). Similar arguments and claims on Bergama issue also appeared in the columns of some other journalists, such as Emin Çölaşan, Hıncal Uluç, Fatih Altaylı, Tayfun Talipoğlu, Necati Doğru, and so on. It is also interesting to add that the World Bank gave a place to Bergama struggle in one of its development reports. It was stated in the report that developing countries desire the inflow of foreign investments on the one hand but resist to some investments on exploitation of natural resources on the other hand. While Turkey was included among the developing countries mentioned in the report, the Bergama movement was given as an example to the difficulties that foreign investors face (Milliyet, 22 August 2002).

Furthermore, the chief prosecutor of Ankara State Security Court started an investigation both about the German foundations and about the leading protesters on the basis of the claims in Hablemitoğlu's book. Following the investigation, the prosecutor brought the case to the State Security Court preparing an indictment in which the German foundations were charged with engaging in clandestine activities and espionage to undermine the Turkish state, whereas the leading protesters, namely Oktay Konyar, Sefa Taşkın, and Senih Özay, were charged with spying for Germany and receiving money from German foundations (Turkish Daily News, 31 October 2002). Presenting the book of Hablemitoğlu as an evidence to all these claims, the prosecutor accused the above-mentioned names with the charge of 'secret plots against the security of the state' under Article 171 of the Turkish Penal Code (Turkish Daily News, 31 January 2003). In spite of the fact that the State Security Court acquitted later both the representatives of the German foundations and the protesters, these claims severely diminished the sympathy of the public to the protesters.

Meanwhile, the courts issued their decisions on other cases that the Bergama protesters brought to the courts for canceling the operation permits that were granted by the related ministries on the basis of the circular of the Prime Ministry. The most important one among them was the cancellation of the operation permit that was granted by the Ministry of Health for one year trial production of the company. In January 2002, the İzmir Administrative Court cancelled that permission stating that it overturns the final decision of courts allowing the operation of the mine, which is not acceptable concerning the rule of law (Cangi, 2002). The appeal of the Ministry of Health to this verdict, which was upheld in İzmir Regional Administrative Court, was rejected and the decision became definite in March 2002. Upon the final decision, the Ministry of Health ordered the İzmir governorship for stopping the operation of the mine on 28 March 2002.

Accordingly, the mine was sealed by the officials of Bergama district governorship on 2 April 2002 (Cangı, 2002).

However, the government did not give up with this court order, either. Before the mine was closed down, the Council of the Ministers had taken a ‘principle decision’ (*prensip kararı*) so as to allow the operation of the gold mine in Bergama. With this decision, which was based on the ‘national economic interests of the country’, the Cabinet authorized the continuation of the production in the goldmine (Cangı, 2002). On the basis of this decision, the mine was granted a permanent operation permit by the Ministry of Health on April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2002. Concerning the operation permit, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Health stated that they did not agree with the courts’ view that the operation of the mine would damage environment because the mine was being monitored by the Ministry and it was scientifically proven that the operation of the mine would be harmless. The Minister of Health, on the other hand, stated that ‘he would leave his post if it ever emerges that he has failed to protect the health of Turkish people’, also adding that the protesters were anti-Turkey because they were misleading the public and damaging Turkish economy (Turkish Daily News, 5 April 2002). The most interesting comment on the issue, however, came from the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. In a speech he delivered in the Turkish Parliament, he directly linked the operation of the mine to the inflow of foreign investments, remarking that “the mine in Bergama turned into a syndrome to prevent the investment of foreign capital to the mining sector. The operation of this mine will be beneficial to provide the entrance of the foreign capital to the mining sector” (Hürriyet, 13 April 2002).

Upon the issuance of the operation permit by the Ministry of Health, the company re-started its operations on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, after one day suspension. It had maintained its operations until August 2004, when the mine was re-sealed again in line with a new court order, which was given in the meantime upon the application of the protesters to the court to cancel the principle decision of the Council of Ministers. However, it did not take long for the company to obtain new operation permits again because the government gave an immediate response to the closure of the mine starting a new process of granting permissions to the company. Just after nine days later, the Environment Ministry issued a new operation permit to the company. It later became apparent that a letter from the then US ambassador to the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement, played an important role

in the issuance of new licenses to the company<sup>115</sup>. In the letter, the ambassador requested from the Minister of Public Works and Settlement to instruct the İzmir governor for a required operation permit (Radikal, 28 January 2005). The new process was finalized in May 2005 and the mine re-started to produce gold. In the meantime, the ownership of the mine was changed twice. First a Canadian company, Frontier Pacific, purchased the mine from Newmont (Radikal, 26 June 2004; Milliyet, 6 August 2004), and then a national company, Koza Altın, purchased it from Frontier Pacific.

In August and September 2004, when the mine was closed, Milliyet again began giving supportive news on the mining company and on gold mining. For instance, in August 2004, Milliyet gave the views of the grandson of a protester who became a media celebrity. As given in Milliyet, the grandson, who was working in the mine, believed that some interest groups deceived his grandfather to oppose the mine:

My grandfather and the others, who were not informed on the issue, were deceived by some others. But there is no adverse affect of the operation of the mine. Many people earn their living from this mine. We will struggle for its operation (Milliyet, 25 August 2004).

In a similar manner, another news on the issue appeared a few days later, stated that “In the past people in Bergama was demonstrating against gold mining with cyanide, but now they demonstrate for the operation of the gold mine”. It was maintained in the news that:

The people consisting about ten thousands sent a petition to Prime Minister and other ministers which reads that ‘the mining company has the most environmentally sensitive technology in the world. It is contributing to local economy. It is providing employment opportunities. The company will bring welfare. The mine should be opened’ (Milliyet, 1 September 2004).

More importantly, with the aim of preventing the new mobilizations against the operation of mines elsewhere in Turkey, the Turkish government enacted a new mining law in 2004. In fact, the new mining law makes foreign investment in gold mining in Turkey more attractive in the economical, environmental and political senses (Mining Magazine, 2005: 3). The new law unconditionally opens up formerly protected areas such as olive groves, coasts, forests, agricultural lands, national parks and historic sites to mining, does not require an environmental impact study to start mining, exempts gold

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<sup>115</sup> In fact, before sending this letter, the US ambassador also criticized Turkey for not providing a sound environment for foreign investments. He remarked that “US companies that invest Turkey face with some difficulties”. He gave the Bergama mine as an example to these difficulties (Cumhuriyet, 26 October 2004).

extraction from the Value Added Tax, and precludes the withdrawal of the mining licenses once granted. With the enactment of the new law, the government, in fact, attempted to prevent potential court decisions against the operations of the gold mines on the basis of their negative environmental impacts.

Not only the decisions of national courts but also the decision of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on the issue did not change anything concerning the attitude of the Turkish state on the issue. In November 2004, ECHR to which the protesters had applied in 1998, ordered that compensation must be paid by the Turkish state to the applicants, because the right to live and the right to a healthy environment was violated (Hürriyet, 1 November 2004). Although the government did not refuse to comply with this decision, which in fact not possible, the decision did not produce any concrete effect in terms of the operation of the mine.

It is important here to note that the support of the media to the movement considerably decreased as the efforts of the pro-mining bloc against the movement increased. Although it cannot be said that all of them turned against the protesters, some of them that had supported the movement in the preceding periods began giving news that were supportive of neither the movement nor the pro-mining bloc. Overall, however, the news about the Bergama protesters highly decreased in the last period particularly in the mainstream newspapers, like Hürriyet Daily for instance, mainly because of the decreased activities of the protesters. Moreover, the claims of the pro-mining lobby and the legal cases they brought against the protesters were highly covered. While some newspapers maintained giving supportive news about the protesters, such as Cumhuriyet and Evrensel, their influence on public opinion was limited given the low numbers of their readers.

So far, this study focused on the construction of the pro-mining discourse in the process of the hegemonic battle. In the following section, the logic of this discourse will be scrutinized with the aim of demonstrating how it attempted to compete with the anti-mining discourse through the articulation of some particular elements on the one hand, and through the construction of the protesters as antagonists on the other hand.

### **9.1.3 The Logic of the Pro-Mining Discourse and the Challenges it Posed to the Anti-Mining Discourse**

As demonstrated above, the operation of the mine in Bergama as well as the operation of other gold mines in the country, and the investments of foreign capital were discursively constructed by the pro-mining bloc through rationalizing them not only in economic terms, but also as serving to the national interests of the Turkish society. That is, they were constructed in and through the pro-mining discourse as crucial for the economic development of the country, and therefore for the national interests of the Turkish society. In this regard, ‘economic development’ and ‘national interests’ have been the main elements articulated in the pro-mining discourse along with ‘the operation of the gold mine in Bergama’, ‘the operation of other gold mines’, and ‘the investment of foreign capital’. It should be stressed that the elements of ‘economic development’ and ‘national interests’ were also constructed in a specific way through their articulation in the pro-mining discourse together with ‘the operation of the mine in Bergama’, ‘the operation of other gold mines’, and ‘the investment of foreign capital’. This is so because, as explained before, in establishing a relation between dispersed elements, articulatory practices also modify their identity. In other words, elements are attributed a specific meaning and thereby turned into moments of a discourse through their articulation in it.

Through its articulation in the pro-mining discourse ‘economic development’ signified a specific form of economic development: ‘economic development through neo-liberal policies’. Representing the operation of the gold mines in Bergama and elsewhere through the investment of foreign capital as vital to the economic development of the country, the pro-mining discourse equated economic development with neo-liberal form of economic development. Accordingly, economic development and neo-liberal economy turned to signify the one and the same thing in the pro-mining discourse. Moreover, this form of economic development was represented as serving to the interests of the whole nation. In this way, ‘national interests’ was strongly tied to economic development through neo-liberal policies. This, however, was not the only meaning attributed to national interests in the pro-mining discourse. National interests were also equated with the ‘interests of the Turkish state’, establishing a link between being obedient to state authority and national interests.

As it is the case with all discourses, the construction of the pro-mining discourse became possible through the construction of its outside. In other words, the constitution of the pro-mining discourse through the equivalential articulation of the 'economic development', 'national interests', 'the operation of the gold mine in Bergama', 'the operation of other gold mines', and 'the investment of foreign capital' was accompanied by the exclusionary definition of the Bergama protesters as those who were blocking the economic development of the country through opposing the investment of a multinational to a gold mine, and thereby posing a threat to national interests of the country. Thus, the pro-mining discourse constructed the protesters not only as those who oppose economic development of the country but also as those who work against the 'national interests', as well as against the Turkish state for the interests of another country. With the construction of the protesters as antagonists in this way, the pro-mining discourse also provided some forms of identification. It particularly appealed to those who demand 'economic development of the country' through the use of natural resources and through the attraction of foreign capital into the country, and also to those 'who privilege national interests over narrow individual interests', and therefore, unlike the protesters 'who are either deceived by external forces or collaborate with them', 'do not oppose the Turkish state'.

Hence, through the hegemonic attempts of the pro-mining lobby, two different spaces of representation emerged around an antagonism: pro-mining discourse and anti-mining discourse. Due to the antagonistic relation between them, each space of representation was radically heterogeneous with the other. This is to say that one was totally outside to another. This, however, does not mean that completely different elements were articulated within each discursive space. In fact, some of the elements that were articulated by the both sides of the antagonistic relation were the same elements, such as the nationalist elements. Still, however, the two discursive spaces were radically heterogeneous because the nationalist elements that were articulated in each of them signify different concepts. While in the anti-mining discourse it signified protection of environment, economy, local community, and the whole society from the 'exploitation of foreign capital', in the pro-mining discourse it signified 'the economic development of the country through the investment of foreign capital', as well as 'the obedience to state authority'.

The articulation of the same element in the discourses of the rival parties can be explained both with the structural and strategic factors. The credibility and availability of

the nationalism as a discursive source are the structural factors that led to the use of it in both discourses, whereas the aim of interrupting the equivalential chain of the rival camp is the strategic factor. As a result, nationalism as a signifier received ‘the structural pressure of rival hegemonic projects’, which led to an indetermination in its meaning (Laclau, 2005a: 131). As such, ‘nationalism’ turned to, what Laclau (2000: 305; 2005a: 131) calls, *floating signifier* because it did not have a fixed meaning in an equivalential chain but became indeterminate between alternative equivalential chains.

Given the privilege that was accorded to economic development in the pro-mining discourse, the speculations of the pro-mining lobby about the gold reserves of Turkey have become highly influential in serving to the hegemonic attempt of the pro-mining bloc in a number of ways. First of all, they facilitated the construction of the protesters as the antagonists, turning them to those who oppose to gold mining which would allegedly help the country to overcome the economic crisis. Second, they became a response to the claims of the protesters that the potential economic contribution of gold mining would not be high. Third, bringing the amount of gold reserves and their potential economic contribution into the agenda, they served to push back environmental concerns. Fourth, constructing it as critical for overcoming the economic hardships that the country has faced for long years, they served to increase the importance of gold mining for the Turkish economy. Finally and more importantly, they increased the importance of the operation of the mine in Bergama through turning it into a gate to gold mining. Put differently, the operation of the mine in Bergama became highly important for the economic welfare of the country. This particular point is extremely important and therefore needs further elaboration.

Through the construction of gold mining in the pro-mining discourse as vitally important for the Turkish economy, the operation of the mine in Bergama was simultaneously constructed as necessary to open the way to gold mining, and thereby, to economic development. In this way, the operation of the mine in Bergama began signifying not only itself but also something beyond its particular meaning. More precisely, it also began signifying ‘gold mining in general’, ‘the attraction of foreign investments’ and more importantly ‘economic welfare’ and ‘national interests’ of the country. As it represented these elements besides its particular meaning, it dispossessed from its original particularistic content and began to function as an ‘empty signifier’. In other words, it became a name of the different elements articulated in the pro-mining discourse.

This particular operation has been highly influential on the hegemonic battle between the anti-mining bloc and the pro-mining bloc, since with this move the operation of the mine in Bergama, as a particular aim of a particular group, was presented as compatible with the interests of the whole society. As explained in the Chapter 4, this is exactly what is intrinsic to hegemonic operation because hegemony is constituted through the ability of a sector to make its own particular aims compatible with the functioning of the community (Laclau, 1990). This hegemonic operation of the pro-mining bloc was accompanied by simultaneous reduction of the protests to the narrow interests of the few. That is, while the operation of the mine was constructed as compatible with the interest of the whole society, the demand of the protesters for the prevention of the mine was constructed as serving to the individual interests of only a few leading protesters who ‘work in the service of another country’. As part of this operation, all the other protesters were constructed as those who ‘were deceived by a few leading protesters’. It is also very important to point here that all the demands other than the ‘prevention of the operation of the mine’ that were articulated within the anti-mining discourse were completely disregarded by the pro-mining lobby as if they had not been voiced by the protesters at all. This was a highly important strategy of the pro-mining lobby because in this way they created a situation in which the interests articulated in the anti-mining discourse became, in Gramscian terms, ‘corporative’ but not ‘hegemonic’. In this way, they attempted to prevent the formation of ‘people’ as a collective actor around a number of different social demands which were brought together around the nodal point ‘the prevention of the operation of the mine’. More precisely, de-mobilizing those people other than the peasants against the mine, they attempted to prevent the mobilization of a large number of people against the operation of the mine.

While the appeal of the pro-mining discourse increased and the pro-mining bloc expanded through these hegemonic practices, the appeal of the anti-mining discourse decreased and Bergama movement gradually weakened in the years from 1999 to 2005. Although the most critical factor behind the relative decline of the Bergama movement has been the expansion of the pro-mining bloc, there were also a number of structural and movement-related factors that affected the hegemonic attempts of the movement. Having explained the expansion of the pro-mining bloc, the study will focus in the following sections upon the hegemonic attempts of the Bergama movement in the last period of the struggle. It will particularly indicate how the hegemonic practices of the pro-mining lobby as well as some structural and movement-related factors limited the



hegemonic appeals of the anti-mining discourse on the one hand and led to the waning of the mobilizations against the mine on the other hand.

## **9.2. The Hegemonic Attempts of the Bergama Movement**

The period from 1999 to mid-2005 witnessed the increasing inability of the Bergama protesters to shape the hegemonic battle. As noted before, until the last period the other party of the hegemonic struggle had been largely reactionary to the activities carried out by the protesters. However, the situation was considerably changed in the last period because the rival camp became more active, whereas the protesters became rather reactive to them. In fact, overall the activities that the protesters carried out considerably decreased in the last period in comparison to the preceding period. While at the beginning of the last period, the main reason behind this was that the protesters believed that the struggle was finalized in their favor with the final decision of the Council of the State on the issue, towards the end of the last period the main reason became the protesters' loss of faith to the democratic channels of claim-making. Moreover, partly due to the hegemonic efforts of the pro-mining bloc and partly due to the inability of the movement to increase its hegemonic appeals, the public support of the Bergama movement highly decreased. More importantly, most of the main constituents of the movement also became de-mobilized towards the end of the last period because, as mentioned, the determination of the governments for the operation of the mine dispelled their confidence to the value of mobilizations. Thus, in sharp contrast with the preceding period, the movement gradually narrowed in the last period of the struggle which began with the withdrawal of the support of many individuals, groups, NGOs, and some newspapers, and culminated in the resignation and de-mobilization of a considerable number of its main constituents towards the end of this period.

From the very beginning of the last period, the number of those who mobilized against the goldmine began decreasing. There were four movement-related factors that played important roles in the waning of the mobilizations against the mine. First, at the beginning of this period, the İzmir-Bergama Hand-in-Hand platform, which, as mentioned, consisted of some professional groups, environmentalists, academics, and so on in İzmir, split with the peasants and began concerning also with other environmental problems in other areas (Interview, No. 3, 2004). Second, Konyar and the peasants decided not to allow the participation of the leftist parties, such as the Freedom and

Solidarity Party (ÖDP), the Workers Party (İP) and so on, to the protest activities with the aim of preventing the identification of the movement with a political party (Reinart, 2003). Konyar also prevented the involvement of some individuals and NGOs in the struggle (Interview, No. 6, 2004). Third, Taşkın was not re-elected in the elections held in 1999. The electoral defeat of Taşkın negatively affected the Bergama movement because it meant a decrease in its power stemming from the position of Taşkın and the resources of the municipality (Interview, No. 6, 2004). Fourth, some cleavages emerged within the leadership, particularly between Taşkın and Konyar, concerning not the aims but the ways that would be used to achieve the aims of the movement (Interview, No. 2, 2004; Interview, No. 6, 2004). As a result, Taşkın split with Konyar and the peasants.

Moreover, some broader factors, such as the earthquake that struck western Turkey on August 17<sup>th</sup> 1999, and the economic crisis that Turkey experienced in 2001, exerted some influences on the movement indirectly contributing to the decline of the protests. The former influenced the movement diverting the attention of the media and the public. Since the attention of the media and the public was focused upon the tragedy that the earthquake caused, the protesters did not engage in much action. On the other hand, the big economic crisis that Turkish economy went into in February 2001 devaluing the currency at rate of 40 per cent, used by the pro-mining bloc, as explained above, to increase the importance of the operation of the mine as an economic investment. Moreover, adversely affecting agriculture sector it led some peasants to accept the job offers of the company.

