THE POSSIBILITY OF ARENDTIAN ACTION:
FOUNDING NEW PUBLIC SPACES IN FATSA 1979-80 AND
THE OCCUPY WALL STREET MOVEMENT

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

MEHMET BURAK ÜNAL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

JULY 2014

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

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July 2014, 130 pages

This thesis examines the possibility of Arendtian action without a pre-established public space. The major concern is to question the mainstream understanding of the relationship between action and publicness in Arendt's framework, which identifies action as always necessitating an already-given public space. In this context, this thesis focuses on the revolutionary and founding dimensions of Arendtian action and frames it as "the creation of the new". Grounding the thesis on such framing, it is asserted that action in Arendtian sense is capable of establishing unique forms of public-political spaces even if there are not any existing spaces of deliberation and participation. To elaborate further on this debate, two cases from social and political movements are taken into account: First, the emergence of People's Committees in Fatsa which came into being with the mayorship of Fikri Sönmez in the period of 1979-80 is interpreted as an original type of public experience that demonstrates action's potential to give birth to something peculiar in human affairs. Second, the occupation of Zuccotti Park in the Occupy Wall Street Movement in the U.S. of 2011 constitutes a novel example in which action transforms a recreation site into a dynamic space of collective interaction. In addition, both cases are also reflected on with respect to certain features of Arendtian action such as spontaneity, plurality, non-violent power and non-sovereignty. Moreover, the examination of cases

provides insights to criticize certain Arendtian conceptual separations between the social and the political as well as between labor, work and action.

ÖZ

ARENDTÇİ ANLAMDA EYLEMİN OLANAKLILIĞI: FATSA 1979-80 VE WALL STREET'İ İŞGAL ET HAREKETİ'NDE YENİ KAMUSAL ALANLAR KURMAK

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Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Cem Deveci

Temmuz 2014, 130 sayfa

Bu tez verili bir kamusal alan olmadığı durumlarda Arendtçi anlamda eylemin olanaklılığını inceler. Tezin esas derdi, eylemin her zaman önceden kurulu bir kamusal alana muhtaç olduğunu öne süren, ana akım Arendtçi çerçevede eylem ve kamusallık ilişkisi okumasını sorgulamaya tabi tutmaktır. Bu bağlamda, bu tez Arendtçi eylemin devrimci ve kurucu niteliklerine odaklanır ve eylemin çerçevesini "yeni olanın yaratımı" olarak çizer. Tezi böylesi bir çerçeve üzerinde temellendirerek, herhangi bir siyasal müzakere ve katılım alanı mevcut olmasa bile, Arendtçi anlamda eylemin özgün kamusal-siyasal alan biçimleri oluşturabileceği ileri sürülmektedir. Bu tartışmayı genişletmek için, siyasal ve toplumsal hareketlerden iki olay ele alınır: İlk olarak, Fatsa'da 1979-80 döneminde, Fikri Sönmez'in belediye başkanı olmasıyla beraber ortaya çıkan Halk Komiteleri, eylemin ortak meselelerde eşsiz bir şeyler doğurabilme kapasitesini gösteren orijinal bir kamusal deneyim olarak yorumlanır. İkinci olarak, ABD'de 2011 yılında ortaya çıkan Wall Street'i İşgal Et Hareketi esnasında Zuccotti Park'ın işgal edilmesi, eylemin bir mesire alanını dinamik bir kolektif etkileşim alanına dönüştürdüğü alışılmışın dışında bir örnek teşkil eder. Buna ek olarak, her iki olay da kendiliğindenlik, çoğulluk, şiddete başvurmayan iktidar ve egemen olmayanlık gibi Arendtçi eyleme özgü belirli özelliklere göre değerlendirilir. Ayrıca, mevzu bahis deneyimlerin incelenmesi

sosyal olan ve siyasal olan ile emek, iş ve eylem arasındaki Arendtçi kavramsal ayrımları eleştirmek için önemli detaylar sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hannah Arendt, Eylem, Fatsa, Wall Street'i İşgal Et, Kamusal Alan

To Zorba…

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During my minor degree studies in politics, I found myself increasingly interested in the political thought of Hannah Arendt. The unconventional lines that Arendt drew between concepts such as labor, work and action, the social and the political as well as power and violence seemed to me very unique and a fresh perspective in political theory in order to evaluate what was taking place in the world. In addition, her relentless effort to disclose the oppositional relationship between philosophy and politics, beginning with Ancient Greece, was worth of consideration. Yet, I think, Arendt's identification of politics with action is her most impressive and peculiar remark. Such peculiarity stems from the understanding of politics as collective action, solidarity, leaderlessness, spontaneity and creativity which departs from the mainstream portrayal of politics as "competition for power between contesting sides". Moreover, a theory of action, I thought, would be a relevant tool in order to examine actual political experiences from a different point of view because in terms of shaping the meaning of politics, social and political movements had strong impacts and in the transformations of societies, such movements played crucial roles. In addition, each movement held its own dynamics, motives and originalities, and the responses to the activists vary from one context to another as well. In this regard, it was my contention that, Arendt's approach to action would constitute an alternative outlook for interpreting political struggles from a different angle.

I started reading Arendt as well as some secondary sources written about her works. At that point, I encountered a very thought-provoking argument by Dana Villa, suggesting that "For where the space of action is usurped, action in the strict sense is no longer possible" (Villa, 1992: 718; Villa, 1995: 206). Such comment was a surprising one because one of the most significant aspects of Arendtian action is natality (Arendt, 1958: 9). In other words, for Arendt, action is able to bring

novelties into our common existence in a spontaneous manner. Then one should ask, "If action can create something new in the human world, how come it could be asserted that political action is no longer possible?" Mainstream readings of Arendt actually shared Villa's comment: There was a given public space and people get out of their privately owned houses to that public to talk and appear to each other. So, action in this sense, was always taking place within an already established space for politics. However, such a stance led me to ask another question in this regard: There might be some given public spaces, yet, how were they brought into being? Did they come out of blue sky? Or did they arise out of certain legal and constitutional establishments? The answer for the last question might be yes, that is a possibility. However, was not it equally possible that action created those spaces of public appearance? If action was able to give birth to something new, could not those political spaces be the outcomes of action? Such questions allowed me to think about inverting the relationship between public spaces and action, with regard to Villa's line of argumentation. This was one of the two problematic points in Villa's assertion, in my view. The second point was about the difficulty in determining whether there were any public spaces preceding action or not. It might be the case that it is almost impossible to diagnose whether a public space or action came first. There might be an undecidability pertaining to such debate and a dynamic interplay between action and public spaces. Therefore, I started to think further about this problem, which constituted the basis for this thesis.

Limiting the scope of my research only with a theoretical discussion about the possibility of action would not be very fruitful since action was always a real happening in human world and for Arendt too, historical political events were regarded as the main sources of thinking and evaluation. Therefore, I decided to take into account certain cases of actual political movements in order to operationalize my major research question, make it more implicative and to understand the novelties that such movements brought into daylight. This kind of an effort would also contribute to criticizing certain features of Arendtian political thought and pave the way for a further revision of her conceptual distinctions (separations). So this study will not only be about trying to interpret the movements under consideration with reference to Arendt's conception of action, but also a critical dialogue between the

cases on the one hand, and Arendt on the other will be constructed in order to expose the tension between certain features of her theory and two actual cases of action.