Although considerably diminished, however, neither the protests nor the support of some groups did completely fade away. This was particularly so during the early years of the last period. The protesters became active in these years to some extent mainly because they were still keeping their faith to the democratic channels of claim-making. After the final decision that the Council of the State issued in favor of the protesters in 1998, the protestors began waiting the implementation of the decision of the courts by the state. As noted, with this decision the protesters believed that they won the struggle. In fact, they were right to believe that the struggle was over because, in theory, the executive has to obey court decisions and implement them. The protesters, therefore, did not engage in any action between March 1998 and March 1999. However, the efforts of the company to start its operations again despite the Court orders, which were observed by the protestors in the insistence of the company for not leaving Bergama, led to the start of the protests again in March 1999. As one of the protesters stated:

Although there is no operation in the mining site, the plant is still there.....We do not trust them [The officials of the mine]. They are determined to operate the mine (Cumhuriyet, 1 June 1999).

But in spite of starting the protests again in March 1999, overall the protesters engaged in a few actions in the 1999. Upon a hearing that 18 tons of cyanide had been brought to the mining site they staged some protest actions demanding the transfer of the cyanide (Hürriyet, 25 March 1999; Turkish Daily News, 25 March 1999; Hürriyet, 3 April 1999; Turkish Daily News, 6 April 1999). In addition, they engaged in some other direct actions in Ankara to protest the international arbitration law which was then on the agenda of the Turkish parliament, worrying about the inversion of the court decision in favor of the company through the mechanisms of international arbitration (Cumhuriyet, 17 July 1999; Hürriyet, 1 July 1999; Hürriyet, 25 December 1999).

However, after the mining company started a new campaign to convince the public to the safety of the mine, and particularly after the Prime Ministry instructed the related Ministries on the basis of TÜBİTAK's report to grant the permissions to the mine in the mid 2000, the protesters gave rise to their activities against the operation of the mine. Particularly in the following two years, they engaged in a number of conventional and unconventional actions. Despite the determination of the government to allow the operation of the mine, the protesters were still confident at that time that they could prevent the operation of the mine through litigation process and through other protest activities. Therefore, upon the circular of the Prime Ministry, they announced that they would file new lawsuits because the Prime Ministry do not have any authority to overrule the Council of the State verdict, and maintain protests through engaging in direct action (Turkish Daily News, 14 June 2000; Hürriyet, 10 November 2000). Accordingly, the protesters carried out a number of appeal and demonstrative actions and brought a new case to the courts against the circular of the Prime Ministry in 2000. Even after the company started trial production in May 2001, the protesters were of opinion that they could stop production through litigation process which became evident with two new cases that they filed against the permissions that were granted to the company by the related ministries on the basis of the circular of the Prime Ministry.

**Table 9.1.****Forms of Action of Bergama Protestors in Chronological Order (1999- 2005)**

<b>1999</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upon a hearing that 18 tons of cyanide was brought to the mine, surrounding the mine, forming human chain around the mine, and sitting under the rain</li> <li>• Demonstration with gas masks in front of the Kütahya governor's office</li> <li>• Sit-in and blocking the traffic in Ankara.</li> <li>• Blocking the Izmir highway</li> <li>• Demonstrations in front of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources</li> </ul>
<b>2000</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marching to Bergama with livestock</li> <li>• Demonstration in İzmir (to take attention to the cyanide spill that spread from Romania due to an accident that occurred in a gold mine in this country)</li> <li>• Filing a lawsuit against the circular of the Prime Ministry.</li> <li>• Filing two lawsuits against the permission granted by the Ministry of Forestry to the company for the use of forestry area, and against the permission granted by the Ministry of Health to the company on the basis of the circular of the Prime Ministry.</li> <li>• 'Kuvayi Milliye' walk to Canakkale</li> <li>• Sending messages to a UN meeting in Johannesburg (organized by Greenpeace)</li> <li>• A petition to the President</li> <li>• A demonstration in Ankara</li> <li>• A petition to İstanbul State Security Court</li> <li>• A demonstration in İstanbul</li> <li>• A meeting in İzmir Bar</li> <li>• Preparing reports</li> </ul>
<b>2001</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surrounding the mining site</li> <li>• A press conference</li> <li>• Blocking the Izmir-Canakkale highway</li> <li>• A demonstration in front of the Ministry of Health</li> <li>• A Symposium on Gold-Mining</li> <li>• A Seminar on Gold-Mining</li> <li>• The İzmir Bar applied to the prime ministry and related ministries for the implementation of the decision of the İzmir administrative court.</li> </ul>
<b>2002</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A demonstration on the Bosphorus Bridge in İstanbul.</li> <li>• İzmir Bar filed a lawsuit against the principle decision of the Council of the Minister.</li> <li>• The Bergama peasants filed a lawsuit against the principle decision of the Council of the Minister..</li> </ul>
<b>2003</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A demonstration in front of State Security Court</li> <li>• A press conference by the professionals</li> </ul>
<b>2004</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A demonstration in İstanbul</li> <li>• A press conference in Ovacık</li> <li>• Filing a lawsuit against the operation permits that were granted to the company by the ministries of Environment and Forestry.</li> </ul>
<b>2005</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A demonstration in İzmir</li> <li>• A petition to the President, Prime Ministry, and some other ministries</li> <li>• A meeting and a demonstration in Çamköy</li> </ul>

Sources: Hürriyet, Cumhuriyet, Milliyet, Radikal, Turkish Daily News.

In addition to the procedural actions which were predominantly used by lawyers, the professionals and academics among the protesters carried out some appeal activities. Since the decision of the Prime Ministry to allow the operation of the mine was based on TÜBİTAK's report, the professionals prepared some other scientific reports with the aim of proving that, contrary to the claims of TÜBİTAK'S report, the operation of the mine would pose a serious threat both to environment and to public health. Exemplary in this regard are the reports prepared by the Chambers of Turkish Architects and Engineers (TMMOB), Turkish Physicians Association (TTB), and Dokuz Eylül University Environmental Engineering Department. Scrutinizing TÜBİTAK's report, these reports questioned the validity and reliability of TÜBİTAK's report and argued that it was scientifically not objective and full of omissions concerning the risks that the operation of the mine would pose to environment and to public health (DEU, 2000; TTB, 2001; TMMOB, 2003). The professionals and academics also organized a number of symposium, seminar and meetings on the issue, and conducted press conferences. Through these activities, they maintained emphasizing the environmental risks of the mine and the threat that the inflow of foreign capital create for the country, as well as underlining that the government's refusal to comply with the court orders (for instance, *Altın İşletmeciliği Nereye Kadar Sempozyumu*, DEU, 2001; *Dünyada Altın Üretimi ve Bergama*, ODTÜ, 2001; *Türkiye Yeşil Diyalog Toplantısı*, İstanbul, 2002, and so on). TÜBİTAK's report, and the circular of the Prime Ministry, were also highly criticized by an influential environmental NGO (TEMA), on the grounds that they were attempts to violate the rule of law (Hürriyet, 16 June 2000; Hürriyet, 21 June 2000). In addition, some other NGOs such as the Bars' Association, the Association for the Support of Contemporary Life (ÇYDD), supported the movement calling the government through meetings and panels to respect the court orders (Cumhuriyet, 10 February 2002; Turkish Daily News, 18 July 2001). The support of some other NGOs, such as GÜMÇED, BÜMED and ADD, also maintained in the early years of the last period (Hürriyet, 17 July 1999; Hürriyet, 27 October 1999; Hürriyet, 23 July 2001).

On the other hand, the peasants engaged in some demonstrative and confrontational actions. Most of these actions were responses to a specific move of the rival camp. For instance, the protesters responded to the circular of the Prime Ministry starting a long march from Bergama to Çanakkale, responded to the allegations of the Bergama public prosecutor demonstrating in Ankara and İstanbul, responded to the news that the mine would start trial operation surrounding the mining site and demonstrating in front of the

**Table 9.2.**  
**Litigation Process and Its Outcomes between 1999 and 2005**

<b>2000</b>	Bergama protesters filed a lawsuit against the circular of the Prime Ministry.
<b>2000</b>	Bergama protesters filed two lawsuits against the permission granted by the Ministry of Forestry to the company for the use of forestry area, and against the permission granted by the Ministry of Health to the company on the basis of the circular of the Prime Ministry.
<b>2001</b>	The İzmir Administrative Court canceled the circular of the Prime Ministry.
<b>2001</b>	The İzmir Bar applied to the prime ministry and related ministries for the application of the decision of the İzmir administrative court.
<b>2001</b>	The Court of Appeal ordered the then Prime Minister, four ministries, and the İzmir governor, who did not implement the verdict of the Council of State, for the payment of compensation.
<b>2002</b>	İzmir Administrative Court decided against the permission granted to the company by the Ministry of Health on the basis of the circular of the Prime Ministry
<b>2002</b>	İzmir Administrative Court decided against the permission for the use of forestry area.
<b>2002</b>	İzmir Regional Administrative Court rejected the appeal of the Ministries and ordered the implementation of this decision within one month.
<b>2002</b>	İzmir Bar filed a lawsuit against the principle decision of the Council of the Minister.
<b>2002</b>	The Council of the State rejected the case on the grounds that the principle decision of the Council of the Minister was not added to the file.
<b>2002</b>	The Bergama peasants filed a lawsuit against the principle decision of the Council of the Minister.
<b>2002</b>	Izmir Administrative Court rejected to cancel the permission for the use of the Forestry area.
<b>2003</b>	The Court of Appeal approved the compensation decision
<b>2003</b>	The Council of the State rejected the appeal of the protesters
<b>2004</b>	The Council of the State cancelled the operation permits given on the basis of the principle decision of the Council of Ministers.
<b>2004</b>	The protesters filed a lawsuit against the operation permits that were granted to the company by the ministries of Environment and Forestry.
<b>2005</b>	The İzmir Administrative Court cancelled the permission of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry granted to the company in August 2004.
<b>2005</b>	The İzmir Regional Administrative Court decided against the decision of the İzmir Administrative Court on the cancellation of the permission given by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

building of the Council of the State in Ankara, and responded to the start of the trial production in the mining site blocking the İzmir-Çanakkale highway (Hürriyet, 24 September 2000; Hürriyet, 14 October 2000; Hürriyet, 4 November 2000; Hürriyet, 3 March 2001; Hürriyet, 22 March 2001; Hürriyet, 27 May 2001). Moreover, the protesters staged a demonstration in front of the Ministry of Health in Ankara and on the Bosphorus Bridge in İstanbul to attract the attention of the public to the decision of the İzmir Administrative court that ordered the cancellation of the operation permits of the company in March 2002 (Hürriyet, 26 March 2002).

The responses of the social control agencies to the protesters became harsher in the last period of the struggle. For instance, upon the attempt of the protesters to block İzmir highway in November 1999, the Bergama public prosecutor started an investigation about Konyar for provoking the people to commit crime and for demonstrating without permission from authorities (Reinart, 2003); the police diminished the demonstration in Ankara in December 1999 through using force and taking the protesters into custody; the gendarmerie used force to diminish the protest which was staged by the protesters blocking the İzmir-Çanakkale highway in reaction to the start of the trial production, (Hürriyet, 27 May 2001), and arrested Konyar for provoking the protesters (Hürriyet, 28 May 2001); the police arrested 36 protesters after they staged a demonstration in the Bosphorus Bridge (Hürriyet, 26 March 2002). Moreover, a lawsuit was filed against 134 protesters, of whom two were subjected to a 19-month imprisonment, which was later reversed by the judgement of the Court of Appeal (Hürriyet, 3 July 2002); Konyar was arrested for insulting two policemen (Hürriyet, 27 April 2002); and chief prosecutor of Ankara State Security Court started an investigation in the villages (Hürriyet, 12 May 2002).

Concerning the demands that were voiced by the protesters, it can be said that they put more emphasis on the rule of law in the last period of the struggle. In some protests, they carried banners showing the decision of the courts on the issue (Hürriyet, 21 November 2000). Moreover, the nationalist elements were increasingly articulated in the anti-mining discourse. In this respect, they framed the company as part of the 'global imperialist powers' (Cumhuriyet, 10 February 2002), and the struggle as a struggle against imperialism and a struggle for national independence. As one of the protesters put it in the protests against the international arbitration law:

**Table 9.3.**

**Types and Forms of Action of Bergama Protestors (1999- 2005)**

Types of Action		Forms of Action	Date
CONVENTIONAL (INSTITUTIONALIZED) ACTION	Appeal Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending messages to a UN meeting in Johannesburg (organized by Greenpeace)</li> <li>• A Petition to the President</li> <li>• A petition to İstanbul State Security Court</li> <li>• A meeting in İzmir Bar</li> <li>• Preparing reports</li> <li>• Press conference</li> <li>• A Symposium on Gold-Mining</li> <li>• A Seminar on Gold-Mining</li> <li>• A press conference by the professionals</li> <li>• A press conference in Ovacık</li> <li>• A petition to the President, Prime Ministry, and some other ministries</li> </ul>	2000 2000 2000 2000 2000 2001 2001 2001 2003 2004 2005
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Filing a lawsuit against the circular of the Prime Ministry.</li> <li>• Filing two lawsuits against the permission granted by the Ministry of Forestry to the company for the use of forestry area, and against the permission granted by the Ministry of Health to the company on the basis of the circular of the Prime Ministry.</li> <li>• The İzmir Bar applied to the prime ministry and related ministries for the implementation of the decision of the İzmir administrative court.</li> <li>• İzmir Bar filed a lawsuit against the principle decision of the Council of the Minister.</li> <li>• The Bergama peasants filed a lawsuit against the principle decision of the Council of the Minister..</li> <li>• Filing a lawsuit against the operation permits that were granted to the company by the ministries of Environment and Forestry.</li> </ul>	2000 2000 2001 2002 2002 2004
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstration with gas masks in front of the Kütahya governor's office</li> <li>• Demonstration in front of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources</li> <li>• Marching to Bergama with livestock</li> <li>• Demonstration in İzmir</li> <li>• 'Kuvayi Milliye' walk to Canakkale</li> <li>• A Demonstration in Ankara</li> <li>• A Demonstration in İstanbul</li> <li>• A demonstration in Ankara in front of the Ministry of Health</li> <li>• A demonstration in front of State Security Court</li> <li>• A demonstration in İstanbul</li> <li>• A demonstration in İzmir</li> <li>• A meeting and a demonstration in Çamköy</li> </ul>	1999 1999 2000 2000 2000 2000 2000 2001 2003 2004 2005 2005
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upon a hearing that 18 tons of cyanide was brought to the mine, surrounding the mine, forming human chain around</li> </ul>	1999



		the mine, and sitting under the rain	
		• Sit-in and blocking the traffic in Ankara, the capital city	1999
		• Blocking the Izmir highway	1999
		• Surrounding the mining site	2001
		• Blocking the Izmir-Canakkale highway	2001
		• A Demonstration on the Bosphorus Bridge in İstanbul	2002

The independence that we had with Atatürk will be in danger. The owners of foreign companies, and foreign courts will be in the rule in our own country. ....We elected the members of the parliament to represent us, not to sell our country to foreigners (Cumhuriyet, 12 August 1999).

In a similar way, they named the march from Bergama to Canakkale as ‘Kuvayı Milliye’ walk, representing the patriotic military forces fought in the War of Liberation during 1920s. As Konyar put it:

Enemies in the past used to attack with rifles and guns, and today it’s with gold mines and nuclear power stations. We as Bergama residents don’t let them do that. We won’t let them to poison our soil. For that reason we got to Canakkale where thousands of martyrs lie buried. We call for the country to hear our voice (Turkish Daily News, 14 November 2000).

After the government prevented the shut down of the mine in line with the court orders with the principle decision of the Council of the Ministers in April 2002, the emphasis that the protesters put on the violation of the rule of law further increased. The leading protesters, especially the local politicians and lawyers, particularly underlined that the government was committing a big crime. For instance, the president of the Turkish Bar Association declared that this was a ‘constitutional crime’ (Hürriyet, 4 April 2002). Similarly, Taşkın remarked:

To insist on not implementing the final decisions of courts, and to prevent the implementation of court orders with governmental decrees is the biggest crime that can be committed in the Turkish republic (Hürriyet, 4 April 2002).

Despite these hegemonic efforts of the protesters, however, the public support of the protestors considerably weakened at these early years of the last period both due to the hegemonic attempts of the pro-mining bloc and due to some structural and movement-related factors. Especially after 2001, when, as explained above, the pro-mining bloc initiated a hegemonic attack, public opinion were considerably changed about the protests and protesters, and accordingly, many actors gave up supporting the protestors.

As some protesters pointed out it was particularly the claims in Hablemitoğlu's book that became effective both in shaping the public opinion and in decreasing the support of the movement (Interview, No. 4, 2004). "After Hablemitoğlu's book was published and distributed, the individual supports considerably decreased, and we began facing with many difficulties in expressing ourselves to the general public" (Interview, No. 3, 2004). In addition, the protesters believed that the support of the courts and the media considerably weakened in the last period of the struggle, as stated by one of the lawyers: "[a]fter a certain date, the courts in Ankara turned against us and deliberately slowed down the litigation process" (Interview, No. 2, 2004).

In fact, as the appeal of the pro-mining discourse increased through the efforts of the pro-mining bloc, the appeal of the anti-mining discourse decreased. However, the decrease in the appeal of the anti-mining discourse cannot be explained only with the counter-hegemonic efforts of the pro-mining bloc. In addition, there are some structural and movement-related factors that adversely affected the appeal of the anti-mining discourse. The most important structural factor that adversely affected the anti-mining discourse was the centralization of the demand for 'the prevention of the operation of the mine' within the anti-mining discourse. As explained in the preceding chapter, this demand had signified not only itself but also other demands articulated within the anti-mining discourse, almost turning into an empty signifier in the second period of the Bergama struggle. However, in the last period, it increasingly ceased to signify the demands of other groups because its particularity as the demand of the Bergama peasants became dominant. That is, the literality of this particular demand became gradually dominant, divorcing it from other concepts that it had signified in the second phase of the movement. This is so because the objective location of this particular demand in the system of differential relations constituted in the anti-mining discourse limited its hegemonic opening. Since it represented the particular interests of the peasants, who were the most directly affected group from the operation of the mine, its ability of representing the demands of the other groups gradually eroded. As stated by one of the protesters "it could not be told to the public that this problem is not only the problem of Bergama but concerns everyone in the country" (Interview, No. 4, 2004).

As to the reasons that limit the hegemonic appeal of this particular demand, it can be said that both the efforts of the pro-mining bloc and some movement-related factors played crucial roles. As mentioned before, the pro-mining bloc effectively reduced the movement to the 'narrow individual interests of a few leading figures', framing them as

the collaborators of an external force, and framing all the other protesters as those who were ‘deceived by a few number of leading figures’. In addition to the efforts of the pro-mining lobby, the popularization of the Bergama struggle particularly through the direct actions, which were predominantly adopted by the peasants, played a critical role in limiting the ability of Bergama peasants to act hegemonically over the other groups. Interestingly, although the engagement of the Bergama peasants to the protests was important in popularizing the issue, it also negatively affected the movement. This is so because the peasants became the most visible actors of the movement, and therefore, the movement appeared as essentially tied to the dislocations and demands of this group. In other words, the movement gradually appeared as if it had been specific to the demands of the peasants, and this prevented the movement to expand its principle of reading to wider areas.

The mainstream media’s consistent framing of the struggle as an environmental struggle of the Bergama peasants also played an important role in the constitution of the movement as the struggle of only peasants. The mainstream media, including those that supported the pro-mining bloc and those that became relatively supportive of the protesters, completely disregarded the other demands articulated in the anti-mining discourse and represented the Bergama movement as the struggle of the Bergama peasants to protect the environment in Bergama villages (see, *Milliyet*, *Hürriyet*, Turkish Daily News). Although some other newspapers, such as *Cumhuriyet* and *Evrensel*, that supported the movement framing the struggle as a national independence struggle and as a struggle against imperialism, their influence became highly limited in comparison to the above-mentioned ones given the low numbers of their readers.

More importantly, the activities of the protesters, particularly the demonstrative and confrontational activities, almost faded away after 2002 mainly because the determination of the government to allow the operation of the mine despite the court orders, which became evident with the re-opening of the mine in April 2002 through a governmental decree, undermined the protesters’ confidence in the value of the protest actions. Although the lawyers initiated a new litigation process, and professionals and academics maintained some appeal activities as seen in the Table 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3, the peasants were highly disappointed with this particular move of the government. They, in fact, realized that they would not be able to enforce the government to implement the court ruling.

The insistence of the government on the operation of the mine, disregarding both the opposition of the protesters and the court verdicts on the issue, dispelled the peasants' faith in the value of existing democratic channels for voicing their claims. As a result, a considerable number of peasants resigned and accepted the operation of the mine in despair. It can be claimed that with the recognition that established democratic channels were unreliable, the protesters, particularly the peasants, experienced a second dislocation. The new dislocation, however, could not be turned into new actions against the mine because most of the peasants believed that the democratic ways were exhausted. As one of the protesters put it, they used all the existing legal and legitimate ways to prevent the operation of the mine by engaging in direct actions and bringing the case to the courts (Interview, No. 6, 2004). 'What else we can do to prevent the operation of the mine? Do we have to go to the mountains [to wage a guerilla fight]? But because we do not do that there is no way to force the state to respect our demands' (Interview, No. 6, 2004). Thus, it is the recognition that they would not be able to enforce the state to satisfy their demands that created despair in the peasant protesters. They, in fact, realized how powerless they are in the existing structural configurations to force the state to implement court rulings. As it was put by a peasant:

What about human rights? Human rights are not respected in this country. All villages were united here against the mine....It was closed with court orders but re-opened with the decision of the Council of Ministers. This is Turkey. The mine was closed as a result of our nine-year long struggle but re-opened in two hours. After its re-opening, our protests almost ended (Interview, No. 6, 2004).

Another peasant stated in a similar way, "nothing frightened us, neither the gendarme nor the police, what made us de-motivated is that the state did not apply the court verdict. That made us despair" (Reinart, 2003: 83). Hence, neither the mining company nor the other actors in the pro-mining bloc but the Turkish state was regarded by the peasants as their real opponent. "If there is one to blame" stated a peasant, "it is government, it is state" (Reinart, 2003: 159). Even many of those who accepted to work in the mine consider the Turkish state as the only actor responsible both from the operation of the mine, and their working there. For instance, a peasant who had been a protester but then began working in the mine explains his working in the mine with being not stronger than the Turkish state (Reinart, 2003: 149). Another peasant who also works in the mine, on the other hand, underlines that it is the responsibility of the state to concern with environmental impact of the mine:

Is it harmful or not? The state and those who allowed the operation of the mine should worry about that. Regardless of I work there or not, this mine will operate. The ministers of the Turkish republic allowed it. Our resistance did not produce any positive outcome..... The only effect that our protest actions produced is that the mine employed the people from the villages.....Our state brought this mine here. The mine is not guilty. If there is any guilt it is the guilt of our state (Reinart, 2003: 154).

In addition to this disappointment, the economic hardship that the peasants experienced mainly due to the February 2001 economic crisis led them to accept the job offers of the company. As it was stated by a peasant:

I was a protester. I was against the operation of the mine.....Yes, the operation of the mine will be harmful. But people became poor. They lost [the struggle]. They had to work [in the mine] (Reinart, 2003: 155).

Although some of the peasants engaged in a few direct actions in the years from 2002 to 2005, the number of the protesters who participated to these activities was considerably low. For instance, only 25 people participated to the demonstration in İstanbul in 2004 (Hürriyet, 14 September 2004; Radikal, 15 September 2004), and only 11 people participated to the demonstration in İzmir in 2005 (Milliyet, 2 June 2005). Recently, the company has recruited some peasants with high wages, including the heads of some villages, who had played considerable roles in mobilizing and coordinating peasants against the mine (Interview, No. 6, 2004). As noted before, the multinational company maintained its operations in the Bergama area until 2004 when the mine closed once again after a new order of Court against the operation of the company. After that closure, a national company purchased the mine from the multinational one and started to operate the mine in May 2005.

The resignation of a considerable number of peasant protesters became a critical factor in the course of the Bergama movement. It precipitated the waning of the mobilizations against the operation of the mine almost as a whole because as explained above the movement largely turned into the movement of the peasants in the last period. Although many peasants are still against the operation of the mine they are highly de-mobilized at the moment because they lost their confidence in the value of mobilizing (Interview, No. 8, 2005).

We have worked a lot to prevent the operation of the mine, but now we understand that we cannot change anything. That is, we do not have any hope,.....it is not possible to be a citizen in this country (Interview, No. 6, 2004).

In sum, the hegemonic efforts of the pro-mining bloc, in which the determination of the state for the operation of the mine became critical on the one hand, and the incapability of the movement actors to continue the popular appeals of the anti-mining discourse on the other, effectively limited the hegemonic openings of the anti-mining discourse. Moreover, the inability of the movement actors to turn the second dislocation, which they experienced with the state's refusal to comply with the court orders, into new antagonisms and new equivalences, led to the waning of the mobilizations. However, although the Bergama movement could not attain its goals, it produced a number of consequences both in the minor social space in the Bergama context and in wider areas in the Turkish context. In the chapter that follows, which will be the concluding chapter of the study, both the concrete consequences of the movement, and the overall meaning that Bergama movement signified in the Turkish context will be handled.

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **CONCLUSION**

The aim of this study has been to examine the 15-year long hegemonic struggle of the Bergama movement. In the pursuit of this aim, it was first sought to furnish the means of the analysis of the Bergama movement in a non-objectivist, non-essentialist, and non-reductionist manner. In the accommodation of this task the first step was to review the main social movement approaches with a view to understand their strengths and weaknesses in accounting for social movements. Categorizing the main social movement approaches as Collective Behavior theories, Rationalist theories, and Constructionist theories according to some broad assumptions that they share, each approach was exposed offering an assessment of their individual contributions as well as inadequacies in highlighting aspects of social movements. The review revealed that, notwithstanding their seminal individual contributions to the field of social movement studies, mainstream social movement approaches hardly offer an adequate and coherent theoretical framework for the study of social movements due to some ontological and methodological problems inherent in them. They have an objectivist vision to the social world and accordingly tend to fall into different forms of essentialism in conceptualizing social movements on the one hand, and fall short of providing a balanced account of structural conditions and subjective practices of movements on the other hand. However, despite their failure to propose an adequate theoretical framework for the study of social movements, the mainstream social movement approaches offer invaluable insights taking our attention to different aspects of social movements. Therefore, instead of totally rejecting social movement approaches, this study has attempted to employ their insights within the non-objectivist and more comprehensive framework of the discourse-theoretical approach of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe.

The second step, then, was to introduce the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe so as to prepare the ground for the elaboration of the framework of the study. The discourse-theoretical perspective of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe offers a more promising framework for the analysis of social movements than the mainstream social movement

approaches in the sense that it overcomes the ontological and methodological problems inherent in the main social movement approaches. It proposes a broad and non-objectivist framework for the analysis of the constitution of the social through the political struggles. Moreover, it provides a more balanced view of structure and agency without giving a special priority to the one over the other.

The third and last step was to elaborate the conceptual framework of the study through integrating the insights of social movement approaches within the broader framework of the discourse theory. It has been claimed in the study that with the use of the insights of social movement approaches within the broader framework of the discourse theory not only the ontological and methodological problems in social movement approaches can be overcome, but also discourse theory can be made more fruitful for the study of social movements. Although discourse theory provides a better framework to start with, it should be informed by the insights of social movement approaches for the analysis of social movements because due to its metatheoretical character, discourse theory lacks some conceptual tools which are important in informing an ontical research on an actualized social movement.

Within the framework of discourse theory, the study, unlike social movement theory, regarded social movements as having a truly constitutive role. Social movements emerge in periods of crisis as collective agents of change, proposing new discursive spaces and thereby challenging the existing discourses. In other words, social movements emerge as political subjects and engage in a hegemonic battle through contesting the existing social logics and attempting to constitute new ones along the lines of the discourse they introduce. The emergence of a social movement, as a political subject, requires the failure of existing structural arrangements as its precondition. It is not, therefore, the existing social structures that give birth to social movements but rather the failure of these structures that paves the way for the possible emergence of social movements. As such, in contrast with what is assumed in social movement theory, movements cannot be envisaged as the 'internal moments' of existing structural arrangements. They, rather, refer to a 'new agency' that comes into being to reconstitute the structures that fail to provide a meaningful framework.

The discourse of movements, which is constituted by drawing new frontiers, involves new meanings and new forms of identification for subjects. In constructing new discourses, movements do not totally draw on existing structures, as it is implicitly



assumed by the constructionist social movement approaches, but actualize some possibilities which are not actualized before. Being not totally closed, the social always bears other meanings and possibilities than the existing structural systems, and movements emerge to actualize some of these possibilities. Thus, it is the open character of the social that makes the emergence of social movements possible at all. Moreover, contrary to what is assumed in social movement studies the discourse of a movement does not refer to the discourse of an already constituted group, and as such it is not the expression of the unity of a previously given group. Rather, it is through the constitution of the discourse that a movement comes into being. In other words, constituting the unity of different actors in a movement, the discourse of a movement constitutes the movement.

Since social movements do not refer to the mobilizations of already constituted social groups, instead of taking groups as the basic unit of analysis of social movements, the study takes the category of social demands as the smallest unit of analysis. Thus, it envisages social movements as coming into being through the articulation of some 'social demands' that are not accommodated by the existing hegemonic systems. Due to their emergence through the articulation of some social demands that are negated by the existing system, there is a radical antagonistic dimension inherent in any social movement. That is to say, an antagonistic relation is established between movements and those in power through the articulation of some social demands against the existing system which cannot satisfy these demands. Through the articulation of unfulfilled social demands, social movements constitute a new discursive space that proposes new forms of identifications for subjects. As the number of demands that are articulated by a movement increases, its popular appeal also increases.

Within this framework, social movement concepts were used to focus on issues that are not considered or less prominently featured in the discourse theory. Social movement concepts are insightful concerning particularly the factors that facilitate or constrain mobilization of people, such as the structure of institutional politics, the availability of different forms of resources, and the availability of different mobilizing structures, as well as the ways through which movements attempt to voice their claims and try to achieve their ends, such as the adoption of different strategies, and the use of different forms of collective action. In employing social movement insights, the study did not draw on them as they exist, but rather, incorporating them into the discourse-theoretical framework, it reformulated them according to the requirements of a discursive ontology.

After elaborating the theoretical framework of the study, the Bergama movement was analyzed by means of applying the new conceptual framework. The movement was analyzed dividing the mobilization process into three periods on the basis of the changing characteristics that the movement displayed in different periods: the emergent period (1990-April 1996), the consolidation period (April 1996- November 1998), and the weakening period (December 1998- 2005). The first argument that was put forward is that the Bergama movement emerged through constituting an anti-gold mining discourse that, establishing a new principle of reading both to the changes in the local Bergama context, i.e., the operation of gold mine, and to the changes in the broader economic space, i.e., the neo-liberal transformation, succeeded to suture the dislocations experienced by Bergama locals and some other social groups as a result of these changes. The anti-gold mining discourse brought together different particular unfulfilled social demands of different groups articulating them in an equivalential way in opposition to the operation of the goldmine, and thereby, establishing an antagonistic relation between these groups and the mining multinational. Since the anti-gold mining discourse did not simply express the demands of the local residents for the prevention of the goldmine in Bergama in an isolated way, but also constituted and voiced some other demands for 'broader' changes such as 'protection of the environment', 'prevention of goldmining', and 'prevention of the operation of the multinational and foreign companies in the country', Bergama protest movement represented more than a local opposition to the operations of a goldmine. Accordingly, the constituents of the Bergama movement did not become limited with the local people in the initial phase of the movement. A number of other groups, such as environmentalists, academics, and professionals, also involved in the movement around different social demands articulated in the anti-gold mining discourse.

From the perspective adopted in the study, the emergence of the Bergama movement was viewed neither as a structural necessity nor as the product of the actions of autonomous actors. Rather, the mobilization of different groups was viewed as related with dislocation. It was argued that the dislocatory experiences of the peasants, stemmed from the mining project, coincided with the dislocation that the other groups experienced with the broader neo-liberal transformation. Disrupting not only existing structures but also together with them the subject positions internal to these structures, dislocation forced these people to construct themselves through the acts of identification. The anti-gold mining discourse was constituted as the peasants, environmentalists, academics, and

professionals identified with it. The construction of the anti-mining discourse involved a radical break with the existing meaning structures not because it articulated completely new elements but because it articulated existing elements in a new way. The discourse of the Bergama movement, therefore, entailed both continuity and discontinuity with the existing structures. Among the various strands of thinking that informed Bergama protest discourse, left thought, environmentalism, and nationalism became the most notable ones.

The existing structures influenced the emergence of the Bergama movement not only providing ideological raw materials but also through the availability of resources and mobilizing structures. In the initial phase of the Bergama movement, the material resources of the Bergama municipality and the resources of the professional groups in the form of technical knowledge and information on gold-mining issue and on legal issues were very valuable on one hand, and the pre-existing networks between professional groups, local politicians, and Bergama peasants on the other hand were very valuable both in the construction of the protest discourse and in the rapid mobilization of these groups against the operation of the goldmine.

As an important part of the discourse of the movement, the action forms that movement actors deployed were also analyzed. It was indicated that in the initial phase of the movement, the Bergama protesters engaged mostly in appeal activities, while engaging only three procedural, and three demonstrative activities to prevent the operation of the mine. In short, the protesters engaged only in conventional forms of actions in the emergent phase of the movement. Nevertheless, through conventional forms of action, the movement actors became considerably successful in establishing a transnational advocacy network, attracting the attention of the local and national media, pressurizing the state elites, and forcing the mining company to make some changes in its initial mining project.

Second, the study argued that the movement consolidated both through widening its support base, and through developing a collective identity. On the one hand, it was indicated that the support base of the movement broadened as the movement gained a public visibility, and as the chain of equivalence constituted in the anti-mining discourse further expanded. While the movement gained public visibility through the use of different action forms, particularly among them through the use of direct action, the equivalential chain between different particular social demands expanded through the

articulation of some other unsatisfied social demands in the Turkish context, such as the demands for the rule of law, for human rights, and for democracy. The expansion of the chain of equivalence was realized through drawing new boundaries to the discourse of the movement, which involved the construction of the Turkish state as the common enemy of the movement actors besides the mining company. On the other hand, it was put forth that the particular demand for the prevention of the operation of the gold mine in Bergama started functioning almost as an empty signifier representing the equivalential chain as a totality. It was also contended that due to the centrality of that particular demand, all social groups who involved in the movement united around the collective identity of 'Bergama protesters'. As a result of its success both in increasing its support and in uniting the different social groups around a collective identity, the movement produced some important intended outcomes, getting a court decision in its favor, and thereby forcing both the government and the company to take its claims into consideration.

The study also indicated that as the Bergama movement succeeded to extend its support base, and began seriously forcing for some changes in line with its demands, those who are for the mine, i.e., the company and the Turkish state, intensified their efforts in favor of gold-mining, leading to decisive turns in the unfolding of the movement. While the company and the Turkish state had been rather reactionary and weak in terms of proposing an alternative discursive space to that of the protesters in the first two phases of the struggle, they began strengthening in the last phase increasing the popular appeal of the pro-mining discourse and thereby expanding the pro-mining bloc. The pro-mining bloc articulated a discourse not only in favor of the gold mine in Bergama but also in favor of neo-liberal economy, and accordingly in favor of gold-mining and foreign investments in general. Through a number of strategies and tactics, the pro-mining bloc effectively antagonized the Bergama protesters and posed serious challenges to the anti-mining discourse of the protesters. The hegemonic efforts of the pro-mining bloc did not only consist of winning the popular consent to the operation of the gold mine but also consisted of repressing the movement actors through various measures. Despite its success in the first two periods, the movement gradually weakened in the last period not only due to the hegemonic efforts of the rival party but also due to the inability of the movement actors to increase the hegemonic appeals of the anti-gold mining discourse. The central demand, i.e., the demand for the prevention of the operation of the gold mine in Bergama, that had signified the totality of the equivalential chain gradually lost its

central place. Its literality as a particular demand became dominant divorcing it from other concepts that it had signified in the earlier periods of the movement. Accordingly, the Bergama movement gradually appeared as if it had been specific to the demands of the peasants, and this prevented the movement to expand its principle of reading to wider areas. As a consequence of both the hegemonic efforts of the pro-mining bloc and the incapability of the movement actors to continue the popular appeals of the anti-mining discourse, in addition to not achieving its ultimate ends, the public support of the Bergama movement sharply decreased, and more importantly, the main constituents of the movement became de-mobilized.

Having reiterated the main points of arguments in this study concerning both the analytical value of social movement theory and discourse theory for the study of social movements, and the genesis, development, and demise of the Bergama movement, the study now, in conclusion, provides an overall evaluation of the Bergama movement considering the outcomes and consequences that it produced both in the minor social space in Bergama villages, and in the broader context of the Turkish socio-political system. In doing so, the institutional Turkish political system will also be evaluated in terms of its capacity for democratic politics.

As explained in Chapter 4, the consequences of movements vary depending on whether they aim to structure a minor social space or broader social spaces. In the case of the former even if they become hegemonic, their influence will be limited with the minor social space in which they operate, but on the contrary, in the case of the latter when they become hegemonic they will influence the whole society. As we have seen, the Bergama movement emerged in the local Bergama context as a particular response to the operation of the gold mine in Bergama area but extended itself through tying the issue of the operation of the gold mine in Bergama to some wider issues, such as the protection of the environment, the operation of gold mines, the operation of foreign companies, the rule of law, human rights, and democracy. As such, the movement transformed two forms of 'relation of subordination' that had existed within the Turkish social structure in a differential way into an 'antagonistic relation of oppression': the subordination of the local people, as well as the natural environment, to the interests of the international capital created by the ongoing processes of liberalization and globalization, and the subordination of society, or citizens, to the authoritarian rule of the Turkish state which, as explained in Chapter 6, was created through the years after the establishment of the Turkish republic. Thus, the movement did not only aim to restructure the minor social

space in Bergama but also posed a challenge to the broader institutional system. In evaluating the consequences of the movement, therefore, we need to consider its effects on both the local Bergama context and on the broader institutional system.