The brief municipal era of Fikri Sönmez in Fatsa, 1979-80 is my first case of action. The changes that took place during the time of Mayor Fikri Sönmez impressed many people in Turkey. I think, particularly when exposed to Arendtian perspective of action, the experience of Fatsa becomes a very valuable exemplar. Moreover, there were only few studies about the steps taken in Fatsa but none of them approached the events from the angle of political theory. Thus, on the one hand, I pursued the interest in Arendtian theory of action, and the story of Fatsa on the other. Why not studying them together? It came to me as an appropriate research subject. It seemed that Villa's argument was contrary to what happened in Fatsa. However, including only one political event in the thesis was not sufficient since a comparison between two cases would constitute a richer source and a more profound ground for demonstrating the possibility that action might come first. With my supervisor, we decided to choose the Occupy Wall Street Movement as the second case of action: It was recent, it was hardly touched academically and it would be an interesting effort to put Occupy Wall Street into dialogue between Arendt and Fatsa as well. Although there would be certain problems in comparing two different historical periods in two different countries, I contended that there were strong common points such as political spontaneity, non-violent activism, founding new public spaces and the joy of engaging in collective matters which could very well be examined with regard to Arendtian notion of action. This probably comes from the phenomenological character of her conception of action from which, I think, Arendt disassociates contextual ties and tries to look at the very essential features of action itself. In addition, I believed that in both cases, there were unique forms of political engagement and strong role of agency against the persistent social, economic and political structures.

In the light of all these reflections, I designated the thesis as composing of three core chapters. In the following second chapter, I will elaborate on Arendt's notion of action in detail and try to frame it as "the creation of the new", by taking into account two of her major works "The Human Condition" and "On Revolution"

(Arendt, 1958; Arendt, 2006b). Initially, I will construe the term *vita activa* and the role of action in it, by considering action's relationship with other two fundamental human activities; labor and work. Referring to the biological processes of human life and natural necessities, laboring activity has life as its condition, whereas indicating the unnatural world of durable things and including the logic of instrumentality, working activity has human worldliness as its condition (Arendt, 1958: 7). Both activities are clearly distinguished from politics and action by Arendt since for her, politics does not have anything to do with necessity or instrumentality, rather it denotes the human capacity of initiation and founding (Arendt, 1958: 9). After discussing the relationship between activities within *vita activa*, I will deepen the dispute about action. It is generally contended that action carries alternative veins in different works of Arendt: The conceptualization of action in "The Human Condition" was more or less regarded as bearing existentialist characteristics with a focus on heroic display and glory, whereas in "On Revolution", action appeared as having collective, revolutionary and republican dimensions which attained a living body in the historical examples such as the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and the American Revolution of 1779. Although there is such dispute about the dimensions pertaining to Arendtian action, I believe that there is continuity between both works of Arendt with regard to action as both manage to demonstrate its "founding something new" aspect well. In this context, the term "new" might be obscure and seem to be very broad. To clarify this point, I will argue that what I understand from "new" is something dynamic and vibrant that discloses itself in the form of new relationalities, collective enthusiasms and fluid bonds of solidarity which acquire their living bodies in the spaces that they create; such is the conceptualization of action as *initium*. The examination of the cases will also make it easier to have a grasp of what "new" stands for: In the Fatsa experience, the new will be manifest in the form of a new participatory political body (namely the People's Committees), a new type of solidarity (between revolutionaries, conservatives, villagers and students), whereas in the Zuccotti Park occupations the new will take the form of an alternative public space (which used to be a site of recreation), original forms of solidarity (between students, veteran activists, black people, LGBTT people, conservatives and etc.) and a unique type of political engagement (demand-less-

ness). In this sense, the cases will be complementary in accordance with their respective contributions to the understanding of "newness" in action.

In terms of the main question of this research, I will engage in a debate on the relationship between public spaces and action. In Arendt's work, as I will assert, it is possible to find both, the understanding of a pre-given public field as the stage on which action reveals itself, and action creating and preceding the constitution of those spaces of appearance. To respond Villa's aforementioned argument about action's impossibility without a pre-established public realm under conditions of modernity - which, according to Arendt, gave rise to the social realm, blurring the distinctions between labor, work and action as well as between the private and the public realms (Arendt, 1958: 38) - I will focus on the latter sense of action in Arendtian framework, as constitutive of spaces of appearance. I will also try to deconstruct and problematize the understanding of the relationship between action and public spaces as "Which comes first?" and I will argue that action itself, without any concern for whether there are any given public spaces or not, may mark the novelties in social and political movements. Apart from the debate that will take place with reference to the major research question of the thesis, I will examine certain other features of action which are also important but which will be central especially for the discussion of cases. Such characteristics include plurality, as the worldly condition for action, non-sovereignty, non-violent power and unpredictability. Focusing on these characteristics allows me to examine each case in detail in terms of fitting and unfitting aspects with respect to Arendt's theory of action.

After establishing the theoretical ground of the study, in the third chapter, I will begin the analysis of the first case; the short revolutionary era in Fatsa in 1979-80. I will reflect on the Fatsa case with reference to academic works (Türkmen, 2006; Morgül, 2007; Bozkurt, 2008), a documentary (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007), two detailed works on the history of events (Aksakal, 1989; Uyan, 2004), a book-interview (Özden, 2013) and other sources (Erdoğan, 1998; Erdoğan 2013; Yıldırım 2008). The formation of People's Committees in the region after the elections which resulted with the victory of Fikri Sönmez as the new mayor will be regarded as a

novel example of Arendtian action since the emergence of the committees marked the beginning of something new, the foundation of an original "type of government" that was based on active involvement and direct participation. By focusing on the emergence of the committees, I will elaborate on the main problematic of the thesis by suggesting that it is more or less impossible to decide whether spontaneous action by local people or the People's Committees came first, an idea which will problematize Villa's arguments. Indeed, the act of founding the People's Committees in Fatsa where there were not any given public spaces may also be regarded as action in Arendtian sense. Furthermore, the qualities of Arendtian action such as plurality, non-sovereignty and non-violent power will disclose themselves in the detailed analysis of the committees. In addition, by introducing amplifiers which were designated to broadcast the discussions within the municipality, I will contend that the processes in Fatsa managed to bring into being a very unique sense of publicness, understood as "widest possible publicity", in Arendt's words. Later on, the organization of "End to Mud" campaign, as I will assert, will constitute a remarkable case in order to question certain conceptual separations in Arendt's political thought, such as the one between the social and the political, as well as between labor, work and action. In some cases, I will argue, these activities rigidly distinguished by Arendt might well go hand-to-hand with each other and carry one another's essential characteristics. After discussing the fight against mud, I will examine the "People's Culture Festival" as the disclosure of Fatsa to the rest of Turkey as well as one of the most crucial steps in the establishment of Fatsa narrative. In the end of the chapter, I will begin the interpretation of the "Point Operation" in Fatsa and comment on it as a suitable case that depicts the contrast between power and violence in Arendt's perspective. Such contrast in Fatsa will be discussed as remarkably fitting to Arendtian theory.

Moving on to the second case of my study, I will try to give an account of the Occupy Wall Street movement that emerged in September 2011, in the U.S., as the core of the fourth chapter. The sources consist mainly of newspaper articles, academic articles (Calhoun, 2013), two documentaries (Rise Like Lions, 2011; Occupy Love, 2012), books on the story of events (della Porta; 2013; Gitlin, 2012; Lang & Lang/Levitsky, 2012; van Gelder, 2011), Adbusters posts (Adbusters Blog

2011a; 2011b; 2011c; 2012) and the documents of the New York City General Assembly (NYCGA 2011a; 2011b; 2011c; 2011d; 2011e; 2011f; 2011g). By limiting the framework of the case study with the occupation of Zuccotti Park in New York City, I will examine the transformation of the park from a site of recreation and relaxation into a unique public space, and interpret it as an example of Arendtian action to a certain extent. Such transformation, as I will argue, fits well to the debate on the possibility of action since Zuccotti Park has not been a pre-established public space before the actual occupation itself. It was just a park. So I will argue that it was action which gave rise to an alternative space of appearance without relying on existing spaces, unleashing a peculiar sense of politics that was not state-oriented, but was based on direct participation and deliberation. Villa's thinking, in this regard, will be inverted. In addition, the political processes in the park included dimensions pertaining to acting and making at the same time, and the introduction of the language of instrumentality into public spaces will be considered as fruitful, not dangerous as Arendt would have contended. Certain dimensions of the occupations such as the heterogeneity of activists, leaderlessness, non-violence and horizontal way of organizing will be related to Arendtian features such as plurality, non-sovereignty and power. Moreover, the Zuccotti Park encampments, as I will argue, were not only about creating a political space, which found its living body in the General Assembly, but also about establishing different laboring and working environments as well. Such point will constitute a criticism against Arendtian separations within *vita activa*, as in the case of Fatsa. Probably the most striking aspect of the movement was its explicit rejection of clearly identified demands and its embracement of demand-less-ness. Rather than encapsulating the movement within passivity, I will assert that demand-less-ness founded an original way of political engagement, by making the movement difficult to be named and comprehended. Consequently, the reactions to the occupations from the U.S. government, media and police forces will be analyzed with regard to the contrast between power and violence in Arendtian framework.