Although Bergama movement could not achieve its ultimate end in terms of not preventing the operation of the mine in Bergama, it has produced some important consequences in the minor social space in Bergama villages. The most important effect of the movement in the local context of the Bergama villages has become the changes in the local structures. Due to its hegemonic position in the local context of Bergama villages, the anti-gold mining discourse brought considerable changes in the lives of the peasants, replacing the traditional meaning patterns and traditional social divisions. While it united a number of peasants who have considerable ethnic differences around the collective identity of the 'Bergama protesters', it also instituted a new social division in the villages between those opposing the mine and those working for the mine. As it has been detailed in Chapter 8, regardless of their ethnic identities, those peasants who opposed the operation of the mine were rendered equivalent by reference to the common opponent: the mining company and its supporters. Similarly, regardless of their ethnic identities those peasants who supported the mining company or who worked for the mining company were constructed as the opponent. In this way, the traditional social divisions in the Bergama villages that had been formed around ethnic differences were replaced with a new social division. Another consequence of the movement in terms of changing the lives of the peasants is the changes in gender relations. The status of women has considerably improved as a result of their participation to the protests. The women state that their active involvement in the protests together with men has improved their self-esteem and also their status both in the family and in the villages (Interview, No. 8, 2005). One of the most visible changes in the women is that they no longer use their traditional clothes in public spaces, which, called *kıvrak*, were used to cover all of their bodies except their eyes (see, Appendix A, picture 9). While it was impossible for women before the struggle to come to village square without wearing *kıvrak*, now they do not wear it. Instead they wear *şalvars* and head scarves (see, Appendix A, picture 10). Another is that they now comfortably come together with men other than their family members in the public spaces of villages, which, as they state, was unimaginable for them, and unacceptable for the men in their families before the protests.

As to the question of why the Bergama movement has been highly influential in the restructuration of the local social space, it should be underlined that two factors played

the most critical roles: the depth of the dislocation in the local structures and the credibility of the anti-gold mining discourse of the movement for the peasants. The dislocation of the traditional patterns of meaning that had shaped the world of peasants opened up a terrain for political interventions. Of the two available discourses that articulated the dislocations of the peasants, it became the anti-gold mining discourse of the Bergama movement that has won the hegemonic battle. Thus, after peasants experienced a deep dislocation, they had the opportunity of organizing their lives through the reinvention of new social forms along the lines of the anti-gold mining discourse. Accordingly, a new field was constituted in the Bergama villages.

Bergama movement has also influenced subsequent mobilizations against the other mining companies. Some of the people in another town, Eşme, where another foreign mining company has been constructing a mine site, have been waging some protests against the company, and planning to start a litigation process. Thus, it can be said that Bergama movement, as the longest-running movement waged with the participation of local people, has added 'protests' to the cultural repertoire of the society as a legitimate way for local people to voice their demands.

The Bergama movement produced some effects on the mining, environmental, and foreign direct investment fields as well. However, its effects on these structures have been in the form of what social movement scholars call 'negative' and 'unintended consequences of movements' since they were not aimed by the movement actors but nonetheless emerged as the outcome of the struggle that they engaged in. The most important effect of the hegemonic struggle in wider spaces has been the re-structuration of the mining field, and in relation the environmental and foreign direct investment fields in a way that totally contrasted with the demands of the protesters. As we have seen, the Bergama protesters were confronted with the repression of their central demand for the prevention of the operation of the mine in Bergama. The response of the institutional system to this demand did not only consist in repressing it but also in tightening the legislation concerning the mining, environmental and foreign direct investment fields through the enactment of the new mining law in 2004 that made foreign investment in gold mining in Turkey more attractive in the economical and environmental senses (Mining Magazine, 2005: 3). The new law unconditionally opens up formerly protected areas, such as olive groves, coasts, forests, agricultural lands, national parks and historic sites, to mining; does not require an environmental impact study to start mining; exempts gold extraction from the Value Added Tax; and precludes the withdrawal of the mining

licences once granted. With the enactment of the new law, the government, in fact, did not only attempt to increase the attractiveness of Turkey for mining multinationals but also attempt to block potential court decisions against the operations of the gold mines on the basis of their negative environmental impacts. Thus, it is fair to say that the opposition of the Bergama movement to the structuration of the mining, environmental, and foreign direct investment fields along the lines of the neo-liberal ideology has resulted with the further structuration of these fields in line with the neo-liberal ideology and thereby, with the reinforcement of the relation of subordination between the local people and international capital.

Concerning the failure of the movement in achieving the particular aim for the prevention of the operation of the mine in Bergama, it can also be said that the Bergama movement has fallen victim of its success. Had this demand remained as a purely particular demand, it could have had the chance of being satisfied because its satisfaction would not lead to a considerable change in the institutional system<sup>116</sup>. Put differently, if the demand for the prevention of the operation of the mine had remained as a democratic demand without entering into any equivalential relation with other demands, it could have been absorbed within the existing system. But as this demand represented a large set of simultaneous demands that sought for bigger changes, such as the prevention of goldmining in the country, the prevention of the operation of foreign companies, the rule of law, democracy and so on, it was repressed by the regime because it presented a challenge to the hegemonic formation as such.

With the repression of the demands voiced by the Bergama movement, the forces of the existing system did also reinforce the relation of subordination between the Turkish state and society. As explained, Bergama movement voiced some demands for more democracy, for the rule of law, and for human rights. Through repressing these demands, the regime indicated that it would not negotiate these issues with the society. In fact, Bergama case revealed that apart from the content of the demands that were articulated by the Bergama protesters, the very act of protesting something, regardless of whether they are peaceful and conducted within the bounds of laws, is still conceived by some state authorities as unacceptable. It is the 'political' action of citizens by themselves,

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<sup>116</sup> This is in fact exactly what happened in the protest campaign that was waged in Küçükdere against the operation of a gold mine by a multinational company. The protesters in Küçükdere voiced the demand for the prevention of the operation of the mine in an isolated way, which later was satisfied by the state officials.



which empower them to some extent, that is envisaged by the state authorities as not acceptable since they seek the obedience of citizens to state authority.

Hence, in spite of being highly influential in the local context, the Bergama movement could not transform two forms of relations of subordination that it challenged. While the depth of dislocation in the local context played a critical role in the success of the movement in the local context, the dislocations that existed in the broader context did not play the same role. This is because in spite of the existence of several forms of dislocations, the broader system still had a relative structurality on the one hand, and the powerful actors of the system had a considerable ability to repress the movement and to ascribe it a marginal status through developing a populist discourse and thereby suspending existing dislocations on the other hand. As it has been outlined in Chapter 6, the Turkish socio-political context in the 1990s and early 2000s, within which Bergama movement emerged and unfolded, was structured in a very narrow way excluding the demands of various social groups. Although the system failed to absorb many political and economic demands, which made it vulnerable to the challenges of the Bergama movement, it did not experience an 'organic crisis' in these years in the sense that its all forms of representation were questioned, which posed certain limitations on the Bergama movement. More importantly, however, the system had a considerable ability to reinforce itself as it existed, and thereby, to block the attempts of the Bergama movement for the subversion of the existing system. Due to their crucial role in understanding the consequences of the Bergama movement both of these points deserve further attention.

Being not well integrated and structured in terms of hegemonizing the various aspects of social life, the institutional system in Turkey provided favorable circumstances for the emergence and expansion of the Bergama movement. As we have seen, the movement emerged and broadened through the articulation of those demands that the system failed to absorb. However, due to the relative self-structuration capacity of the system, the Bergama movement had an ambiguous position because it tried to subvert the existing system while at the same time being integrated into it. This is to say that the movement operated in the middle ground both as an insider and as an outsider. It was an insider because the existing system still had the capacity of structuring itself, but it at the same time was an outsider because it articulated the unfulfilled demands within the system and thereby tried to subvert the system. Imposing certain limitations to the movement, this ambiguous position of the Bergama movement played an important role in preventing it to achieve its ultimate ends. Mainly because of the structuration capacity of the existing

system, the movement tried to achieve its ends increasingly within the system through court orders and through urging the state officials to comply with the court orders. It seemed to the movement actors that they could attain their goals through reinforcing the written rules of the existing institutional system. In doing so, however, they failed to see that the institutional system consists of not only what written rules and regulations state but also of the ways through which, and the extent to which the rules and regulations are implemented. As we have seen, an important component of the final victory of the pro-mining bloc has been the violation of the definite court orders by the governments. At first it may seem that the governments broke the institutional rules with their refusal to comply with the court orders, however, as far as the institutional system in Turkey is considered it is seen that it is the structuration of that system in a certain way that very well prepares the ground for the ignorance of the court orders. As explained in Chapter 6, the executive power in the Turkish state system has been considerably increased with the 1982 constitution over that of the judiciary. Although it is stated in the 1982 constitution that executive authorities must comply with court orders and that they cannot alter or delay the execution of court orders (Özbudun, 2005), the system lacks effective control mechanisms that work to ensure the respect for this constitutional rule. Therefore, the executive has had a considerable discretionary power which paves the way for different sorts of authoritarian behavior, such as the refusal to comply with court orders, the refusal to respect the rules and regulations and so on. In fact, the violation of the court orders has become almost an institutionalized way since it is often resorted to by different executive authorities in governing the society. For instance, the principle decision of the Council of the Ministers, which ordered the operation of the mine in Bergama despite the existence of court verdicts on the contrary, is not unique only to the Bergama case. There are many other principle decisions taken by the different governments to by-pass court decisions (Özay, 2006).

In such a domain where the executive authorities do not remain within the legal boundaries, it is highly difficult, if not impossible, for a political movement to advance its cause on the basis of the laws. Put another way, it is difficult for a movement to advance its cause by means of struggling within the established political sites if the rules of the game through which politics is enacted in these sites are not clear due to their being subject to arbitrary decisions of the state. In fact, such systems themselves push political movements to the outside of the institutional choice arbitrarily blocking the institutional ways through which social conflicts can find a form of expression.

This is precisely what happened in the Bergama case. Refusing to comply with the court orders, the government blocked all the institutional ways for the protesters to achieve their ends. However, the system has also blocked the unconventional ways for protesters through increasing the risks and burdens of engaging in protest activities. As we have seen, although the protesters always adopted moderate forms of protests and became careful enough to remain within the bounds of the laws, the responses of the social control agencies to the protests became increasingly harsher. Particularly during the last phase of the struggle the protest activities were attempted to be suppressed through a number of ways, such as starting investigations about the protesters, diminishing protest activities by the use of violence, taking the protesters into custody, arresting some protesters, filing lawsuits against the protesters, and subjecting some of them to imprisonment.

In this way, that is, blocking institutionalized channels and repressing moderate forms of protests, the system increasingly pushed the Bergama protesters to more radical modes of expression. It, in fact, also became clear to the protesters that any step forward in the expression of their demands requires going through more radical ways, as the following statements reveal: ‘What else we can do to prevent the operation of the mine? Do we have to go to the mountains [to wage a guerilla fight]? But because we do not do that there is no way to force the state to respect our demands’ (Interview, No. 6, 2004). Similarly, “We have worked a lot to prevent the operation of the mine, but now we understand that we cannot change anything. That is, we do not have any hope,.....it is not possible to be a citizen in this country” (Interview, No. 6, 2004). Since, the movement actors were determined not to go through radical ways, they mostly gave up the promotion of their cause.

However, this is not all about the factors that prevented the Bergama movement to attain its goals. More important than blocking institutionalized ways and repressing protest activities, the system became highly successful in reinforcing its hegemony and thereby reproducing itself through the Bergama struggle. In other words, the system became able to block the challenges of the Bergama movement not only closing the institutional and unconventional ways but also developing a populist discourse and in this way suspending the dislocations that the movement expressed and ascribing the movement a marginal status. It should be emphasized here that what is meant with the reproduction of the system is different than the recomposition of the system. While the latter refers to the ability of the accommodation of dislocated demands within the dominant system through

expanding that system in a transformistic way, the former is used here to refer to the ability of a system to repress dislocated demands and thereby to reproduce itself. It is precisely in this manner, that is, repressing the demands of the Bergama movement that the institutional Turkish system reproduced and reinforced itself. What is interesting and worth underlining, however, that in repressing various demands the movement expressed, the system did not only use force but also won the popular consent to the necessity of repression. This is a highly important point not only in terms of understanding the consequences of the Bergama movement but also in terms of understanding the institutional Turkish politics, and therefore, needs further elaboration.

As it has been explained in Chapter 6, the Turkish state has almost always established an antagonistic relation with different oppositional groups envisaging them as ‘those who betray the country’, or as ‘those who attempt to divide the country’, in short as ‘enemies to be destroyed’. As far as Bergama movement concerned, this pattern was reproduced once more. As the demand for the prevention of the operation of the mine in Bergama crystallized the other demands that sought for considerable changes in the Turkish institutional system, the various forces of the status-quo, including not only governments but also judiciary and military, as well as some non-state actors such as academics, the mainstream media and so on, actively involved in the struggle and effectively antagonized the Bergama protesters. In doing so, however, they did not simply establish an antagonistic relation between the protesters and the state. But rather, they established an antagonistic relation between the protesters and the whole society. The protesters were constructed as posing a serious threat to the economic development of the country and thereby to the interests of the whole society. As explained in Chapter 9, the claims of these actors that Bergama protesters were being provoked and organized by external forces played a critical role in antagonizing the protesters. This is one of the most influential and credible strategies that has been widely used by the powerful actors in the Turkish system not only concerning the Bergama case but concerning other forms of oppositions. Whenever a challenge is posed to the system, several forces of the system begin framing it as related with the hidden intentions of some external forces to weaken and to divide the country. In doing so, they are constructing the Turkish society, which is, as mentioned, subject to considerable dislocations stemming from ethnic, religion, and class cleavages, as a ‘unified whole’, that is, a single people threatened by external enemies. Put it in different way, dichotomizing the political space in this way, as the Turkish people as a unified whole on the one side and as the external forces and the local

collaborators of external forces on the other side, the forces of the status-quo temporarily erase all the internal differences and cleavages in the Turkish society. They portray it as a strong and unified nation having a rich potential to be much stronger and therefore has always been subject to hostile attitudes of external forces. Within this picture, the role of the state becomes the repression of those who collaborating with external forces, attempt to weaken and divide this single people. It is precisely here the capacity of the institutional system for self-structuration lies because in constructing the Turkish society as a single people at an imaginary level and in constructing the state as the guardian of the interests of this people, the system blocks the challenges directed to it, and thereby, reproduces itself.

As we have seen in Bergama case, as the movement increasingly took a subversive character, several forces of the status-quo began involving in counter-hegemonic practices against the movement. They became highly successful both in presenting the operation of the mine in Bergama as compatible with the interests of the whole society, and in limiting the hegemonic openings of the Bergama movement by means of reattaching the demand for the prevention of the operation of the mine in Bergama to its original particular signified. Put differently, they became successful in presenting the prevention of the operation of the mine as serving to the interests of an external force, and in presenting the protesters as working for the interests of an external force. Although they eventually failed to evidence the allegation that protesters worked for the interests of Germany, these allegations played the most critical role in turning the public against the protesters. Thus, in spite of being not a highly structured system in terms of absorbing different social, political, and economical demands, the capacity of the institutional system not to negotiate with the Bergama protesters was high.

Hence, studying Bergama movement further helped to locate the boundaries of the institutional Turkish politics across some dimensions, such as what sorts of social demands are acceptable and what political action is regarded as a legitimate form of participation. It once more indicated that despite the democratization steps that have been taken in the last decade, democracy has not yet been seemed on the political stage in the Turkish context. There is a large democratic deficit in the existing system mainly because the system has not been attempting to fulfill the diverse forms of frustrated demands but rather has been spending its energy for repressing them. It seems that various forms of frustrated social demands are bound to persist if a profound change in the system does not take place. What is meant here with the profound change is different

than the democratization steps that have been taken by the Turkish state in its path to the EU. As the analysis of the Bergama case also made it clear, these efforts fall short of creating a system that is tolerant and open to the expression of different social demands. A profound change will take place to the extent the system regards the expression of social demands by social groups, that is, the political actions of the citizens as legitimate and to the extent it establishes institutions to channel the political actions of the citizens.

It is possible from the analysis of the hegemonic struggle of the Bergama movement to draw out some wider theoretical conclusions concerning political mobilizations. One conclusion is that it is not only the degree of structuration of an institutional system but also its capacity for repressing frustrated demands that would affect the hegemonic possibilities of movements. As the Bergama case indicated, an institutional system having considerable dislocations may well become successful in suspending, and thereby, in repressing dislocations with a populist discourse. Another conclusion is that it is not the number of demands articulated by movements but rather the content of demands that will affect the consequences of movements affecting the responses of the system. While a high number of demands that do not pose a substantial threat to a system may be absorbed by the system, a small number of demands that call for a substantial change in the system may spur repression.

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## **List of Interviews**

### **Individual Interviews**

No. 1: Sefa Taşkın, 1. 7. 2004.

No. 2: Senih Özay, 1. 7. 2004.

No. 3: Ahmet Soysal, 2. 7. 2004.

No. 4: Arif Ali Cangı, 2. 7. 2004.

No. 5: Oktay Konyar, 3. 7. 2004

### **Group Interviews**

No. 6: Narlıca Villagers, 3. 7. 2004.

No. 7: Tepeköy Villagers, 3. 7. 2004.

No. 8: Çamköy Villagers, 7. 5. 2005.

## **Newspapers**

Cumhuriyet Daily, 1990-2005

Gazete Ege, 1990- 1998

Hürriyet Daily, 1990-2005

Milliyet Daily, 1990-2005

Radikal Daily, 1990-2005

Sabah Daily, 1990-2005

Yeni Asır 1990-1998

Yeni Yüzyıl Daily, 1990-1998

Türkiye, 1990- 2005

Zaman Daily, 1990-2005

Turkish Daily News, 1996- 2005

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

Picture1. One of the First Direct Actions of the Bergama Protesters



Source: Akşam, 20 October 1994

Picture 2. The First Disruptive Protest of the Bergama Protesters -The Blockage of the İzmir- Çanakkale Highway.



Source: Gazete Ege, 16 November 1996

Picture 3. The Demonstration on the Bosphorus Bridge and the Media Attention



Source: Akşam, 27 August 1997

Picture 4. The First Half-Naked Protest in Bergama



Source: Yeni Asır, 24 December 1996



Picture 5. The Protest Control by the Police and the Gendarmerie



Source: Milliyet, 11 March 1997

Picture 6. A Newspaper Ad by the Mining Company

**Hürriyet**  
21 Ocak 1998 Çarşamba

**"Bir milletin yücelmesi, yeraltı zenginliklerinin işlenmesine ve değerlendirilmesine bağlıdır."**

**BİRİLERİ TÜRKİYE'DE ASIRLARDIR UYUYAN PETROLÜN, MADENLERİN ÇIKARTILMASINI; TÜRKİYE'NİN YÜCELMESİNİ İSTEMİYOR.**



**BİRİLERİ BU ÜLKEDEN "ALTIN" ÜRETİLMESİNİ ENGELLİYOR...**

Büyük bir Holding'ten sosyalist partilere, müteahhit ve madenci bir "sosyal-demokrat" belediye başkanından Avrupa Parlamentosu zirhına bürünmüş parlamenterlere, Türk işçilerinin serbest dolaşım hakkından korkan bir Avrupa ülkesinden eşleri milletvekillerine kadar, geniş ve "garip" bir ittifak, Türkiye'nin yerinde saymasını istiyor.

Bu ülkeyi seven sosyal-demokratları, sağcılar, solcuları, "çevrenin ancak zenginlikle" korunacağını bilen tüm gerçek çevrecileri, Türkiye'nin Avrupa yolunu açacak olan Türk dostlarını görevine çağırıyoruz.

**Bergama-Ovacık Altın Madeni**'ni karalayan bu geniş ve "garip" ittifak içinde, istemeden yer alan tüm gerçek yurtseverleri de ayrıca çağırıyoruz.

sağıdaki gerçekleri araştırın, uzmanlarına sorun... Neden "birilerinin Türkiye'de 'altın' çıkarılmasını istemediklerini" öğrenin

**EUROGOLD MADENCİLİK A.Ş.**  
"Türkiye'nin Cevherini Uyandırın"

**te gerçekler:**

"Siyanür, naylon torba yapımından, tekstile, metal işlemeden, ziynet eşyalarının imaline kadar gündelik kullanımdaki birçok ürünün üretiminde kullanılmaktadır. "Siyanür zehirli bir maddedir. Ancak gerekli önlemler alındığında, siyanürün insan sağlığına veya çevreye zarar vermesi söz konusu değildir." **Kaynak:** ODTU Maden Mühendisliği Bölümü Öğretim Üyeleri'nin Ovacık Altın Madeni konusunda Mayıs 1997'de yayımladıkları bildiri.

T.C. Çevre Bakanı Sayın **İmren Aykut**, 28 Kasım 1997'de, BERGAMA-OVACIK ALTIN MADENİ için şu açıklamayı yaptı: "EUROGOLD, dünyanın en modern ve çevreyi koruyan madenini inşa etmiş." **Kaynak:** Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 28 Kasım 1997

"Bakanlık olarak çevre standardı çok gelişmiş ülkelere bile alınmayan tedbirlerin alınmasını (Ovacık Madeni için) yeterli bulduk. Dünyada ilk defa Türkiye'de uygulaması olan bir izleme komitesi teşkil ettik. Bu izleme komitesi (...) üniversitelerde, sivil toplum kuruluşlarında, belediyelerde ve tüm ilgili kurum ve kuruluşlardan oluşuyor. (...) Bağımsız bir yapıya sahip. Tesis faaliyeti önce, isterlerse 24 saat tesisi izleme yetkisine sahiptir." **Kaynak:** T.C. Çevre Bakanlığı, Altın Madencilik ve Çevre Sorunları Konferansı'na Bakanlıkça sunulan bildiriden, Ankara, 26 Mart 1997.

"Çevre bilincinin uyanması (...) elbette iyi bir şey. Ama 'santrol' sözü duyar duymaz 'çevre' diye ayağa kalkıp bağırarak artırıncaya kadar (...) dâmenin inceliği bile yok. Böyle bir (karşı çıkma), neredeyse doğal kaynakları işletmeyen, enerjisiz, sanaysiz bir Türkiye'ye varacak. (...) (kna edilmesi gereken köylüler değil. Hangi teknoloji, kimin uzmanlığı, nasıl önlemler alınacak soruları sormadan (...) ortalığı velveleye veren 'okumus' çevreciler değil midir?" **Kaynak:** Prof. Dr. Mümtaz Soysal, Hürriyet Gazetesi'ndeki 7 Aralık 1997 tarihli yazısından.

**BERGAMA-OVACIK ALTIN MADENİ ile ilgili danışıp görüşlerini alabileceğiniz bazı "bilin ve uzmanlık" telefon numaraları ve adresleri:**

T.C. Çevre Bakanlığı Tel: (0312) 282 99 43 Etiler Yolu 8. Km. Bilkent Kavşağı Ankara  
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"Ta madencilik, ya çevre" gibi bir duyuru, ülkemiz çıkarlarına uygun değildir. Yeraltı kaynaklarımızın eklenmeye katkılarını artırarak yapılarak işletmeye bilimsel ve teknik yöntemlerle ilgili kuruluşların ve kurumların birarada çalışmaları ve bilimsel araştırmalar, üzerinde çalışılması ve gelecekte nesillerle bu kaynaklarımızın çevremizin sağlığını korumak için yapılacak çalışmaları, insan yararına olacak şekilde değerlendirilmelidir." **Kaynak:** ODTU Maden Mühendisliği Bölümü Bildirisi

**maden çevreye ve insana zarar vermeyecek; Türkiye'yi yüceltecek**

Source: Hürriyet, 21 January 1998



Picture 7. Free *İftar* Meals Offered by the Mining Company



Source: Hürriyet, 18 January 1998

Picture 8. Company Officials were Swimming in the Tailings Pond



Source: Hürriyet, 20 March 1998

Picture 9. A Bergama Peasant Wearing *Kıvrak* in one of the First Protest Actions



Source: Akşam, 20 October 1994

Picture 10. The Clothes Women Wear Instead of *Kıvrak*.



Source: Milliyet, 23 April 1997

## APPENDIX B

### TURKISH SUMMARY

Türkiye 1990'lı yıllarda ve 2000'li yılların başlarında İzmir'in Bergama ilçesinde faaliyet göstermek isteyen çokuluslu bir altın madeni şirketine karşı doğan ve gelişen bir protesto hareketine tanıklık etmiştir. Protesto hareketi başlangıçta Bergama yerelinde ortaya çıkmış olmasına rağmen ulusal ve hatta uluslararası bir katılım, destek ve önem kazanması itibarıyla yerel bir hareketin oldukça ötesine geçmiştir. Bergama köylüleri, yerel politikacılar, çevreciler, profesyonel gruplar, yerel, ulusal ve uluslararası sivil toplum kuruluşları gibi farklı toplumsal gruplar ya hareketin kurduğu altın madenciliğine muhalif söylemle doğrudan özdeşleşmek yoluyla veya hareketle kısa dönemli ittifaklar kurmak yoluyla Bergama protesto hareketine dâhil olmuşlardır. Bergama hareketi Türkiye'de doğmuş en barışçıl toplumsal hareketlerden birisi olmanın yanı sıra 1990 da doğmuş ve günümüze kadar devam etmiş olmasıyla en uzun toplumsal hareketlerden birisi de olmuştur.

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı 'Bergama Hareketi' nin 1990 ile 2005 yılları arasında sürdürdüğü hegemonik mücadeleyi anlamaktır. Bu amaca ulaşmak yönünde bu çalışmada öncelikle Bergama Hareketi'ni temelci ve özcü olmayan bir kavrayışla analiz etmenin imkanlarını sağlayacak bir kavramsal çerçeve geliştirmek hedeflenmiştir. Çalışmanın Giriş bölümünü takip eden ilk üç bölümünde yürütülen bu çabanın sonucunda Bergama Hareketi'nin analizinde kullanılan kavramsal çerçeve Ernesto Laclau ve Chantal Mouffe tarafından geliştirilmiş söylem kuramına Toplumsal Hareket kuramınca geliştirilen bazı kavramların entegre edilmesiyle oluşturulmuştur. Çalışmanın ikinci hedefi Bergama Hareketini bu kavramsal çerçeve etrafında analiz etmek olmuştur. Çalışmanın metodolojisinin açıklandığı beşinci bölümü izleyen dört bölümde Bergama hareketi sergilediği farklı özellikler bazında üç farklı döneme ayrılarak analiz edilmiştir: Hareketin doğuş dönemi (1990- Nisan 1996); güçlenme ve yayılma dönemi (Nisan 1996- Kasım 1998); ve zayıflama dönemi (1999- 2005). Çalışmanın Sonuç bölümü ise Bergama Hareketi'nin etki ve sonuçlarının tartışılmasına ayrılmıştır.

#### **Çalışmanın Kavramsal Çerçevesi**

Bergama Hareketinin analizinde kullanılan kavramsal çerçeveyi geliştirme çabasının ilk adımını ana akım Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımlarının incelenmesi oluşturmuştur. Son 50

yılda Toplumsal Hareket çalışmalarında etkili olmuş Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımları temel varsayımları bazında üç kategori etrafında gruplandırılarak incelenmiştir: Kollektif Davranış geleneği, Rasyonalist gelenek ve Toplumsal İnşa geleneği. Kolektif Davranış Geleneği başlığı altında iki Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımı ele alınmıştır. Bunlardan birincisi Herbert Blumer (1955) tarafından geliştirilmiş olan Sembolik Etkileşimci yaklaşımdır. Blumer toplumsal hareketlerin doğmasının zeminini halihazırda hüküm süren toplumsal düzenin ve yaşam biçimlerinin insanlar için tatminkar olmamasından ötürü insanların deneyimlediği toplumsal huzursuzluğun hazırladığını düşünür. Toplumsal hareketlerin artık tatminkar olmayan yaşam biçimlerini yeni yaşam biçimleri, yeni bir düzenle değiştirmeyi önererek doğduklarını ileri sürer. Toplumsal hareketlerin ortaya çıkma nedenleri ile ilgili makul açıklamalar ileri sürse de, Blumer'in geliştirdiği kavramsal çerçeve bir yandan yalnızca toplumsal ajanları dikkate alması ve toplumsal yapıyı ihmal etmesi diğer yandan toplumsal ajanları özcü bir şekilde ele alması itibariyle sorunludur. Blumer toplumsal hareketlerin doğmasında önemli rol oynadığını düşündüğü toplumsal huzursuzluğun kaynağını toplumsal yapıları hiçbir şekilde dikkate almadan bireylerarası etkileşim olarak açıklar. Bu yaklaşım toplumsal yapıların ajanlar üzerindeki etkisini tamamen ihmal etmenin yanı sıra toplumsal ajanları merkeze almak yoluyla özcü bir çerçeve sunar. Ayrıca Blumer'in kavramsal çerçevesi toplumsal hareketlerin çeşitli gruplarla, örneğin mevcut düzenin aktörleriyle, giriştikleri güç mücadelelerini tamamen ihmal eder.

Blumer'in yaklaşımının içerdiği bazı problemlerin üstesinden gelmek amacıyla Neil Smelser (1962) yapısal-işlevselci bir kolektif davranış yaklaşımı geliştirmiştir. Blumer gibi Smelser da toplumsal hareketlerin varolan toplumsal yapılar insanların beklentilerini karşılamadığı durumlarda doğduğunu düşünür. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, Smelser mevcut toplumsal yapıların toplumsal grupların isteklerini karşılamada yetersiz olması durumunda ortaya çıkan yapısal gerilimin kolektif eyleme yol açtığını iddia eder. Fakat Blumer'in geliştirdiği kavramsal çerçevenin tersine Smelser'in toplumsal hareketleri anlamak üzere geliştirdiği kavramsal çerçeve yapısal faktörlere ağırlık verir ve toplumsal ajanları büyük ölçüde ihmal eder. Bir takım sübjektif faktörlere değinmesine karşın toplumsal hareketleri toplumsal yapının bir fonksiyonu gibi ele alır ve bundan ötürü toplumsal yapıyı özelleştiren bir çerçeve sunar.

Bu çalışmada Rasyonalist gelenek başlığı altında özellikle Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde oldukça etkili olmuş üç toplumsal hareket yaklaşımı, Kaynak Mobilizasyonu yaklaşımı, Siyasi Süreç yaklaşımı, ve Çerçeveselendirme yaklaşımları, ve bu yaklaşımları

sentezleme çabaları ele alınmıştır. Bu yaklaşımların ortak özelliği hepsinin toplumsal hareketleri veya toplumsal hareketlerin aktörlerini ‘rasyonel’ aktörler olarak değerlendirmeleridir. Kaynak mobilizasyonu yaklaşımı Kolektif Davranış yaklaşımlarının tersine toplumsal hareketleri anlama çabasında toplumsal huzursuzluk veya toplumsal gerilim gibi faktörleri değil bu gerilimi veya huzursuzluğu deneyimleyen insanları protesto eylemlerine iten nedenleri anlamak gerektiğini işaret eder (Klandermans, 1997). Anthony Oberschall (1973), Jenkins ve Perrow (1977) ve John McCarthy ve Mayer Zald (1977) gibi isimler tarafından geliştirilmiş olan Kaynak Mobilizasyonu yaklaşımının temel argümanı toplumsal hareketlerin hareket aktörlerinin rasyonel davranışları yoluyla ekonomik ve ekonomik olmayan çeşitli kaynakları seferber etmesiyle ortaya çıktığıdır. Kaynak mobilizasyonu yaklaşımı toplumsal hareket aktörlerinin stratejik davranışlarına, çeşitli kaynakların toplumsal hareketlerin doğması ve gelişmesinde oynadığı role, ve toplumsal huzursuzluğun veya gerilimin tek başına toplumsal hareketlerin doğmasına yol açmayacağına dikkat çekmesi açısından toplumsal hareket çalışmalarına önemli katkılarda bulunmuş olmasına karşın toplumsal hareketlerin çok boyutluluğunu kapsayan bir kavramsal çerçeve sunmakta yetersiz kalmıştır. Toplumsal hareket aktörlerinin rasyonel davranışlarına odaklanmakla bir yandan toplumsal ajanları çıkarları bütünüyle oluşmuş homojen aktörler olarak ele alır ve özelleştirir diğer yandan ise yapısal faktörlerin toplumsal hareketler üzerindeki etkisini büyük ölçüde göz ardı eder.

Siyasi Süreç yaklaşımı Kaynak Mobilizasyonu yaklaşımı gibi toplumsal hareketleri rasyonel aktörler olarak ele almakla birlikte toplumsal hareketleri anlamak için toplumsal hareketlerin doğduğu ülkenin siyaset ve devlet yapısını anlamak gerektiğini ileri sürer. Siyasi Fırsatlar Yapısı olarak da adlandırılan bu yaklaşım Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow ve Doug McAdam gibi isimler tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Toplumsal hareketlerin doğması için birtakım siyasi fırsatların ortaya çıkmasının elzem olduğu argümanına dayanan bu yaklaşım, siyasi fırsatların ortaya çıkmasını kurumsallaşmış siyasi yapıdaki birtakım değişimlerle açıklar. Bu değişimler devletin protestolara daha müsamahakar olması; devletin siyasi baskı kapasitesinin değişmesi; ve siyasi elitin bir kısmıyla ittifaklar kurulabilmesi yolunun açılması gibi değişiklikleri içerir. Siyasi süreç yaklaşımı toplumsal hareketlerin ancak bu tür değişimler sonucu ortaya çıkan siyasi fırsatların değerlendirilmesi sonucu doğabileceğini ileri sürer. Toplumsal hareketlerin doğduğu bağlamdaki siyaset ve devlet yapısına dikkat çekmekle Kaynak Mobilizasyonu yaklaşımının dar rasyonalist çerçevesini bir ölçüde genişletmekle birlikte hem toplumsal

hareketleri rasyonel aktör olarak görmekte ısrar etmesi ve hem de siyaset ve devlet yapısının ötesinde etkili olan yapısal faktörleri tamamen ihmal etmesi açısından Siyasi Süreç yaklaşımının toplumsal hareketleri anlamak için sunduğu kavramsal çerçeve sorunludur.

Hem Kaynak Mobilizasyonu ve hem de Siyasi Süreç yaklaşımının toplumsal hareketlerin ‘anlam’ ve ‘kimlik’ üretme gibi işlevlerini tamamen göz ardı etmiş olmaları, toplumsal hareket konusunda çalışan bazı sosyal bilimcileri bu boşluğu doldurmaya sevk etmiştir (bkz. Gamson et al., 1982; Snow et al., 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988; Gamson, 1992; Morris and Mueller, 1992; Snow and Benford, 1992; Johnston and Klandermans 1995; Klandermans, 1997). Toplumsal hareketlerin anlam ve kimlik üretme işlevlerini ‘çerçeveleme’ terimini kullanarak kavramsallaştıran bu isimler temel olarak toplumsal hareketlerin hangi anlam ve kimlikleri üreterek insanları kolektif eyleme katılmaya ikna ettikleri üzerinde dururlar. Kaynak mobilizasyonu ve Siyasi Süreç yaklaşımlarındaki önemli bir eksikliğe dikkat çekmelerine rağmen Çerçeveleme yaklaşımları toplumsal hareketlerin anlam üretme faaliyetlerini tamamen rasyonel varsayımlara dayanarak enstrümental bir biçimde değerlendirirler.

Rasyonalist gelenek içerisinde yer alan toplumsal hareket kuramcıları bu gelenek içerisinde geliştirilmiş bu üç yaklaşımın bir araya getirilmesinin toplumsal hareketleri anlamada geniş ve kapsayıcı bir model oluşturacağını düşünerek bu yaklaşımların farklı sentezlerini oluşturmuşlardır (bkz. Mc Adam et al., 1996a; McAdam et al., 1996b; Tarrow, 1998; McAdam et al., 2001; Meyer et al., 2002). Ortaya konan sentetik yaklaşımlarda dört faktörün, siyasi fırsatlar, mobilizasyon yapıları, çerçeveleme süreçleri ve eylem repertuarı, altı çizilmesine rağmen siyasi fırsatlara diğer faktörler üzerinde merkezi bir önem verilmiştir. Sentetik yaklaşımlar daha kapsayıcı bir kavramsal çerçeve oluşturma çabalarının bir sonucu olmasına karşın amacına ulaşmakta büyük ölçüde yetersiz kalmıştır. Bunun en önemli nedeni sentezi oluşturulan yaklaşımların rasyonalist varsayımlara dayanma ve yapısal faktörleri göz ardı etme gibi yetersizliklerinin aşılabilmesidir.