The aim of this study can be summarized as following: First, by emphasizing the creative and founding aspects of Arendtian action, especially by demonstrating new modes of the public realm, I will try to break the deadlock in Villa's

argumentation, and theoretically reflect on the constitution of a different understanding of the relationship between action and public spaces. Second, by interpreting two unique, yet mainly untouched cases, I will avoid from a purely theoretical study and relate and test theory with practice. Third and last, by forming a dialogue between Arendt on the one hand, and the cases on the other, I will pursue a critical inquiry which will provoke one to revise certain assumptions in Arendtian thinking.

CHAPTER 2

ACTION AND THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL BEGINNINGS

In this chapter, Arendtian conception of action will be examined with respect to the question of political beginnings and the founding of new public spaces. The quintessential debate is going to take place with regard to the possibility of political action when there are no pre-established spaces of appearance. With a profound focalization on the natal aspect as one of the most crucial hallmarks of action, I will try to frame the concept as "the creation of the new", namely in the form of a polity, of solidarity, of a story and of political engagement. With an interpretation of action's plural and non-sovereign dimensions, the richness of the concept will be underlined and creative-revolutionary facets which action bears will be explicated. Moreover, the problematic relationship between action and labor-work, as well as that of the political and the social in Arendtian political thought will be elaborated on so as to pave the way for criticizing such separations. To constitute one of the backbones for reflecting on the reactions to the cases that I will interpret, the split tie between power and violence in Arendt's political thought will be helpful. To demonstrate these points in accordance with the possibility of action and the problem of political beginnings well, focusing on two of Arendt's major works "The Human Condition" (1958) and "On Revolution" (2006b) have substantial importance.

2.1. Essential Human Activities: Labor, Work and Action

Throwing a glance throughout the entire history of Western philosophy, what one is to come across, according to Arendt, is the subordination of the *vita activa*, the term which originally stood for the *modus vivendi* of active engagement in public-political matters, by *vita contemplativa*, that remarks the philosopher's way of life taking place in solitude outside the realm of human relations. Arendt traces this unequal and hierarchical relationship back to the times of Ancient Greece, above all to Plato, according to whom matters of the *polis* must be executed in accordance with the superior sight of the philosopher king (Arendt, 1958: 14). What Arendt observes here

is that politics and the active way of living turns out to be a means to an end which is nothing but setting by the ground with respect to the ultimate intellect of the philosophical gaze into Being. Such remarks also signify one of the most cornerstone properties of Christianity, namely the necessity to withdraw oneself from secular approximation, an abandonment that was supposed to lead the individual to the path of God. So there was an explicit negation of human movement in public. As Arendt properly suggests, both, the Ancient Greek truth of Being and the Christian truth of God, could reveal themselves only in pure human stillness (Arendt, 1958: 15). As a result, movement was secondary to stability, as speech was to silence, togetherness to solitude and most remarkably, politics to philosophy. The other side of the coin, however, in Arendt's point of view, was also problematic: Even the figures who intended to revitalize *vita activa contra* the predominance of *vita contemplativa*, such as Nietzsche and Marx, only confined themselves to a mere reversal of the existing hierarchy and thus, they contributed to the blurriness within *vita activa* itself by declaring a sole denominator for human activities (Arendt, 1958: 17). Nietzsche did that by glorifying life as the sole basis of active engagement in the world whereas Marx attributed this excessive value and world-transforming capacity to labor, by following Hegel's footsteps (Arendt, 2006a: 29). As a result, the uneven relationship between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* was reproduced. In contrast with these thinkers, Arendt's idea is that *vita activa* comprises of three elemental types of human activity: Labor, work and action, all of which are investigated in a phenomenological way by her.

To take the initial step, labor basically indicates the natural-biological processes of human life and the concern for the perpetuity of the species. Concordantly, labor bears the mentality of necessity as its core, notably in the form of "natural necessity". It is the infinite cycle of production and consumption out of which nothing durable shows up, since the end products of labor are automatically subject to immediate consumption. Hence, means-ends categories cannot be applied to the activity of labor because there is an inevitable undecidability about whether we consume in order to produce or produce so as to consume (Totschnig, 2011: 5). The human condition for the laboring activity is the life itself (Arendt, 1958: 7). Taking a second step towards another type of human activity, work, refers to the artificial and

unnatural world of things fabricated by human hands. By dint of work, human beings transcend the natural necessity embedded in the cyclical vital processes and produce lasting things in which they can move. Dissimilar to labor, the means-ends category can be employed in the realm of work and its instrumental character can be disclosed[1]. In addition to its instrumental character, work diverges from labor in terms of naturalness/unnaturalness (labor is completely natural whereas work is artificial) as well as in the sense of the durability of its products (products of work are durable whereas out of labor nothing durable emerges). The human condition for the working activity is human worldliness (Arendt, 1958: 7).

Climbing to the highest step of *vita activa*, there stands the political and the truly human type of activity: action. Contrary to labor and work, it is the sort of activity that takes place directly between men, unmediated by things themselves[2]. The vocable and sonorous "men" has vital importance here since, as Arendt claims, men (in plural) inhabit the world, not Man (Arendt, 1958: 7). This plurality is the human condition for action. Thus, action takes place within the sheer human togetherness. In other words, action necessitates the existence and presence of others if it is to be seen and heard. So by this means, it is always acting in concert. Then politics turns out to be a worldly relation, between actors themselves as well as between actors and their common political spaces. Without the company of others, it would be akin to the solitude of philosopher, a situation of muteness which has nothing to do with politics and human affairs. At this stage, Arendt utilizes etymology so as to attest the importance of togetherness in action: The term *inter homines esse*, also referred to as *inter-est*, which is Latin in origin, was used in Roman times to denominate both "to live" and "to be among men"(Arendt, 1958: 7). As a result, the way in which philosophers live is simply death since in solitude one does not move anymore among men. Therefore, living was understood as taking initiative in worldly matters with

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[1]Works of performative arts can be considered as an exception to this logic. As Arendt states, performative arts have a similarity with politics and action in the sense that both necessitate the presence of an audience and both depend on the performance itself (Arendt, 2006a: 152). So the focus on the output in the products of work is directed towards the process in performative arts.

[2] I find this term "directly between men" confusing because Arendt defines love, which destroys the *in-between* space, as also taking place directly between men (Arendt, 1958: 242). In action the relationships between actors are mediated by the political space of *in-between* since this *in-between* marks the worldly dimension of action in Arendtian sense, and such dimension is precisely what the concept of love lacks.

others. In other words, it demonstrates the tie between participation and commonality, in the sense that what was common in Roman times was also considered to be a matter of participation[3].