Sentetik yaklaşımların yetersizliği bu yaklaşımları geliştiren toplumsal hareket kuramcıları farklı ve yeni bir yaklaşım geliştirmeye itmiştir. McAdam, Tarrow ve Tilly, Mücadele Dinamikleri (Dynamics of Contention, 2001) isimli çalışmalarında klasik model olarak adlandırdıkları sentetik yaklaşımların sınırlılıklarını aşmak üzere interaktif bir yaklaşım geliştirirler. Yeni yaklaşım toplumsal hareketlerin oluşum sürecine ve bu süreçte mücadeleye katılan farklı taraflar arasındaki etkileşime



odaklanmayı önerir. Klasik modelin sınırlılıkları bu modelin temel kavramlarını dinamik bir şekilde ele almak yoluyla aşmaya çalışılır. Dolayısıyla, siyasi fırsatlar ve mobilizasyon yapılarının araştırmacının objektif olarak teşhis edeceği faktörler olarak değil ama toplumsal hareket aktörlerinin yorumladığı ve kullandığı şekliyle, çerçevelendirme faaliyetlerinin toplumsal hareket aktörlerinin stratejik araçları olarak değil ama farklı aktörlerin etkileşimi yoluyla kurulan anlamlar olarak ve eylem repertuarının yalnızca mevcut repertuar değil ama eylemcilerin yaptığı yeniliklere dikkat edilerek ele alınması gerektiğinin altı çizilir. Toplumsal hareketleri siyasi fırsatların doğrudan bir sonucu olarak görmek yerine çevresel faktörlerin kolektif yorumu yoluyla oluşan bir olgu olarak görmesiyle, yalnızca toplumsal hareket aktörlerinin değil fakat mücadeleye katılan tüm aktörleri dikkate almasıyla ve yalnızca toplumsal hareketlerin nasıl ortaya çıktığıyla değil bütün bir mobilizasyon süreciyle ilgilenmesiyle McAdam, Tarrow ve Tilly'nin geliştirdikleri yeni yaklaşım klasik modelin birtakım yetersizliklerini aşar. Bununla birlikte McAdam, Tarrow ve Tilly'nin rasyonalist varsayımlardan tümüyle vazgeçmemeleri önerdikleri yeni yaklaşımı önemli ölçüde zayıflatır. Siyasi fırsatlar yerine aktörler arası etkileşime önem vermeleri önemli bir farklılık olmasına rağmen, aktörleri rasyonel aktörler olarak ele almalarından ötürü toplumsal ajanı özelleştirdikleri bir çerçeve sunarlar. Ayrıca, tarihsel ve kültürel bağlama dikkat edilmesi gerektiği yönündeki uyarılarına karşın yeni yaklaşımlarında da kurumsal siyasi yapıya öncelik verir ve tarihsel toplumsal bağlamı ihmal ederler.

Çalışmada Toplumsal İnşa geleneği başlığı altında incelenen toplumsal hareket yaklaşımları Alberto Melucci ve Alain Touraine'in Yeni Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımları olarak bilinen ve Marksizm'e karşı geliştirdikleri yaklaşımlarını içerir. Yeni Toplumsal Hareketler olarak adlandırılan hareketler sınıf hareketlerinden farklı olarak çevreci hareketlere, barış hareketine, kadın hareketine ve azınlık hareketlerine işaret eder. Melucci ve Touraine rasyonalist geleneği yoğun bir şekilde eleştirerek yeni toplumsal hareketleri anlamak için oldukça farklı ve toplumsal inşacı yaklaşımlar geliştirmişlerdir. Rasyonalist gelenekten farklı olarak bir yandan toplumsal hareketleri rasyonel aktörler olarak görmemiş diğer yandan geniş toplumsal yapıları da toplumsal hareketlerin analizinde dikkate almayı sağlayacak kavramsal çerçeveler önermişlerdir. Melucci toplumsal hareketleri homojen bir bütün olarak almak yerine toplumsal hareketlerin oluşumuna yol açan süreci ve bu süreçte kurulan kolektif anlam ve kimlikleri anlamak gerektiğini savunur. Önerdiği toplumsal inşacı perspektifle hem yapısal faktörlerin ve hem de toplumsal ajanın rolünü dikkate almaya çalışır. Touraine ise toplumsal eylemi

analizin merkezine almayı önererek yapı-ajan ikiliğini aşmaya çalışır. Her iki kuramcıda toplumsal hareketlerin analizinde rasyonalist geleneğin fazla dikkate almadığı çatışma ve güç mücadeleleri gibi faktörlere önem verir. Hem Melucci hem de Touraine toplumsal hareketlerin analizinde bir yandan geniş yapısal faktörleri ve bir yandan subjektif faktörleri dikkate alarak yapı-ajan ikiliğini aşma gayreti gösterebilirler. Toplumsal hareketlerin yapısal olarak belirlenmiş toplumsal çatışmalar etrafında doğduğunu ileri sürerek toplumsal yapıları özelleştirirler. Daha açık bir ifadeyle Melucci ile Touraine günümüzdeki toplumsal hareketlerin post-endüstriyel veya bilgi toplumu olarak adlandırdıkları günümüz toplumlarının yapılarının doğurduğu çatışmalar sonucu ortaya çıktığını savunurlar. Bu argüman bir yandan post-endüstriyel olarak tanımlanamayacak toplumlarda ortaya çıkan yeni toplumsal hareketlerin nasıl değerlendirileceği konusunda hiçbir ipucu içermediği için diğer yandan mevcut toplumsal yapıları toplumsal hareketleri doğuran zemin olarak varsaydığı için sorunludur.

Buraya kadar özetlenen ve ana akım Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımlarının her birinin toplumsal hareketleri anlamak üzere geliştirdikleri argümanların güçlü ve zayıf yanlarını ortaya koymayı amaçlayan bu inceleme sonucunda bu yaklaşımların çok değerli katkıları olmasına rağmen iki temel zayıflığı barındırdıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunlardan birincisi toplumsal hareket yaklaşımlarının toplumsal hareketler gibi bir olguyu anlamaya ve açıklamaya çalışırken yalnızca objektif olarak mevcut olan üzerine odaklanmalarından kaynaklanan ontolojik bir zayıflığa işaret eder. Bu zayıflık objektif olarak mevcut olanın aslında tarihsel ve olumsal olarak çeşitli güç mücadeleleri sonucu birtakım başka alternatifleri bastırarak kurulduğunu görememelerinden kaynaklanır. Bu zayıflıktan ötürü toplumsal hareket yaklaşımları toplumsal yapıları ve toplumsal ajanları kendinden menkul bütünlükler olarak ele alır ve böylece özcü ve temelci bir kavramsal çerçeve sunarlar. Diğer bir deyişle, toplumsal hareket yaklaşımları ya toplumsal yapıları bütünüyle oluşmuş kapalı sistemler olarak görür ve buradan hareketle bu ‘anlaşılabilir’ bütünün toplumsal hareketleri anlamlandırabileceğimiz bir temel oluşturduğunu varsayarlar veya toplumsal ajanları homojen ve yine bütünüyle oluşmuş, çıkarları ve talepleri belli özneler olarak ele alır ve toplumsal hareketlerin bu öznelerin önceden belli bir takım çıkar ve talepleri doğrultusunda oluştuğunu varsayarlar. Toplumsal hareket yaklaşımlarının ikinci zayıflığı ise yapı-ajan ikiliğini aşamamalarından kaynaklanır. Toplumsal hareket yaklaşımlarının bir kısmı toplumsal hareketleri toplumsal yapıların bir fonksiyonu gibi ele alma eğilimindeyken bir kısmı toplumsal hareketleri toplumsal ajanların genellikle ‘rasyonel’ varsaydıkları davranışlarıyla açıklama eğilimindedir.

Bu iki zayıflığı içermesine rağmen bu çalışma toplumsal hareket yaklaşımlarını bütünüyle reddetmek yerine bu yaklaşımların önemli katkılarını Ernesto Laclau ve Chantal Mouffe'un geliştirdiği söylem kuramı çerçevesinde kullanmayı önermektedir. Bu nedenle Bergama hareketinin analizinde kullanılacak olan kavramsal çerçevenin geliştirilmesinde çalışmanın ikinci adımını Laclau ve Mouffe'nin geliştirdiği söylem kuramını incelemek oluşturmaktadır. Laclau ve Mouffe toplumsal hareketlerin analizi için ana akım toplumsal hareket yaklaşımlarının zayıflıklarını aşan bir kavramsal çerçeve sunarlar. Geliştirmiş oldukları söylem kuramı bir yandan özcü ve temelci olmayan bir biçimde toplumsalın politik mücadeleler yoluyla nasıl kurulduğunu anlamamıza, diğer yandan ise politik mücadeleleri anlama çabasında hem yapısal faktörleri ve hem de sübjektif faktörleri birine diğerinin üzerinde öncelik tanımadan dikkate almamıza olanak tanır.

Laclau ve Mouffe'un geliştirdikleri söylem kuramı 'toplumsal'ın politik mücadeleler yoluyla nasıl kurulduğuna dair geniş bir perspektif sunar. Kuramın dayandığı temel varsayımlardan birisi toplumsalın yeni oluşumlara açık ve olumsal bir karaktere sahip olduğu, bir diğeri ise herhangi bir toplumsal halin oluşumunun ancak diğer alternatiflerin bastırılması, olumsuzlanmasıyla mümkün olduğudur. Daha açık ifade etmek gerekirse, Laclau ve Mouffe mevcut toplumsal hallerin tarihsel ve olumsal olarak diğer toplumsal halleri dışlamak ve olumsuzlamak yoluyla kurulduğunu ve her zaman radikal bir biçimde yeniden kurulmaya açık olduğunu ileri sürerler. Aslında politik mücadelelerin zeminini de toplumsalın yeni oluşumlara açıklığı oluşturur.

Laclau ve Mouffe'un toplumsalın politik mücadeleler yoluyla kuruluşunu açıklarken kullandıkları temel kavram 'hegemonya' kavramıdır. Her türlü özcülüğü reddederek tümüyle kurulması hiçbir zaman mümkün olmayan toplumsalın ancak herhangi bir toplumsal halin toplumsal olanı geçici ve kısmi olarak kurmasıyla yani kısmi bir toplumsal halin tüm toplumsalı temsil etme iddiasıyla hegemonyasını kurması yoluyla oluştuğunu söylerler. Kısmi bir toplumsal halin erişilmesi imkansız toplumsal bütünü temsil etmesi ancak birtakım başka toplumsal halleri olumsuzlama yoluyla görelî olarak sabitlenmiş bir anlam sistemi yani bir söylem oluşturulması ile mümkün olur. Dolayısıyla herhangi bir söylem kendinden menkul bir bütünlüğü değil ancak ne olmadığını temsil eden diğer söylemlerin dışlanması, olumsuzlanması yoluyla oluşturulan geçici bir bütünlüğü temsil eder. Söylemin bu şekilde oluşmasının koşullarını söylemin ne olmadığını, 'öteki' nin, belirlemesi itibarıyla söylem ile öteki arasındaki ilişki antagonist bir ilişkiye işaret eder. Bu ilişkinin antagonist olmasının nedeni

söylemin dışladıklarının bir yandan söylemi mümkün kılması diğer yandan ise söyleme bir tehdit oluşturmaktadır.

Laclau hegemonik mücadelelerin ortaya çıkmasının koşullarını mevcut toplumsal yapıların yetersizliğiyle açıklar. Herhangi bir toplumsal düzen bir toplumsal alanı yapılandırma kapasitesine sahip olduğu sürece bu düzeni sorgulayan ve yeni alternatifler sunan söylemlerin ortaya çıkmasının koşulları oluşmaz. Ancak mevcut düzen bu düzen içerisindeki öznelerin toplumsal taleplerini tatmin etmekte yetersiz kalıyor ise yeni söylemlerin oluşumuna zemin hazırlar. Mevcut düzen toplumsal alanı yapılandırma kapasitesine sahipken bu düzen içerisinde oluşturulmuş özne konumlarını pasif bir şekilde işgal eden özneler bu düzen yapılandırma kapasitesini yitirince toplumsalı yeniden yapılandırmak üzere ortaya çıkan ve farklı politik projeler sunan hegemonik mücadelelerle özdeşleşerek toplumsal ajanlara dönüşürler.

Laclau ve Mouffe'un söylem kuramını inceledikten sonra çalışmanın kavramsal çerçevesini oluşturmakta son adım Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımlarınca geliştirilmiş ve toplumsal hareketleri anlamada önemli katkılar sağlayan kavramları Laclau ve Mouffe'un söylem kuramına entegre etmek olmuştur. Bu çaba Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımlarında tespit edilen ontolojik ve metodolojik zayıflıkları gidermenin yanı sıra büyük ölçüde ontolojik bir karakter taşıyan ve bu nedenle ontik bir toplumsal hareket araştırmasını yönlendirmede önemli olabilecek bazı kavramlardan yoksun olan Laclau ve Mouffe'un söylem kuramının da zenginleşmesini amaçlamıştır.

Bu çalışmada toplumsal hareketler, Laclau ve Mouffe'un çeşitli çalışmalarında ortaya koymuş oldukları söylem kuramı çerçevesinde, toplumsalı yeniden ve farklı bir biçimde kurma iddiasında olan politik mücadeleler olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, toplumsal hareketler toplumsal yapıların çeşitli toplumsal talepleri karşılamada yetersizliğinden doğan kriz dönemlerinde kolektif değişim ajanları olarak ortaya çıkar ve toplumsalı oluşturdıkları söylem doğrultusunda yeniden yapılandırma çabasına girerler. Toplumsal hareket yaklaşımlarından farklı olarak söylem kuramı çerçevesinden toplumsal hareketlerin söylemleri halihazırda varolan toplumsal grupların söylemleri olarak ele alınmaz. Tam tersine toplumsal hareketi oluşturan grupların söylemin oluşmasıyla bir araya geldiği yani grubun kendisinin söylemin kurulduğu süreçte olduğu iddia edilir. Toplumsal hareketler mevcut grupların mobilize olmasıyla oluşmadığı için de grupları analiz birimi almak yerine toplumsal talep kategorisi en temel analiz birimi olarak ele alınır. Dolayısıyla, toplumsal hareketlerin mevcut hegemonik sistemlerin karşılamakta

yetersiz kaldığı birtakım toplumsal taleplerin dile getirilmesi yani bir söylem içerisinde eklemelenmesi yoluyla doğdukları öne sürülür.

Toplumsal hareketlerin halihazırdaki yapılar zayıfladığında toplumsalı yeniden yapılandırmak üzere ortaya çıkmaları toplumsal hareketlerin doğuşunu ve oluşumunu anlamak için öncelikle mevcut toplumsal yapıların çeşitli toplumsal talepleri tatmin etmede yetersiz kalmasına bir diğer deyişle zayıflamasına ve belirleyici kapasitelerinin azalmasına yol açan yapısal krizleri araştırmayı gerektirir. Laclau (1990) mevcut yapıların krize girmesini yerinden oynatma, altüst etme, şeklinde çevrilebilecek *dislocation* kavramı üzerinden açıklar. Toplumsal yapıların krize girmesi ve yerinden oynamasında toplumsal yapıya dışsal pek çok olay rol oynayabilir. Bu olayların toplumsal yapıya dışsal olmaları, yani bu yapının içsel uğrakları olmamaları yapı tarafından anlamlandırılmalarını imkansız kılar. Bu imkansızlık halihazırdaki yapıyı krize sokar ve bu dışsal olayları anlamlandırabilecek yeni söylemlerin oluşumuna zemin hazırlar. Toplumsal hareketler bu noktada toplumsalı yeniden yapılandırmak üzere yeni söylemler geliştirerek ortaya çıkarlar ve sundukları söylem toplumsal gruplarca kabul edilip benimsendiği ölçüde başarılı olur ve hegemonyalarını kurarlar. Bununla birlikte, toplumsal yapının yerinden oynaması toplumsalın belirleyiciliğinin tamamen ortadan kalktığı ve herşeyin yeniden kurulabileceği anlamına gelmez zira belirli bir yapılandırma bu durumda dahi mevcuttur (Laclau, 1990). Bu nedenle, oluşturulan yeni söylem hiçbir zaman bütünüyle baştan yaratılmış bir söylem değil ama varolan birtakım söylemsel unsurların yeniden ve farklı bir biçimde artiküle edilmesiyle oluşturulmuş bir söylem olacaktır.

Mevcut yapıların altüst olması yeni bir söylem etrafında bir toplumsal hareketin doğmasına zemin hazırlamasına rağmen toplumsal hareketlerin mutlak olarak doğmasına yol açmaz. Yalnızca toplumsal hareketlerin doğması için yapısal bir potansiyel sunar. Ayrıca, mevcut yapıyı krize sokan olaylar yeni söylemlerin oluşumunun olanaklarını sağlamasına rağmen yeni söylemlerin ne içeriğini ve ne de formunu belirlerler. Yani halihazırdaki yapıyı ve bu yapı içerisinde oluşmuş anlam ve kimlikleri zayıflatan olaylar, bu yerinden oynama sonucu oluşturulacak söylemleri belirlemez (Laclau, 1990). Başka bir ifadeyle bu olayların kendinde anlamları yoktur. Bu nedenle aynı olay çok farklı biçimlerde çerçevelendirilebilir ve çok farklı yorumlanabilir. Aslında aynı olayın farklı yorumları yeni bir anlam sistemi ve yeni kimlikler sunarak birbirleriyle yarışır. Bu anlam yükleme sürecinde organik aydınlar insanlara etraflarında cereyan eden olayları anlamlandırmalarını sağlayacak yeni söylemler sunarak yani insanların yeni durumla

başdeebilecekleri çözümler ve özdeşleşebilecekleri yeni kimlikler ortaya koyarak önemli roller oynarlar. Bir söylem ortaya koyduğu anlamlar, kimlikler, veya özne pozisyonları kabul gördüğü, benimsendiği oranda başarılı olur.

Yeni söylemin kurulmasında mevcut yapıların altüst olma durumunu deneyimleyen öznelerin karşılaştıkları problemler çeşitli toplumsal talepler olarak kurulurlar. Herhangi bir toplumsal hareket mevcut yapı tarafından karşılanmayan farklı tikel talepleri eşdeğer bir biçimde eklemlendiği ölçüde farklı toplumsal grupların hareketle özdeşleşmeleri ve böylece hareketi genişletme imkânını sağlamış olur. Farklı tikel toplumsal taleplerin bir söyleme eklemlenmesi ise ancak bu talepler ile bu talepleri karşılamayan sistem arasında anatagonistik bir ilişki kurmakla mümkün olur. Bir diğer deyişle, söylemin sınırları bu sınırların ötesinde kalanların oluşturulması yoluyla belirlenir. Tıpkı söylemin içerisinde eklemlenen talepler gibi söylemin ötesinde yer alanlar da önceden varolan ampirik kategoriler olmayıp söylem tarafından kurulurlar.

Herhangi bir toplumsal hareketin güçlenmesi ve gelişmesi yalnızca farklı tikel talepleri eklemlemesine değil ama aynı zamanda kolektif bir kimlik inşa etme kapasitesine de bağlıdır (Laclau, 2005a). Herhangi bir söylemin kolektif bir kimlik geliştirebilmesi söylemin eklemlendiği tikel taleplerden birinin söylem içerisinde merkezi bir konum kazanması ve söylemi bir bütün olarak temsil etmesine bağlıdır. Bu durumda merkezi konum kazanan tikel talep söylemin içerisinde dile getirilen herhangi bir talep olmaktan çıkar ve söylemin temeli gibi hareket eder. Herhangi bir tikel talebin söylem içerisinde merkezi, hegemonik, bir pozisyon kazanması bu talebin literal içeriğine sıkı sıkıya bağlı olmayıp diğer talepleri de temsil edebilmesi yeteneğine bağlıdır. Dolayısıyla, bütün bir söylemi temsil edebilecek tikel talep aynı anda iki farklı işlevi yerine getirir: tikel bir talep olarak kendisini temsil etme ve kendisinden farklı bütünü temsil etme. Tikel bir talep bütünü yani farklı taleplerin eklemlenmesiyle oluşmuş eşdeğerlik zincirini temsil ettiği ölçüde kendi literal içeriğinden soyutlanarak 'boş gösteren'e dönüşür. Toplumsal bir hareketin kolektif bir kimlik geliştirebilmesinde boş gösterenlerin kurulabilmesi kritik bir rol oynar çünkü kolektif kimlikler ancak boş gösterenler etrafında gelişir.

Söylem kuramının burada çok genel olarak verilen çerçevesi içerisinde Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımlarınca geliştirilmiş ve toplumsal hareketleri anlama çabasına önemli katkıları olan bir takım kavramlar kullanılmıştır. Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımlarının dikkat çektiği gibi yeni bir söylem etrafında bir toplumsal hareketin doğmasını özellikle yapısal altüst olma durumunu deneyimlemiş ve bu nedenle toplumsal bir hareketin doğmasında rol oynayabilecek aktörler için materyal ve materyal olmayan kaynakların

bulunabilirliği ve ulaşılabilirliği, bu aktörlerin içinde yer aldıkları çeşitli toplumsal ağlar, ve daha da önemlisi bu aktörlerin içinde yer aldığı toplumsal bağlamda hüküm süren kurumsallaşmış siyasi yapının toplumsal hareketlere açıklık derecesi gibi faktörler etkiler. Hareketin doğuşunu ve alabileceği formu etkileyen bu faktörlerin yanı sıra Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımları toplumsal bir hareketin doğduktan sonra bir yandan farklı hegemonik teşebbüslere diğer yandan devletin ve devletin kolluk güçlerinin harekete verdiği tepkiye karşı yürüttükleri mücadelede benimseyebilecekleri veya geliştirebilecekleri strateji ve taktikleri anlamada önemli noktalara dikkat çekerler. Özellikle toplumsal hareketlerin çeşitli kolektif eylemlerle bir yandan hareketin varlığını geniş kitlelere duyurabilmek ve diğer yandan hem otoritelere baskı yapmak ve hem de devletin kolluk güçleri tarafından engellenmeyi önlemek amacıyla yürüttükleri mücadeleyi anlamada Toplumsal Hareket yaklaşımları önemli ölçüde rehberlik eder.

### **Araştırma Yöntemi**

Bergama hareketi yukarıda özetlendiği gibi Söylem kuramı çerçevesinde Toplumsal Hareket kuramınca geliştirilmiş kavramların kullanılmasıyla oluşturulan kavramsal araçlar doğrultusunda analiz edilmiştir. Hareketin analizinde kullanılan veriler niteliksel veriler olup çeşitli dokümanlar, derinlemesine mülakatlar ve gözlem yoluyla toplanmıştır. Veri toplamada kullanılan dokümanlar Bergama Hareketi üzerine 1990 ile 2005 yılları arasında sekiz ulusal *Milliyet*, *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Zaman*, *Yeni Yüzyıl*, *Türkiye* and *Radikal*, ve iki yerel gazetede, *Gazete Ege* and *Yeni Asır*, ve 1996 ile 2005 yılları arasında bir ulusal gazetede, *Turkish Daily News*, çıkmış konuyla ilgili haberleri ve köşe yazılarını; maden firmasına ait web sayfasında ([www.ovacik-altin.com](http://www.ovacik-altin.com)) yer alan bütün dokümanları ve firma tarafından çıkarılan Ovacık adlı bülteni; protestocuların web sayfasında, ([www.geocites.com/siyanurlealtin](http://www.geocites.com/siyanurlealtin)) yer alan bütün dokümanları ve protestocular tarafından yayınlanan makale, kitap ve raporları; Bergama’da altın madeni işletilmesi konusunda düzenlenmiş çeşitli panel, sempozyum ve seminerlerin raporlarını; ve protestocuların açmış olduğu çeşitli mahkemelere dair belgeleri içermektedir. Derinlemesine mülakatlar Bergama Hareketinin doğuşu ve gelişmesinde önemli roller oynamış organik entellektüellerle, *Sefa Taşkın*, *Senih Özay*, *Arif Ali Cangı*, *Ahmet Soysal* ve *Oktay Konyar*, ve yine harekette aktif bir biçimde yer almış Bergama’lı köylülerle yapılmıştır. Organik entellektüellerle birebir mülakat yapılmış, Çamköy, Narlıca ve Tepeköy köylerinden köylülerle odak grup mülakatları

yapılmıştır. Gözlem tekniği ise Çamköy’de 7 Mayıs 2005 te protestocuların düzenlediği bir kolektif eylem sırasında kullanılmıştır.

Bergama Hareketi ile ilgili veriler Laclau ve Mouffe’un geliştirmiş olduğu söylem analizi araçları kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Laclau ve Mouffe’un geliştirmiş olduğu söylem analizi araştırmacıya yalnızca sözlü ve yazılı olarak dile getirilenlerin analizinin yapılacağı bir yöntem sunmaz. Diğer söylem analizi yöntemlerinden farklı olarak söylemi toplumsal olanla eşanlamlı olarak ele alır. Söylemin toplumsal olanı kurması, ya da toplumsalın söylemsel bir inşa olarak ele alınması, herhangi bir söylemin analizinin aslında mevcut bir toplumsal halin veya inşa edilmek istenen bir toplumsal halin analizi olması durumunu doğurur. Dolayısıyla, Laclau ve Mouffe’un geliştirmiş olduğu söylem analizi yalnızca sözel ve yazılı olarak dile getirilenler üzerinde değil ama toplumsal olanın politik yani hegemonik mücadelelerle nasıl kurulduğu veya kurulmaya çalışıldığı üzerinde durur.

Bu perspektiften söylem analizi yaparken toplumsal ve politik olanı birbirinden ayırt etmek önem kazanır. Toplumsal yapılar tarihsel ve olumsal olarak inşa edilmiş olmasına rağmen kurumsallaşmış pratiklere işaret ederken, politik olan toplumsalı kuran ve toplumsalı değiştirmeye çalışan pratiklere işaret eder. Söylem analizi temel olarak politik olanı anlamayı amaçlamakla birlikte kurumsallaşmış toplumsal yapıları da dikkate alır. Özcü ve temelci olmayan bir yaklaşımla, toplumsal yapıları incelerken bu yapıların objektif anlamları üzerinde değil fakat toplumsal olanın yetersizliklerinden, yani toplumsal olanın kurulmasında dışlanan, yer verilmeyen ve öteki olarak kurgulananlardan, yola çıkarak bu yetersizliklerin politik mücadeleler ve yeni söylemlerin doğması için nasıl bir zemin hazırladığını inceler.

Buradan yola çıkarak bu çalışma Bergama Hareketi ile ilgili toplanan verilerin analizinde temel olarak Bergama Hareketi’nin yürüttüğü politik yani hegemonik mücadeleyi anlamaya çalışmıştır. Bu amaçla hareketin oluşturduğu altın madenciliğine muhalif söylemin hangi yollarla kurulduğunu, hangi talepleri artiküle ettiğini, hangi kimlikleri kurduğunu ve hangi toplumsal grupları mobilize ettiğini, bütün bu çabada hangi söylemsel kaynaklara başvurduğunu, hareketin söyleminin 15 yıllık mücadele sürecinde nasıl değiştiğini, mevcut yapıların hareketi nasıl etkilediğini ve hareketin hegemonik mücadelesinde izlediği strateji ve taktikleri incelemiştir. Hareketin analizinde öncelikle mevcut toplumsal yapıları ve bu yapıların spesifik bir biçimde kurulmakla hangi çıkar ve kimlikleri dışladığını ve bu durumun Bergama Hareketi’nin doğmasının koşullarını nasıl hazırladığını incelemiştir. Çalışma daha sonra Bergama Hareketinin mobilizasyon süreci



üzerine yoğunlaşmıştır. Bergama Hareketinin yürüttüğü hegemonik mücadeleyi anlama çabasında bu çalışma yalnızca Bergama hareketi üzerinde değil ama aynı zamanda hareketin hedefi ve rakiplerinin harekete karşı yürüttükleri mücadele üzerinde de durmuştur.

### **Bergama Hareketi**

Bergama Hareketi üzerine yapılmış bazı çalışmalar (bkz. Öncü and Koçan, 2001; Arsel, 2003; Çoban, 2004; Arsel, 2005a) Bergama hareketinin doğuşunu Bergama köylülerinin maden şirketinin maden alanındaki hazırlık faaliyetlerine verdikleri direkt bir tepki olarak değerlendirirler. Bu değerlendirmeler şöyle bir varsayıma dayanır: madenin faaliyetleri kendi içinde köylüler için olumsuz bir anlam barındırır ve bu nedenle maden şirketi faaliyete geçer geçmez köylüler ona karşı bir hareket başlatır. Böyle bir varsayım yalnızca Bergama Hareketinin doğuşunu değil aynı zamanda Bergama hareketinin karakterini de yanlış yorumlamaya yol açar. Bergama Hareketi yalnızca köylülerin hareketi olarak ve bu hareketin dile getirdiği talep yalnızca madenin Bergama köylerinde çalışmaması talebi olarak değerlendirilir. Bu değerlendirmelerden farklı olarak bu çalışma Bergama hareketinin maden şirketinin faaliyetlerinin doğurduğu direkt bir tepki olarak değil bu faaliyetlere spesifik anlamlar yükleyen bir söylemin oluşturulmasıyla doğduğunu ileri sürer. Bu çalışmada ayrıca Bergama Hareketinin yerel bağlamda ortaya çıkmasına rağmen Bergama'daki altın madeninin işletilmesi konusunu çevrenin korunması, altın madenciliğinin genel olarak önlenmesi, yabancı ve çok uluslu şirketlerin faaliyetlerinin önlenmesi, hukukun üstünlüğü, insan hakları ve demokrasi gibi daha geniş konulara bağlayarak ve bu talepler etrafında farklı toplumsal grupları mobilize ederek yerel bir hareketin ötesine geçtiğini ve ulusal hatta zaman zaman uluslararası bir önem kazandığı ileri sürülmektedir. Bu niteliğiyle Bergama hareketi Türkiye'nin toplumsal yapısında var olan iki tür itaat ilişkisini antagonist bir ilişkiye dönüştürerek sorgulamıştır. Bunlardan birincisi neo-liberal dönüşümle oluşturulan ve uluslararası sermayenin çıkarlarına yerel halkın, çevrenin, ve doğanın üzerinde bir öncelik tanımayı içeren bir itaat ilişkisi, ikincisi ise Türkiye'nin sıradan vatandaşlarının Türk devletinin otoriter yapısına itaatini içeren bir ilişkidir. Bu itaat ilişkilerini sorgulaması itibarıyla Bergama hareketi sadece bir altın madeninin işletilmesine karşı çıkan NIMBY tarzı bir protesto kampanyasının çok ötesine geçmiştir.

Bu çalışmada Bergama hareketinin hegemonik bir mücadele yürüttüğü 15 yıllık süreç farklı özellikler sergilemeleri nedeniyle üç döneme bölünerek analiz edilmiştir:

Hareketin doğuş dönemi (1990- Nisan 1996); güçlenme ve yayılma dönemi (Nisan 1996- Kasım 1998); ve zayıflama dönemi (Aralık 1998- 2005). Hareketin doğduğu ilk dönem Bergama'nın üç köyü arasında kalan bir alanda faaliyet göstermek isteyen çokuluslu maden şirketi Eurogold'un önermiş olduğu altın madeni projesine karşı bir söylemin kurulmaya başlamasıyla birlikte Bergama hareketinin ortaya çıktığı dönemdir. Bergama hareketinin yeni bir söylem etrafında doğuşunu anlamak için bu söylemi mümkün kılan koşulları anlamamız gerekmektedir. Bergama Hareketi Eurogold'un Bergama yöresinde bir altın madeni işletmek üzere yürüttüğü faaliyetlere karşı verilen spesifik bir tepki olarak doğmakla birlikte, Bergama Hareketi üzerine yapılan bazı çalışmalarda ortaya konduğu gibi maden şirketinin faaliyetlerinin Bergama hareketini direkt olarak doğurduğu söylenemez. Bergama hareketi ile geliştirilen madene muhalif söylem bu olaya karşı geliştirilebilecek farklı söylemlerden yalnızca biridir. Nitekim, madene taraf söylemler de ortaya çıkmış ve farklı oranlarda, farklı kesimlerce kabul de görmüşlerdir.

Bir yandan Bergama Hareketi'nin hangi toplumsal hallere ve ilişkilere meydan okuyarak doğduğunu ve yürüttüğü hegemonik mücadele sürecinde başka hangi toplumsal halleri ve ilişkileri hedef aldığını anlamak diğer yandan hareketin nasıl bir kurumsal-politik bağlamda mücadele ettiğini anlamak için Türkiye'nin kurumsal politik ve ekonomik yapısını dikkate almak gerekir. Bergama Hareketinin altın madenciliği karşıtı bir söylem etrafında doğmasının koşullarını sağlayan bu yapılar hareketin doğmasına objektif olarak varoldukları şekilde değil fakat objektif olarak varolmalarını sağlayan dışlama, bastırma, öteki'leştirme mekanizmalarıyla yol açmışlardır. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, bu yapıların birtakım toplumsal talepleri ve toplumsal grupları dışlayarak, bastırarak ve öteki'leştirerek vücuda gelmiş olmaları Bergama Hareketi'nin dışlanan, bastırılan talepleri dile getirerek doğmasının yolunu açmıştır.

Pek çok 'gelişmekte olan ülke' gibi Türkiye 1980'den itibaren başlattığı neo-liberal dönüşümle dünya kapitalizminin değişen yapısına ayak uydurmaya çalıştı. Bu amaçla 1960 ve 70'lerde izlenen ithal ikameci sanayileşme politikaları terk edilerek ulusal ekonomi serbest piyasa modeli çerçevesinde liberalleştirildi. Liberal politikaların çok önemli bir ayağını yabancı yatırımlar üzerindeki kısıtlamaların kaldırılması ve yabancı yatırımları ülkeye çekecek cazip bir ekonomik ortamın yaratılması oluşturdu. Bu süreçte piyasa ve özellikle yabancı yatırımcıların oluşturduğu piyasa güçleri Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin kurulmasından bu yana arzu edilen fakat bir türlü ulaşılamayan ekonomik gelişmenin en önemli aktörleri konumunu edindiler.

Ekonomik alanda 1980’den itibaren deneyimlenen liberalleşme politik alanda hüküm sürmedi. Tam tersine Türkiye, aslında cumhuriyetin kurulmasından bu yana farklı biçimlerde hâkim olan, otoriter devlet yapısını daha da güçlendirdi. 1960 ve 70’lerin görece liberal ortamında çeşitli toplumsal talepleri dile getirme fırsatı bulan toplumsal grupları sessizleştirmek ve pasifleştirmek ve böylece hem devletin otoritesini arttırmak ve hem de neo-liberal dönüşümü sağlamak amacıyla yapılan 1980 askeri darbesinin ardından oluşturulan 1982 anayasası ile Türkiye sivil hak ve özgürlüklerin büyük ölçüde sınırlandırıldığı ve bu yolla halk kitlelerinin politikadan uzaklaştırıldığı bir döneme girdi. Bergama hareketinin doğduğu ve geliştiği dönem olan 1990 ile 1999 yılları arasındaki dönem ise bir yandan Kürt hareketi diğer yandan İslamcı hareket nedeniyle Türk devletinin hemen hemen tümüyle güvenlik kaygılarıyla hareket ettiği ve bu nedenle sivil hak ve özgürlükleri oldukça sınırlı tuttuğu bir dönem olmuştur. 1999 sonrasında özellikle Avrupa Birliği’nin çeşitli kurumlarının baskısıyla politik alanda bir takım değişiklikler yapılmasına rağmen, yapılan değişikliklerin sınırlı olması ve bürokratik ve askeri eliten direnci nedeniyle tam olarak uygulanamamasından ötürü ne Türk devletinin otoriter yapısında ne de demokratikleşme doğrultusunda önemli değişiklikler olmuştur.

Bergama Hareketinin doğmasında Türkiye’nin neo-liberal dönüşümü ve bu dönüşüm sonucu çokuluslu bir altın madeni şirketinin Bergama yöresinde faaliyet göstermek istemesi önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Bununla birlikte bu çalışmada bu faktörlerin özellikle maden şirketinin faaliyetlerinin Bergama hareketini doğrudan meydana getirdiği ileri sürülmemektedir. Bergama hareketi madene karşıt bir söylemin oluşturulması yoluyla ortaya çıkmıştır ve bu nedenle Bergama hareketini anlamak için madenin faaliyetlerinin ‘objektif’ anlamı üzerinde değil (ki kendinde böyle bir anlamı yoktur) bu faaliyetlerin maden karşıtı söylemin içerisinde aldığı anlamın üzerinde durmak gerekir. Yani çeşitli grupları madene karşı mobilize olmaya iten neden madenin kendinde taşıdığı herhangi bir anlam değil ama bu grupların madene nasıl bir anlam yüklediğidir.

Bununla birlikte madenin protestocuların söyleminde aldığı anlama geçmeden önce şu soruyu cevaplamak gerekir: madene karşıt yeni bir söylemin ortaya çıkmasının koşulları neydi? Yani maden şirketinin kendi faaliyetleri hakkında ileri sürdüğü argümanları benimsemek yerine bu grupların yeni ve farklı bir söylem oluşturmalarını hangi koşullar sağladı. Genelde Türkiye’nin neo-liberal dönüşümü özelde ise bu dönüşümün bir sonucu olarak çokuluslu bir altın madeni şirketinin Bergama’daki faaliyetleri hareketi oluşturan toplumsal grupların anlam dünyalarını altüst ederek ve mevcut kimliklerine bir tehdit oluşturarak madene karşıt yeni bir söylemin oluşturulmasına zemin hazırlamışlardır.

Bununla birlikte ne yeni söylemin oluşmasını zorunlu kılmışlardır ne de bu yeni söylemin içeriğini belirlemişlerdir.

Bu iki faktör, yani Türkiye'nin neo-liberal dönüşümü ve çok uluslu bir şirketin Bergama'da faaliyet göstermek istemesi, iki farklı *dislocation*'a yol açmıştır. Maden şirketinin faaliyetleri öncelikle Bergama halkının özellikle de köylülerin anlam dünyasında bir *dislocation*'a yol açmıştır. Hem altın madenciliği hem de çokuluslu bir şirketle ilk defa karşılaşan Bergama halkının bu oldukça yeni durumu anlamlandırmalarına imkân sağlayacak araçlara sahip olmaması bu durumu anlamlandıracak yeni söylemlerin inşası için zemin hazırlamıştır. Özellikle Bergama'lı köylülerin yıllardır sürdürmekte oldukları toprağa bağımlı hayat tarzına bağlı oluşmuş anlam yapıları madenin hemen köylerinin hatta bir kısmının evlerinin bahçelerinin sınırında göstereceği faaliyeti anlamlandırmada yetersiz kalır. Karşı karşıya kaldıkları yeni durumu anlamlandırmak ve bu durumla ilgili problemleri çözmek üzere yeni bir söyleme, yani yeni bir anlam sistemine ihtiyaç duyarlar. Madenin faaliyetlerinin diğer toplumsal gruplarda, yani çevrecilerde, akademisyenlerde ve profesyonel gruplarda, yarattığı *dislocation* daha çok bu grupların neo-liberal dönüşüm ile oluşturulan yapıdan rahatsız olmaları ve çokuluslu maden şirketinin faaliyetlerini tasvip etmedikleri neo-liberal dönüşümün bir sonucu olarak görmeleriyle ilgilidir. Bu algı neo-liberal dönüşüme olan karşıtlıklarını maden şirketine kanalize etmelerine yol açmıştır.