Moreover, *inter-est* also signifies the collectivity of interests. However, in Arendt's view, action is not considered to be about interest-seeking, neither personally nor collectively. Such a case is mainly due to the fact that the logic of interest seeking invites the mentality of instrumentality into the realm of politics, a mentality that essentially belongs to work as it is explained above and not to action. So, it is a mistake that threatens politics for Arendt. To understand this argument more clearly, it is of prodigal importance to touch onto a distinction that Arendt digs out between making and acting. According to her, initiated by Plato and Aristotle, politics has been identified and contaminated with the logic of fabrication, a process which always bases itself on means/ends relationship (Arendt, 1958: 195). The following passage, as Arendt denotes, exposes well how the confusion of making with acting took place in Plato's and Aristotle's thinking:

> …legislation and execution by vote are the most legitimate types of political action since in them men act like "craftsmen", which means that out of the process there is a tangible product and the process itself has a clear and an easily identifiable end (Arendt, 1958: 195).

In her opinion, this substitution of *praxis* (action) with *poiesis* (fabrication) is seen as a path to escape the boundlessness, unpredictability and frailty embedded in political action and the human realm. Moreover, it includes a strong will to dominate and manipulate whatever takes place in publics. The reflection of this confusion, as Villa states, can easily be seen in the modern world, especially with the developments in technology, where the mentality of means and ends provide the necessary ground of intelligibility about the world which is analyzed only in accordance with the logic of instrumentality and utility (Villa, 1995: 197). So action, with this clutter, acquires a *telos*, in other words, a purpose. This act of mixing two

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[3] It might be relevant to do another etymological exercise to demonstrate this strong relationship between commonality and action in Arendtian framework: As Tanıl Bora mentions the work of Temiz, the word *müşterek* which is essentially Arabic but also used in Turkish, signifies what is common whereas the word *iştirak* which originates from the same root as the former, signifies the verb "to participate" (Bora, 2013: 20). Therefore, politics as action turns out to be nothing but taking part in and rising one's voice up about common issues.

essentially diverse activities not only does make vague the distinction between work and action but also opens the door for the language of necessity to enter into the realm of politics. "In order to", which is a phrase concerning use that Arendt clearly differentiates from the quest for meaning in the term "for the sake of", reach one specific end, it becomes necessary to use such and such means (Arendt, 1958: 154). Moreover, as Arendt posits, this substitution led the logic of the *oikos* (the household) pervade the affairs of *polis* since the confusion of acting with making entails the introduction of the relationship between the ruler and the ruler which is an unequal relationship of domination. Furthermore, this separation of rulers and the ruled brings forth another one between knowing and acting: It is the rulers who know and do not act (in Arendt's words, who is capable of leading and beginning - *archein* or *agere*) whereas it is the ruled who do not know yet act with the guidance of the ruler (which corresponds, in Arendt's terminology, to carrying through – *prattein* or *gerere*) (Arendt, 1958: 189). Consequently action turns out to be a "business" of the rulers who are to prepare the proper formulas and plans so that the ruled shall follow. However, in action, *archein* and *prattein* are inseparably connected to each other and action, as it was explained above, excludes the mentalities that surround labor and work[4].

The fundamental reason why Arendt opposes this confusion and tries relentlessly to distinguish action from work and labor is to claim that action cannot be judged with respect to an end or a standard outside itself, but rather with respect only to that very act itself. To put it differently, it is self-contained (Villa, 1995: 21). In this context, some commentators on Arendt like Kateb and Jay, as d'Entrèves mentions, criticized Arendt due to this over-commitment in excluding interests and instrumental concerns from the field of politics (d'Entrèves, 2001: 83). Actually, it is true that the sole aim of action, according to Arendt, can only be freedom which is always freedom in action (Arendt, 2006a: 146). To act and to be free are the same, as she suggests in a straightforward manner (Arendt, 2006a: 153). Yet to argue that Arendt was blind towards the importance of instrumental dealings seems to be misleading. This is

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[4] It should be noted that Arendt's conception of action excludes labor and work from politics but not laborers and workers, as Honig claims (Honig, 1993a: 82). This is an important point to indicate the virtual openness of politics to everyone in Arendt's vision and to defend her from some charges of elitism.

mainly due to the fact that Arendt, for sure, knew that action had motives, purposive dimensions and consequences. To support this point, in a passage about equality in action, Arendt states: "The equality attending the public realm is necessarily an equality of unequals standing in need of being 'equalized' in certain aspects and for specific purposes." (Arendt, 1958: 215) This last phrase of "specific purposes" shows that she is aware of the inequalities in a certain community and the desire of equalization with respect to some certain goals and objectives. As it was argued above, acting, in its broadest sense, is always a matter of worldly *inter-est*, an affair concerning the common issues within a community. In this regard, as Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves comments, action is not an absolute negation of instrumental concerns. It is not outside interests: What Arendt claims, rather, is that action cannot be reduced to those purposeful engagements (d'Entrèves, 2001: 89). Action in this sense is always more than them. Similarly, Dana Villa asserts that, what Arendt had in mind was not the exclusion of any kind of groups in a community; rather she emphasized cultivating a sense of public spiritedness and joy of engaging in political matters which cannot be limited by instrumental concerns (Villa, 1999: 125). So action cannot be exhausted within interests since it carries an element of being "for the sake of" the common world and a strong concern for public issues as an end in itself. Yet, it should be noted that for Arendt, although action is not considered as totally negating instrumental concerns, the introduction of instrumental mentality into political spaces is considered to be a threat[5].

Apart from signifying that a worldly interest is taken, in action human beings spontaneously disclose their uniqueness and distinctness from each other. To make this point clearer Arendt applies a paradoxical formula: "We are all the same in the sense that each one of us is unique." (Arendt, 1958: 8) Action is the event in which actors insert themselves into the realm of human affairs and appear to each other through words and deeds. This appearance is in some ways akin to a metaphor of "second birth". As he is himself a story, or a narrative, men initiate another story within the plurality of actors. Through action, men become "who" they are in the

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[5] The tension between instrumentality and the display of public enthusiasm performatively will be discussed in the cases that I will focus on. I will question whether instrumentality is a threat to the existence of political action or not, by reflecting on the certain characteristics of Fatsa and Occupy Wall Street experiences.

glance of others. The notion of "whoness" is different from "whatness" that deals with the talents and gifts of someone which can remain concealed in privacy (Arendt, 1958: 179). In addition, it could be argued from an Arendtian gaze that human "whatness" remains tied within the fixed boundaries of ethnic, racial and gender identities given. Contrarily, it is the "whoness" of someone that openly discloses itself in action, where speech (word) and action (deed) are complementary: Speech is closer to revealing oneself to others than action and action is more closely connected with political beginnings than speech is. Without the company of words, action loses its revelatory character as well as its character that marks it as distinguishingly human since even robots are capable of acting without words at all (Arendt, 1958: 178). Such distinctness that human beings acquire through words and deeds is not the same as otherness which human beings share with everything that is. In contrast, distinctness is a relation of human beings only with what is alive, and it complements otherness to constitute human uniqueness (Arendt, 1958: 176). However, this focus on the creation of who in action must not be confused with tackling the question of action in terms of aesthetic performative self-creation which obviously has certain existentialist and self-centric veins. This much of an excessive focus on the self (or personality) is clearly at odds with the ineliminable collective aspect of acting together with respect to the *inter-est*, in its Arendtian glance. Moreover, while creating oneself in performative means is fundamentally about the formation of differences through artistic personal action, Arendt's notion is always of a worldly interest in the form of establishing alternative forms of solidarity, institutional frameworks, new public spaces and new forms of government. So the collective-political aspect of this "whoness" cannot be neglected: Action is always about a concern pertaining to *res publica*.

When one looks at the three different types of human activity that corresponds to *vita activa*, it can be claimed that even though work and labor are essential within the *vita activa* itself, action marks the highest step. This is simply because, as Arendt suggests, one can do well without laboring, by forcing others to do it for him/her. By the same token they can enjoy the permanent world of things without putting any single effort themselves (Arendt, 1958: 176), but a life without action and speech is simply non-human since not acting is the equivalent of death in the world of human affairs, as it was discussed above in terms of the origins of the phrase: *inter-est*.