Dolayısıyla altın madenine muhalif yeni bir söylemin oluşmasının ve bu yolla Bergama hareketinin doğmasının koşullarını bu iki tür *dislocation* sağlamıştır. Hareketin ilk döneminde oluşan söylem bu iki tür *dislocation*'ı deneyimleyen farklı toplumsal grupların çeşitli taleplerini dile getirmeleri yoluyla oluşmuştur. Daha spesifik olarak söylemek gerekirse, Bergama hareketi ilk döneminde Bergama'daki altın madeninin faaliyetinin önlenmesi talebinin yanı sıra çevrenin korunmasına önem verilmesi talebini, altın madenciliğinin tamamen önlenmesi talebini, ve yabancı ve çokuluslu şirketlerin Türkiye'de faaliyet göstermelerinin önlenmesi talebini dile getirmiştir. Bergama yerinde ortaya çıkan madene muhalif söylemin oluşumunda başlangıçta dönemin Bergama belediye başkanı ve diğer yerel politikacılar gibi stratejik konumlara sahip birtakım organik aydınların faaliyetleri ve çabaları etkili olmuşken, Bergamalı köylülerin, İzmir'de bulunan Çevreci Hukukçular grubu, çeşitli Mühendis Odalarının İzmir şubeleri, Tabipler Birliği İzmir şubesi gibi çeşitli profesyonel gruplar ve akademisyenlerin, ve ulusal alanda faaliyet gösteren çevreci sivil toplum kuruluşlarının ve TMMOB gibi meslek örgütlerinin katılımıyla ve farklı talepleri dile getirmeleriyle

hareketin söyleminin kapsamı önemli ölçüde genişlemiştir. Aslında hareketin söylemi farklı toplumsal grupların yani yerel politikacıların, yerel halkın, çevrecilerin, akademisyenlerin ve profesyonel grupların Bergama'daki altın madeninin faaliyetinin önlenmesi, çevrenin korunmasına önem verilmesi, altın madenciliğinin tamamen önlenmesi, ve yabancı ve çokuluslu şirketlerin Türkiye de faaliyet göstermelerinin önlenmesi taleplerinin etrafında, bu talepleri dile getirerek madenin faaliyetlerine karşı çıkmalarıyla oluşmuştur. Hareketin ilk döneminde inşa edilen söylemde dile getirilen bütün bu farklı taleplerin ortak özelliği mevcut hegemonik ekonomik yapı içerisinde karşılanmamaları, tatmin edilmemeleridir. Bergama hareketinin farklı grupları çekmesinin temel nedeni tam olarak burada yani mevcut yapının tatmin etmediği birtakım toplumsal taleplerin dile getirilebileceği bir söylemsel yüzey sunmasında yatar. Hareketin söylemiyle özdeşleşen farklı grupların birleşerek bir koalisyon oluşturabilmelerinin koşulu ise bu grupların dile getirdiği farklı taleplerin eşdeğer bir biçimde maden şirketine karşı olarak eklenmesidir. Dolayısıyla Bergama hareketinin söylemi maden şirketi ile bütün bu gruplar arasında antagonist bir ilişki kurulması yoluyla inşa edilmiştir. Maden şirketinin yalnızca Bergama halkı için değil fakat harekete katılan diğer gruplar için de 'düşman' olarak kurulması şirketin bu gruplar tarafından taleplerinin karşılanmasını engelleyen neo-liberal ekonomik yapının cisimleştiği bir hedef olarak görülmesidir.

Farklı taleplerin eklenmesi yoluyla oluşturulan yeni söylemsel oluşum yabancı sermayenin engellenmesi gibi sol söylemsel unsurları ve çevrenin korunması, altın madenciliğinin önlenmesi gibi çevrecilik ile ilgili unsurları barındırması itibariyle mevcut söylemsel yapılarla bir devamlılık ilişkisi içermesine karşın bu söylemsel unsurları yeni bir şekilde spesifik bir altın madeninin operasyonuna karşı eklememesi itibariyle bir kopuşu da içerir. Mevcut yapılar oluşmakta olan hareketi yalnızca bir takım söylemsel kaynaklar sunmak yoluyla değil aynı zamanda hareketin aktörlerinin çeşitli materyal veya materyal olmayan kaynaklara erişebilirliği, hareketin aktörlerinin içinde yer aldığı çeşitli ilişki ağlarının mevcudiyeti gibi faktörlerle de etkilemişlerdir. Özellikle Bergama belediyesinin imkanları ve profesyonel grupların altın madenleri konusunda teknik düzeyde sağladığı bilgiler hareketin doğuşunda etkili olan kaynaklardır. Ayrıca profesyonel ve çevreci gruplar arasındaki ilişki ağları bu grupların kısa sürede mobilize olmalarında etkili olmuştur.

Bergama hareketinin söyleminin önemli bir parçası da hareketin aktörlerinin hareketin amaçlarına ulaşması için yürüttükleri eylemler olmuştur. İlk dönemde Bergama

hareketinin aktörleri daha çok *appeal activities* olarak adlandırılan faaliyetleri yürütmüş ve hem hareketin taleplerini ilgili otoritelere duyurmakta hem de harekete yeni katılımlar sağlamakta oldukça başarılı olmuşlardır. Örneğin uluslararası bazı aktörlerle işbirliği yaparak *transnational advocacy network* olarak adlandırılan tarzda bir ilişki ağı kurmayı başarmışlardır, hem yerel ve hem de ulusal medyanın dikkatini çekmişlerdir, ve ilgili otoritelere baskı yaparak aslında başlangıçta maden projesinde hiçbir değişiklik yapmayacağını defalarca bildirmiş olan şirketi maden projesinde değişiklik yapmaya zorlamışlardır.

Çalışmada Bergama Hareketinin ikinci dönemi olarak adlandırılan ve Nisan 1996-Kasım 1998 arasını kapsayan dönem hareketin çok daha başarılı olduğu bir dönem olmuştur. Bu dönemi ilk dönemden farklılaştıran temel faktör protestocuların dile getirdikleri taleplerin karşılanması için gerek maden şirketine gerekse devlet yetkililerine yönelik faaliyet ve baskılarını yoğunlaştırmalarıdır. Hareketin aktörlerini faaliyetlerini yoğunlaştırmaya iten temel neden tamamen durmasını istedikleri madenin faaliyetlerinin devlet ve şirket tarafından kozmetik değişiklikler olarak gördükleri birtakım değişikliklerle devam ettirilmesidir. İkinci dönemde hem protestocuların eylemlerini yoğunlaştırmaları yoluyla kamuoyunun bu hareketin varlığından haberdar olmasıyla ve hem de birtakım yeni taleplerin dile getirilmesiyle birlikte Bergama Hareketine çok çeşitli gruplar tarafından destek verilmiştir. Hareketin ikinci döneminde protestocular çok sayıda ve amacına ulaşmakta oldukça başarılı bir dizi eylem yürütmüşlerdir. Özellikle çoğunlukla köylülerin katıldığı protesto eylemleri ve yine hareketin önemli aktörlerinden çevreci hukukçuların mahkemeler yoluyla yürüttükleri mücadele harekete olan desteğin artmasında ve hareketin amaçlarına ulaşmaya başlamasında çok etkili olmuştur. Bu dönemde hareketin söylemi ilk dönemdeki taleplere ek olarak hukukun üstünlüğü, insan hakları ve demokrasi taleplerini de seslendirmeye başlamış ve harekete bu talepler etrafında da çeşitli destekler gelmiştir. Bu taleplerin hareketin söylemine eklemlenmesinin temel nedeni hareketin giriştiği mücadelede özellikle Türk devletinin takındığı tutum olmuştur. Bu döneme kadar ve bir ölçüde bu dönemde de devletin çeşitli organları ve aktörleri Bergama hareketini karşılarına almama yönünde bir tutum izlemekle birlikte protestocular bu dönemde artan bir şekilde devleti kendi yanlarında değil ama karşı tarafta görmüşlerdir. Bu algıyı belirleyen temel neden bu dönemde altın madeninin operasyonunun Danıştay tarafından verilen bir karar doğrultusunda önlenmesi gerekirken çeşitli hükümetlerin bu kararı uygulamama yönünde gösterdikleri dirençtir. Hükümetlerin Danıştay'ın kararının uygulanmasını çeşitli yollarla engellemesiyle birlikte

protestocular nihai amaçlarına ulaşma yolunda en güçlü engelin hükümetlere mahkeme kararlarına uymama yönünde bir esneklik tanıyan mevcut devlet yapısı olduğunu düşünerek devleti ikinci dönemin sonlarına doğru açıkça antagonist bir güç olarak ilan ettiler. Hukukun üstünlüğü, demokrasi ve insan hakları talepleriyle mevcut devlet yapısında olmayan ve bu yapının engellediği birtakım unsurlara işaret ettikleri için bu taleplerin hareketin söylemine dahil edilmesi aynı anda devleti antagonist bir güç olarak inşa etme yoluyla oluştu.

İkinci dönem yeni toplumsal taleplerin Bergama söylemine eklemlendiği bir dönem olmanın yanı sıra protestocular arasında ortak bir kolektif kimliğin geliştiği bir dönem de olmuştur. Ortak kolektif kimliğin gelişmesi hareketin söyleminde dile getirilen farklı tikel taleplerden birinin, Bergama yöresinde madenin operasyonunun engellenmesi talebi, merkezi bir önem kazanmasıyla mümkün olmuştur. Madenin operasyonunun engellenmesi talebinin diğer bütün talepler üzerinde hegemonyasını kurarak merkezi bir önem kazanması yalnızca literal anlamını değil aynı zamanda çevrenin korunması, altın madenciliğinin önlenmesi, çokuluslu şirketlerin faaliyetlerinin engellenmesi, hukukun üstünlüğü, insan haklarına saygı ve demokrasi taleplerini de temsil etmesiyle gerçekleşmiştir. Bu anlamda yani kendi literal anlamına sıkıca bağlı olmamak ve başka talepleri de temsil etmek anlamında madenin operasyonunun engellenmesi talebi bir boş gösterene dönüşmüştür. Bu tikel talebin hareketin söyleminin bütününe temsil eden boş bir gösterene dönüşmesiyle hareketin farklı aktörleri, Bergama'lı olmayanlar da dahil olmak üzere, bu talep etrafında gelişen kolektif 'Bergamalı' kimliği etrafında birleşmişlerdir.

Bergama hareketinin ikinci dönemde güçlenmesi ve amaçları doğrultusunda önemli kazanımlar elde etmesiyle birlikte madenin faaliyetinden yana olanlar özel olarak Bergama'daki madenin genel olarak ise altın madenciliğinin ve yabancı yatırımların önünü açmak amacıyla bir dizi faaliyet yürütmeye başladılar ve böylece Bergama mücadelesinde yeni bir dönem başladı. Çalışmada mücadelenin son dönemi olarak adlandırılan bu dönemde, madenin işletilmesinden yana olanlar, özellikle maden şirketi ve devlet yetkilileri, madene taraf bir söylem geliştirmekte ve bir maden yanlıları grubu oluşturmakta oldukça başarılı olurken Bergama hareketi bu dönemde oldukça zayıfladı. Maden yanlıları bir taraftan sadece Bergama'daki madenden yana değil ama genel olarak neo-liberal düzenlemelerden yana bir söylem geliştirerek ve bu söylemle Bergama hareketinin söylemine ciddi bir tehdit oluşturarak, diğer yandan ise protestocuları birtakım baskıcı önlemlerle sindirmeye çalışarak yoğun bir mücadeleye girdiler.

Geliştirdikleri maden yanlısı söylemi Türkiye'nin altın rezervleriyle ilgili birtakım spekülasyonlarla güçlendirip hem Bergama'daki madenin çalışmasını bütün ülkenin ekonomik refahıyla ilişkilendirip genel olarak kamuoyunu yanlarına çekmeyi başardılar hem de protestocuları yabancı bir ülkenin çıkarına çalışan üç-beş kişiye ve bu üç-beş kişinin oyununa gelen birkaç köylüye indirgeyerek etkin bir şekilde antagonize ettiler. Diğer bir ifadeyle, maden yanlıları inşa ettikleri maden yanlısı söylemle bir tarafa yabancı bir ülkenin çıkarları doğrultusunda var olduğunu iddia ettikleri 'zengin altın rezervlerinin' çıkarılmasını ve böylece tüm ülkenin ekonomik refahını engelleyen birkaç kişi olarak protestocuları, diğer tarafa ise ekonomik refahı engellenen bütün bir Türk halkını koyarak Bergama söyleminden daha populist bir söylem geliştirdiler ve kamuoyunu kendi taraflarına çekmeyi başardılar.

Bergama hareketinin son dönemde oldukça zayıflamasına yalnızca maden yanlılarının karşı-hegemonik çabaları değil aynı zamanda Bergama hareketinin kendisiyle ilgili birtakım faktörler de yol açtı. Hareketin zayıflamasında hareketin aktörleri arasındaki anlaşmazlıklar ve hareketin ulaşabildiği kaynakların azalması gibi birtakım faktörler rol oynamasına rağmen en önemli faktör hareketin söyleminde boş bir gösterene dönüşerek farklı toplumsal talepleri temsil etme kapasitesine ulaşan madenin kapatılması talebinin bu kapasitesini son dönemde artan bir şekilde yitirmesidir. Daha açık ifade etmek gerekirse, Bergama'daki altın madeninin kapatılması talebi önceki dönemde temsil ettiği altın madenciliğini önleme, çevreyi koruma, çokuluslu şirketlerin faaliyetlerini engelleme, demokrasi, hukukun üstünlüğü ve insan hakları gibi talepleri temsil etme yeteneğini kaybederek kendi literal anlamına geri dönmüştür. Bu talebin kendi tikelliğine geri dönmesinde maden yanlılarının hareketi yabancı bir ülkenin çıkarları doğrultusunda çalışan üç-beş kişinin yanılttığı ve yanlış yönlendirdiği birkaç köylünün hareketi olarak kurması, protesto eylemlerinin ağırlıklı olarak köylüler tarafından yürütülmesi nedeniyle kamuoyunun hareketi yalnızca köylülerin hareketi olarak görmesi, ve medyanın ısrarlı bir şekilde hareketi yalnızca madenin kapatılması için köylülerin yürüttükleri bir hareket olarak sunması yatar.

Hareketin zayıflamasının hareketle ilgili bir diğer önemli nedeni protestocuların, özellikle yürüttükleri protesto eylemleriyle hareketin görünen yüzünü oluşturan Bergama'lı köylülerin, çeşitli mahkeme kararları kazanmalarına rağmen hükümetlerin mahkeme kararlarına uymamakta ısrar etmesi nedeniyle yürüttükleri hareketin amaçladığı sonuçlara ulaşabileceği yönündeki inançlarını yitirmeleridir. Protestocuların



demokratik yollardan taleplerinin karşılanabileceğine olan güvenlerini kaybetmeleri pasifleşmelerine ve yürüttükleri eylemleri önemli ölçüde azaltmalarına neden olmuştur.

Bergama hareketi nihai olarak amacına ulaşamamıştır. Hareketin Bergama'daki madenin işletilmesinin engellenmesi, altın madenciliğinin önlenmesi, çevrenin korunması, hukukun üstünlüğü, demokrasi gibi dile getirdiği taleplerin hiçbirisi protestocuları tatmin edecek bir şekilde karşılanmamıştır. Bununla birlikte Bergama hareketinin dikkate değer birtakım sonuçları olmuştur. Bunlardan biri Bergama yerelinde özellikle harekete çok aktif olarak katılmış köylerde ortaya çıkan değişimdir. Köylerde etnik farklılıklar gibi geleneksel farklılıkların önüne geçen ve madene muhalif olanlar ile madene taraf olanlar arasında ortaya çıkan yeni bir toplumsal bölünme yaratmıştır. Hareketin Bergama yerelinde yol açtığı bir diğer değişim protesto eylemlerine aktif olarak katılan köylü kadınların yaşam tarzlarında ve statülerinde ortaya çıkmıştır. Aile içi statülerinin ve özgüvenlerinin arttığını belirten kadınlarda görülen diğer değişimler köylerin kamusal alanlarında kullandıkları ve bütün vücutlarını örten geleneksel giysilerini kullanmaktan vazgeçmeleri ve geleneksel olarak erkek mekânı olan köy kahvelerinde erkeklerle birlikte toplantılara katılmaları gibi değişimlerdir.

Diğer yandan Bergama hareketi madencilik, çevre ve yabancı yatırım alanlarında taleplerinin tam tersi doğrultuda bir takım değişikliklere de yol açmıştır. Devlet yeni bir maden kanunu ile koruma altında olan ormanlar, zeytin alanları ve kıyılar gibi pek çok yeri madencilığe açmanın yanı sıra şirketlerin madencilik izinlerinin mahkemeler yoluyla iptal edilmesinin önünü kapatmıştır. Ayrıca madencilik faaliyeti yürütecek yabancı şirketlere vergi muafiyetleri gibi birtakım yeni avantajlar sağlamıştır. Bergama hareketinin yerel bağlamda önemli değişiklikler yaratmasına rağmen bu alanlarda istenen değişikliklere yol açamamasının bir nedeni madenin faaliyetlerinin yerel bağlamda derin bir *dislocation*'a yol açması ama genelde bu denli derin bir *dislocation* yaratmamış olmasıdır. Ayrıca her ne kadar Türkiye'de mevcut hegemonik politik ve ekonomik sistem pek çok toplumsal talebi karşılamakta yetersiz kalsa da sistemin kendisini devam ettirme yönünde dikkate değer bir yeteneğe sahip olması Bergama hareketi gibi toplumsal hareketlerin amaçlarına ulaşmasının önünü kesmekte önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Daha açık ifade etmek gerekirse, mevcut sistemin aktörleri Bergama Hareketi örneğinde olduğu gibi, çeşitli toplumsal gruplar birtakım talepleri dile getirmeye başladığında bunu Türkiye halkının refahını, kalkınmasını, Türkiye'nin güçlenmesini istemeyen, veya Türkiye'yi bölmek isteyen birtakım güçlerin bir oyunu olarak kolayca marjinalize edip bastırabilmektedirler. Böylece mevcut sistem farklı

toplumsal talepleri tatmin edecek şekilde dönüştürölmek yerine bu talepleri populist bir söylemle bastırmak yoluyla devam ettirilmektedir.

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