Refraining from action is the absolute human stillness and silence, as well as a sense of insignificance about worldly matters. A life without any devotion to public-political affairs lack movement that is the sign of being human. If, then, death is the moment of absolute solitude, marked by the absence of others, it is essentially anti-political. At this point, contrary to the existentialist focus on mortality as the basis of men's essential singularity and the source of authenticity, which is put forward by philosophers such as Sartre and Heidegger, Arendt draws attention to the most original aspect of her theory of political action: natality. Rather than directing spotlights towards death as the "absolute end", Arendt points out that human political life is related fundamentally to the human capacity of initiation. To put it differently, the virtue of beginning something original and new is the name that corresponds to action. At this point, the thesis aims to assess the relationship between action and beginnings in detail.

2.2. Action as *Initium*: Founding a New Polity

Action, in its most basic sense, is the capacity of men to create something new, to set things in motion, to do the unexpected spontaneously, to take initiative within the sheer contingency of the human realm, "forging its own chain", as Arendt employs Kant's phrase (Arendt, 2007: 113). This novel characteristic of action is strongly tied with the term *arkhé*, not in terms of ruling[6] but in the original meaning of the word: Action is beginning. Being a unique emergence in the midst of the ordinary flow of things, action carries within new flows to be unleashed. It is the political activity *par excellence*. In this regard, Arendt uses the notion of natality by asserting that, with the virtue of being born into the world, men hold the capacity to begin something anew, as they are themselves unique beginnings. Interpreting the famous dictum of St. Augustine, "*initium ergo ut esset, creatus est homo, ante quem nullus fuit*", Arendt suggests that with the creation of men, the principle of beginning came into the world (Arendt, 1958: 177). This beginning is understood by her with the metaphor of miracles which are not superstitious beliefs but rather the capability of men to achieve

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[6] Some commentators on Arendt, such as the contemporary political theorist Jacques Rancière, identified Arendt's conception of action with the understanding of *arkhé* as ruling (Rancière, 2001). I find this interpretation problematic since *arkhé* in its relationship with Arendtian action is beginning but not ruling and the logic of ruling (ruler-ruled) cannot be applied to action since *archein* and *prattein*, beginning and carrying through are inseparably connected to each other in action.

the improbable and the unpredictable as long as they act (Arendt, 2007: 114). So action it its most strict sense, is unexpected which, paradoxically can be expected from each man who carries the potential to do so (Arendt, 1958: 178). Additionally, it signals the fact that action is spontaneous, in other words it is not a matter of planning, prediction and executing plans. It arises all of a sudden, by marking a beginning of something novel. Thus, through action, what is new discloses itself into the world of human affairs. At this point, clarifying the notion of "the new" becomes important: It is a dynamic and novel relationality. Through action, human beings may found new polities, bring into being new temporalities which could not be foreseen from the existing temporal structures, establish alternative relationships, set in motion new spaces of appearance and enact novel stories to be told in the realm of human affairs. In this regard, Shklar remarkably asserts: "The revolutionary spirit in action is not a random form of rebellion: It is the foundation of a new polity" (Shklar, 1998: 357). Such statement clearly differentiates between a street protest and action in Arendtian sense by emphasizing its radical and revolutionary aspects.

To understand better the founding and creative dimensions of action, it is very important and helpful to remember the distinction that Arendt makes between liberation and freedom. She claims that in order to act, one firstly has to liberate oneself from the necessities of life; in this sense, a movement of liberation is always liberation from and against something, in other words it is negative (Arendt, 2006b: 143). The argument can be developed by suggesting that opposing existing inequalities, regimes and power relations in a given political order would belong to the scope of liberation. Actually, liberation may also aim at the expansion of some rights to social groups like women, ethnicities and etc. Thus, it carries an ineliminable interest-based aspect. In other words, it is essentially instrumental. As it was seen above, Arendt carefully excludes the logic of instrumentality from action as she differentiates *poiesis* and *praxis* clearly. Therefore, the logic of liberation has nothing to do with political action apart from being the precondition of it and if a liberation movement remains entirely negative, it means that there can be no revolutionary and creative potential embedded in it. Unless liberation develops into action, the opposition based on liberation might diminish slowly with reforms and some changes, but the existing regime continues, by evolving to a different point

after the opposition. The logic of action-reaction prevails, as Gambetti states, and the existing relationships are reproduced, albeit in a different shape (Gambetti, 2009b: 7). On the other hand, in contrast to liberation, freedom, which is nothing but freedom in action as it was discussed previously, is the positive and creative point which might follow a successful liberation movement. This founding moment of action is the very essence of politics in Arendtian sense. In contrast to the evolutionary potential of liberation movements, in the sense of making the existing regime evolve to a different point, political action is the revolutionary potential to create a new type of government, new relationships or new public spaces unexpectedly.

This potential to create something new unexpectedly, however, must not be confused with Aristotelian dichotomy between *dunamis* and *energeia*, the former of which also stands for potentiality. Arendtian action cannot be reduced to a linear and a teleological model like Aristotelian one, in which what comes to actuality, has already been included in the potentiality (Arendt, 1978: 30). As a spontaneous miracle and an unexpected newness, action takes place within the contingency of human relations and it disrupts the logic of cause-effect by resisting explanation. Hence, the framework of linearity cannot be applied to action itself. Of course, this is not to mean that there can be no explanation at all for action: *Post eventum* explanations can always be found but not because, as Honig uses Franz Rosenzweig's phrase, "miracle is not a miracle", but rather, "explanation is explanation" (Honig, 2009: 98). The point is simple: Action cannot be foreseen with respect to the given chain relations of cause-effect and to the understanding of time as the continuum of past-present-future. At this stage Arendt asks a remarkable question in order to support the claim of unpredictability and newness of action: Is it possible for somebody to claim that a composer's specific symphony was possible, before he actually did compose it? (Arendt, 1978: 30) Given the musical notes, themes, measures and etc., is it really possible to forecast beforehand the singular novelty that emerges out of that symphony? Action takes place with regard to a similar logic: As the emergence of the new in the contingent human realm, it cannot be estimated and it arises unexpectedly by creating new motions in political sense.

Following this line of argumentation against the linear model, it becomes possible to differentiate action from choice with respect to pre-given alternatives. The framework of freedom of choice is problematic since it turns out to be unable to deal with "the creation of the new" in action because as Bergson states, by accepting the fact that alternatives are given, the proponents of freedom of choice (or free will) presume the logic of "events-followed-by-events", which is indeed the main idea determinism defends, and therefore in that game, determinists always win (Bergson, 2001: 173). In other words, by accepting time as space, by substituting movement, newness and contingency with the linear clock time and by confusing the qualitative with the quantitative, the arguments of free will proponents still move within the confines of space, not time. Thus, their arguments become self-defeating and by being identified with the preference in accordance with pre-given alternatives, action loses its natal aspect and gets lost in the chain of determinism. Confusion of time and space, in the context of this chapter, turns out to be the confusion of action and behavior, the latter of which will also be dealt later on. To conclude this paragraph, it can be suggested that the discussion between free will proponents and determinists automatically falls short in grasping the novelty of action in its Arendtian sense.

The miraculous natality in action, however, should not also be regarded as a mythical dream of an absolute rupture or a total break within the continuum of history. This "fiction" of a *creatio ex-nihilo*, is originally Judeo-Christian that was basically based on the belief of a divine intervention breaking down everything that is, and creating a new order out of blue sky: Understood in this sense, action bears messianic veins but as Kalyvas argues, Arendt was certainly against this sort of imagination, by suggesting that men's ability to change things is not unlimited (Kalyvas, 2008: 223). Actually, action is limited by the very fact of the world we share and the human realm in which it takes place. The culture, language, values and norms inherent within the spaces where action emerges are very relevant. Such an argument does not indicate that these elements determine action, but rather action, at least to make some sense and to acquire intelligibility, is not in a position of absolute exteriority with respect to the established order (nor is it absolutely interior). Otherwise, action would simply be impossible to articulate, meaningless and thus, insignificant in terms of worldly affairs. In other words, it would remain in the silence of a void which is incapable of

relating with the existing order of things. Furthermore a divine and a messianic occurrence, holds upon the fiction of an eschatological break with everything that there is, it is dangerously absolute in the sense that it calls for a violence for the destruction of this world, a call which is essentially anti-political (Kalyvas, 2008: 226). The implications of the religious tones embedded in the dream of a total rupture were indeed present even in its allegedly secular versions, notably in the French Revolution, which, according to Arendt, aimed at a total negation of the past and tried to establish an absolute break with it (Arendt, 2006b: 74). Yet, dialectically speaking, the absolute negation of the past turned out to be its absolute affirmation: The acts of French Revolutionaries to erase the previous regime indeed served its intensification in a new shape with all the violence and terror the revolution carried within. Likewise, it is noteworthy that one of the fundamental pillars behind the rise of totalitarian regimes was due to the assumption that "Everything is possible" (Arendt, 1973: 427). Hence, asserting that Arendtian action is capable of creating *ex nihilo* is nothing but injecting a dangerously totalitarian element into it. Understood in this manner, totalitarianism carries a strong longing for emancipating the species from its world-bound human condition as well as a desire of omnipotence of the Man, as "the master and center of everything that is", who can do almost everything. In contrast, action as a new beginning is never a creation out of nothing. It always takes place within the world and the flow of mundane occurrences.

The relationship of the spontaneous novelty in action with the routine flow of ordinary life is much complex. On the one hand, action interrupts the mechanical functioning of prevailing temporal continuum, as if "the actors were thrown out of the temporal order and its continuity" (Arendt: 2006b, 206). In other words, action commences new worlds and "forges new chains" which are simply different from the existing ones. On the other hand, action can be seen, heard and narrated by those who remain within the context of the ordinary. To put it differently, action relates with the normal course of events. Referring to this unique relationship, Nedimović remarkably claims: "Action is both inside and outside time continuum; it is inside since it can be seen and shared, whereas it is outside as it enacts new temporal forms" (Nedimović, 2005: 10). To simplify this seemingly complex idea, it could be asserted that action departs from what is ordinary in the sense that it is an unexpected peculiar experience.

However, that peculiar experience is not alien: The original moment of action can be witnessed, discussed, criticized or transformed into a permanent story. From a similar vein, Honig maintains that action has the capacity to blur certain binary oppositions such as extraordinary-ordinary (Honig, 1993a: 114). So, action turns out to have a double meaning: It can be considered as "ordinarizing the extraordinary" as well as "extraordinarizing the ordinary". It has the former capacity by establishing lasting institutions and juridical frameworks, i.e. the revolutionary capacity that action carries within can be translated into durable and permanent channels. Whereas it is able to do the latter since in action ordinary acts (such as introducing oneself to one another), as well as the capacities to promise and to forgive, which will be dealt later on, may acquire original and extraordinary meanings. It should be noted that this double meaning of Arendtian notion of action does not indicate that the actors themselves hold the intellectual intention of "Let's shake the boundaries". Rather, it demonstrates that action has the capacity to lead towards some consequences which might expose the tensions within dualities according to Honig (Honig, 1993b: 529).

At this very point, it becomes possible to think that Arendtian notion of action with a focus on natality can be used against other essential dualities that prevail in her theories throughout her life. Perhaps reading Arendt *contra* Arendt, the impasses in her views can be reevaluated and discussed under a new light. What I intend to mean here is that action as "the creation of the new" can establish new relationalities between what is public and what is private, between labor, work and action as well as between necessity and freedom, the political and the social[7]. This does not mean that action can eradicate the boundaries within a specific duality. It rather means that in action, the line that separates what is public and private can be redrawn with new meanings and for example in action one can see that the sharp distinction between necessity and freedom is not that sharp and there are points of interplay between them. To put it briefly, action, with respect to its consequences, can play with those boundaries.

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[7] Interplays between binary oppositions will not be dealt in detail in this theoretical chapter. However, the following chapters which aim to examine two different cases will shed light on this issue by showing the blurring taking place in the context of action.

Therefore, action is the name of creating new things in a revolutionary manner and setting them in motion, bringing into being new relationalities, as well as demonstrating novel forms of solidarity in spaces which emerge immediately in action. Such political spaces indicate an important conception which Arendt stresses as the fields of disclosure for action and freedom; the spaces of appearance. In this regard, the strong relationship between politics and public appearance in Arendtian political thought will be the next focus of the thesis.

2.3. Politics as Direct Public Appearance

In action, as it was discussed earlier on, the actors disclose themselves as well as exposing their unique and distinct aspects to the gaze of the others with respect to the collectively binding *inter-est*. This very appearance constitutes the basis of politics which is, according to Arendt, is a matter of appearance and nothing else. To put it simply, in politics, appearance constitutes what men conceive as reality. Reminding Machiavelli's dictum "Appear as you may wish to be", Arendt seems to refer to the idea that politics is about wearing masks and engaging in public activity (Arendt, 2006b: 101). That very mask constitutes human identity through acts and words and there is nothing beyond it, at least nothing relevant to politics. Appearance is the mask that human beings desire to disclose to others under the spotlights of public. What French Revolutionaries did, in terms of this discussion, was to "unmask" the "hidden" and display everything that remains under the shadows in the light of public, according to Arendt: This act of "grasping the real intentions behind the deed" (which can be encountered easily even in daily political discussions), transformed personal, private and intimate matters into political ones and let the dirt in hypocrisy contaminate the entire field of politics (Arendt, 2006b: 96). So to claim that there is something behind the mask which holds relevance to politics, has the danger of privatizing the public and suddenly turning everybody against everybody, out of which the threat of domination in the realm of politics may arise. Furthermore, to emphasize the importance of appearance and its relationship with politics, it is valuable to mention Arendt's argument concerning the issue of poverty which is generally understood as an economic problem (even can be social). She suggests that the problem for the poor is not that they are disapproved, excluded, hated, exploited

in the production processes or something else but rather they are simply not seen (Arendt, 2006b: 69). They basically do not appear to the others. Therefore, reading poverty from a unique Arendtian glance, the underlying problem of the poor becomes not of an economic one but rather a political one which is related by Arendt to appearance. To wrap up this part, it can easily be said that, one cannot be said to exist, in a worldly and political manner, unless one appears.

If action in its Arendtian sense is appearing to others, it is then appearance through direct participation. It is taking initiative in a courageous manner and going out of privately owned households for the sake of taking active role in public-political matters. The ones who participate in politics appear whereas those who do not raise their voices remain concealed. This point has vital importance since it includes a radical criticism of the representational models of politics. First criticism is that, in "On Revolution", Arendt argues that *doxa*, partial opinions which men form in the realm of politics, cannot be represented at all: They can only be created through a process of open deliberation with the presence of plurality of actors in political spaces (Arendt, 2006b: 268). Opinions simply do not exist in the representational mechanisms. What can only be represented instead, are interests which include personal well-being as well as wealth that are essentially private concerns, thus, lacking any sense of publicness (Arendt, 2006b: 268). Besides this first criticism, the second argument against representational models is that the "by no means new" distinction between the representatives and the represented invokes the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, which is not only apolitical but also anti-political since the relationship of ruling, carrying an element of domination, belongs to the realm of private, not public, with the threat of eliminating togetherness and plurality in political arenas. Additively, dividing the community between those who rule and who are ruled is reminiscent of the Ancient Greek substitution of acting with making: It was discussed in the previous parts, as Arendt asserts, identifying politics with the logic of execution causes politics to be understood simply as the preparation and production of the best formulas to reach some higher ends. Consequently, the distance between the ruler and the ruled keeps the understanding of politics in which parties are against one another, standing in contrast to the Arendtian understanding of politics in which actors are with one another.

Against these clear oddities that the mentality of representation has with direct political action, Arendt valorizes and glorifies the creation of revolutionary councils through action in the aftermath of several revolutions such as the revolutionary government in the midst of Parisian Commune in 1871, the formation of soviets in Russia in 1905 and the council system that emerged all of a sudden in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution (Arendt, 2006b: 262). Such revolutionary bodies are means of opinion formation and active political engagement as spaces of appearance, spaces which are unmediated and open to immediate participation. The matter at stake here is not a constant and continuous dealing with public matters. The main idea is, rather, to keep open the spaces of appearance so that everybody would hold the equal opportunity to participate in collective problems and to protect freedom so that action can flourish and freedom can go on shining under public gaze.

In this context, the first meaning of the term public is that everything which appears in them can be seen and heard by everybody and has the "widest possible publicity" (Arendt, 1958: 50). This focus on publicity is important because one appears only in public realm and not in private/nor in social. In the private realm one is bound to cope with the necessities of life and all biological processes of human body. In other words, life, as opposed to the common world that human beings inhabit, constitutes the reality within the household. In his privacy and subjectivity, men are not *inter-esse*[8], but rather are against the urgent needs that surrounds him. In the private realm, a man can be said to inhabit, not the world, but the earth, which stands for the general conditions of the organic life. Apart from the private realm, the social which emerges with the rise of modernity and goes hand-in-hand with the developments in the technological processes, blurs the distinctions between the public and the private. As a result, society (or the social) tends to exclude appearance through words and deeds, by exchanging it with the predictability of behavior (Arendt, 1958: 40). With the rise of society, the world itself hardly had the power to gather men together and to create durable common bonds between them. It can be

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[8] It could be argued that in the private and social realms human beings also come together as well. Familial relations within the household and professional relations within the social environments can be regarded as examples in this context. However, what Arendt understands from the conception of *inter-esse* has an ineliminable political aspect referring to participation in collectively binding matters. Thus, *inter-esse* turns out to belong solely to the realm of public and not the realms of private and social since these latter two lack any sense of politics in Arendtian framework.

useful to remind ourselves of a widely known motto of Marx "All that is solid melts into air", in order to apply to the context of Arendtian analysis of society, although Arendt hardly related it to capitalism as Marx did. All enduring bonds between men and all senses of permanence provided by action within the world are in danger of being perished either by being marginalized or by being contaminated with the language of necessity within society.

The second meaning of the word public is simply the world upon which men live and share with each other (Arendt, 1958: 52). However, it is not the world in its natural, astronomical sense but rather it denotes the common human artifice that was created in action. It is the *in-between* of human relationalities. At this point Arendt uses the metaphor of a table, a table which appears to human beings as they sit on their partial chairs (*doxa*) in the presence of other chairs to which the world discloses itself differently and uniquely as well. In addition, this table has the function of binding and separating men from each other at the same time (Arendt, 1958: 52). Without sitting on our chairs around the table, having a chair to sit or a table to sit around, human beings are simply not seen by the others and they are incapable of displaying their individuality since the public realm is the only place where men could show who they really and irrevocably are (Arendt, 1958: 41). So the table is the table of distinctness and uniqueness. Moreover, as Arendt defines it, it is also a space of equality which is always equality in action (Arendt, 1958: 32). Acting men reveal their equal ability to act and speak by disclosing the inequalities in the community that is "in need of being equalized". This equality is not equality before law but rather the same claim to political activity, called as *isonomia* in Ancient Greece (Arendt, 2007: 118). Without this assumption of equality in action, first of all, distinction becomes impossible simply because equality constitutes the basis as a measurement for distinction itself (Arendt, 2007: 67). Secondly, the public realm becomes akin to the private realm, which is the field of inequality and mastery over one's needs which must be dominated.

As a result, politics in Arendtian framework is understood as direct participation and appearance in public through words and deeds in the company of others. However, how is the relationship between action and public spaces, which

were defined above, established? Does action necessitate the existence of a preceding public realm in order to be performed? Or is it action which is able to give rise to alternative publics? May it also be the case that it is almost impossible to establish a relationship of "Which one precedes the other?" between them? These questions, by basing themselves on the major problematic of the thesis about the possibility of action without a pre-established public space, will be the next concern for this study and will be dealt in the following part.

2.4. Action or Public Spaces: Which Comes First?

In his text "Hannah Arendt: Modernity, Alienation and Critique", Dana Villa argues that, Arendt has a strong "anti-modernist" vein (Villa, 1997: 200). This is mainly because of fact that Arendt underlines the world-alienation created by the process of technological advancements which based itself on the idea of absolute human mastery of the world. Such mastery can be read as a rebellion against the human condition. In other words, the developments in technology has gone so far to claim that "Everything is possible" together with a sense of applicability, signifying that even the most fundamental worldly conditions of human existence are subject to change. The dream of a totally anthropologized world, which Hegel and Marx shares as Villa puts it, is one of the core tenets of modernity and it constitutes the very basis of world alienation (Villa, 1997: 185). Thus, this process of de-worldization of the common human world, introduces the logic of technological necessity and instrumentality into the public spaces, blurring the differences between labor, work and action. As a result of the language of necessity leaking into the political scene, interest based social (or private and personal[9]) demands seem to dominate public spaces. Hence, under the conditions of modernity, common *in-between* spaces become destroyed. From such line of argumentation, Villa goes on to assert that "For where the space of action is usurped, action in the strict sense is no longer possible" (Villa, 1992: 718; Villa, 1995: 206). According to Villa's thinking, then, action

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[9]The focus on the inequalities within the household, especially in the student movements and Second-Wave Feminism between 60's and 70's with the famous motto of "The personal is political" tried to bring into daylight the obscured inequalities within the private. But as Zaretsky points out, in those years, the only work in which this tendency of "making political more intimate" was not seen and where there still is a distinction between political and private was the work of Arendt (Zaretsky, 1997: 226).

always takes place within a given public space of disclosure. In other words, the constitution of political spaces precedes the performance of political action and the emergence of action is regarded as dependent on the presence of public realms. Assuming the primacy of the public realm over action, Villa's stance has its roots in Arendt's conceptualization of Ancient Greek *polis* state. In "The Human Condition", Arendt tends to define the public realm in Greece as the condition for individual and agonistic display and distinction among peers (Arendt, 1958: 41). Satisfying their vital necessities in their households - *oikos* -, those who were brave enough to get out of their privacy and appear to equals through words and deeds entered into the public realm and engaged in political activity. There was a political space there, so action was possible, as Villa would have argued in relevance. However, this way of thinking is disputable for four main reasons: First of all, if public spaces of appearance were regarded as preceding action, then the question "How such political spaces came into being?" would arise and constitute a strong challenge. Did they come out of blue sky? Or were they the results of certain legal and constitutional establishments? The answer to the last question might be yes, but then it follows: Could not it be equally possible that the existing public spaces were created in and by action? This question allows me to move to the second problem pertaining to Villa's argument: If action is a beginning which is capable of creating something novel and founding an alternative polity, is not it possible to invert the relationship between public spaces and action that Villa establishes, by saying that it is indeed action which gives rise to public stages? If the answer is no, then would not it be equal to neglecting to a certain extent the natal dimension of action if it is asserted that action cannot establish spaces of appearance but only be performed in a given one? What is the ground of denying men's capacity to do the unexpected since he himself is a beginning? These kinds of questions, I think, demonstrate that action may also be evaluated as the source of public realm. Third problem about Villa's assertions is that, Arendt herself provides different outlooks about the relationship between action and public spaces. In "The Human Condition", as it was mentioned above, there is a sense of action which is made possible by a preceding public stage, namely the Greek *agora*. Yet, in the later parts of the book, while defining what action is, Arendt gives a remarkable stance:

> …comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action and therefore predates and precedes all formal constitution of the public realm and the various forms of government, that is, the various forms in which the public realm can be organized (Arendt, 1958: 199).

The significance of such quotation stems from its identification of action as preceding the coming into being of public spaces. As Moruzzi claims relevantly, action creates the free space of the political, and the community of individual political actors who share it (Moruzzi, 2010: 19). In other words, by coming out of their privately owned realms and interacting with each other in a political manner through words and deeds, men constitute spaces of appearance. Those spaces last as long as men act and if action ceases to exist, the space of appearance disappears immediately. Thereby, the public spaces of appearance are dependent on action. So, action turns out to be solely based on the gathering of people through words and deeds and not on a pre-established space of appearance. From a similar vein, as a response to the claims developed by Villa, Craig Calhoun suggests that Arendtian action does not necessarily presuppose an established public space but on the contrary, action is also capable of creating alternative ones (Calhoun, 1997: 232)[10]. In this regard, Calhoun underlines the need to focus on the creative and positive dimension of political action to revitalize its natal aspect. To elaborate this point, it is beneficial to look at a short phrase of Arendt about the spaces of appearance: "…because it (a public space) ultimately resides on action and speech, never altogether loses its potential" (Arendt, 1958: 200). For her, as long as there are men, who are, by being born into this world, entitled with the capacity to give birth to something drastically new, the possibilities pertaining to action and thus, to the creation of alternative spaces do not cease to exist. Every newcomer into the world which men share and inhabit is capable of initiating something new, enacting a unique story and setting things in motion. Thus, declaring that "Action is no longer possible" under conditions of modernity becomes very disputable. Fourth and final problem about the alleged impossibility of action without a given public space is due to the following question: Is it really an easy task to determine whether there are any

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[10] A relevant debate regarding Villa's and Calhoun's arguments mentioned in this part, can be found in Zeynep Gambetti's article, "Conflict, 'Commun-ication' and the Role of Collective Action in the Formation of Public Spheres", which has been a thought-provoking source of inspiration for this thesis (Gambetti, 2009a, pp. 91-115).

existing public spaces preceding action or not? How such diagnosis can be made? It is true that in some cases an established public realm might make further action possible on the one hand, and action may give birth to alternative spaces of appearance by itself on the other. Yet, such separation carries the danger of turning into a deadlock of "chicken and eggs" type and getting lost in a vicious cycle. In reality, some cases might disclose the fact that it is indeed undecidable whether action or public spaces came first. Rather, they might co-emerge and go hand-to-hand with each other in actual experiences, as it will be manifest and more clarified during the interpretations of the cases of this thesis.

To sum up this part, I believe, the allegations about the impossibility of action in Arendtian sense according to Villa are remarkably problematic. Neglecting to focus on its founding aspect and its capacity to set novel things in motion, and arguing that action is not possible without a given political space is disputable. By defining the framework of action as *initium* in the previous part of this chapter as well as questioning Villa's line of thinking, I argue that action may also give birth to alternative public spaces and sometimes, there might be indecisiveness about which one comes first. Now, I will start elaborating on certain other characteristics of Arendtian action such as plurality, non-sovereignty and power all of which will be crucial in examining the cases. Plurality -the existence of alternative partial opinions - as the worldly condition for human action will be my following focus in this chapter.

2.5. Action and Plurality: The Indispensability of Different Worldviews for Politics

In action, plurality of actors discloses itself and action makes plurality appear. Men engage in public-political matters with partial ideas which constitute this multitude in the spaces of appearance. If the world is a table, to continue Arendt's own metaphor, that table both connects and separates us from one another, we each sit on our own unique chairs to which the table discloses itself in various shapes respectively. This unique appearance of the world to each one of us is called *doxa*, which originates from Ancient Greek *dokei-moi*, literally meaning "as it appears to me" (Arendt, 1990: 80). What Socrates, in Greek *agora*, was actually doing was not

making other citizens, with whom he was in a dialogue with, closer to the Truth, but rather he was giving birth to their *doxa*, making them aware of their partial opinions (Arendt, 1990: 81). In this regard, Socratic questioning was not aiming truth, simply because in the realm of politics, one is not supposed to be concerned with the question of the absolutes or the Truth, as it was discussed earlier on. Regarding the importance of the quest for the Truth in Ancient Greece as the ultimate step of the philosophers' journey, Arendt suggests that this was nothing but a way for them to escape the "noise" within the polis as well as the contingency of human affairs: The path towards the Truth can be passed in sheer solitude, a Truth which is possible only in silence (Arendt, 1958: 15). Such mute aspect of the Truth is clearly at odds with appearing to the others through speech which is one of the essential features of politics in Arendtian sense. However, the philosophical longing to find the Absolute ground of Truth is inhumane since it can only be grasped outside the plurality of human affairs and communication. In Arendt's view, this "hatred" towards the contingency, multifacetedness, speech and the matters of polis in general, was caused by the trial of Socrates where his philosophical insights were treated as mere *doxa*, which any other citizen also bears, by the juridical organ and he was punished by the common-ordinary rule of *polis* law: There emerged a conflict between the philosopher and the *polis*, between philosophy and politics, between the Truth and *doxa* (Arendt, 1990: 73).

As a result of this confrontation, politics became an issue of making and ruling instead of acting and speaking in the works of Plato and Aristotle, according to Arendt's reading, as it was mentioned previously. Only the means-ends relationship embedded in the process of making counts whereas the plurality of partial opinions of each and every common citizen are considered to be "lacking", "untruthful" and even "dangerous". Those who know politics are to be the rulers of the city and to give guidance to ordinary citizens who do not know what they do. This main logic that dates back to Ancient Greek times can easily be seen in the contemporary era too since politics is considered to be as a work or an occupation which is executed by those who are called politicians. To elaborate on this point it is useful to mention what Arendt writes regarding the notion of "professional revolutionaries" in her examination of the relationship between revolutionary councils and parties: In contrast

with the spontaneous emergence of action, the professional elite tries to transform action into a simple issue of execution (Arendt, 2006b: 263). With their problem-solving mechanisms and pre-given formulas, they intended to show the correct path in order for revolution to be successful. So the true revolutionaries who initiate and begin something anew are to follow the way that the professionals determine instead of following the path they opened themselves. Thereby, in the hands of the professionals, action simply becomes a mathematical question: Formulas, plans and predictions prevail in politics, but not spontaneity which was one of the main features of the councils where party membership played no role at all (Arendt, 2006b: 263).

Moreover, the discussion about professional revolutionaries signifies another significant point in terms of the relationship between action and plurality: Action in its essential meaning cannot be reduced to a single ideology or a particular world view. To put it differently, any sort of –ism, let it be in the form of a political ideology such as communism or liberalism, or in the form of a philosophical movement such as existentialism cannot have claims of absolute validity in the public spaces. Since all of the aforementioned –isms, try to explain the world and reality in terms of an essential denominator (such as the class struggle, the individual or existence), they are bound to remain within the limits of metaphysics. Thence, such metaphysical frameworks can be considered as dangerous for politics in Arendtian sense since any claim with regard to absolutes, carries the threat of closing down the public fields of appearance by eliminating the channels of persuasion and debate. In other words, reducing politics to the domain of an ideology would be nothing but the destruction of politics altogether if for politics plurality and the presence of different worldviews are indispensable, as it is for Arendt. Such reasons behind the conflict between ideologies and politics as Arendt understands it are also valid for the relationship between identity-politics and plurality as the condition of action. It could be argued from an Arendtian perspective that identity politics, like ideologies and philosophical movements, tend to cultivate certain problems in terms of politics since they carry within themselves the potential to naturalize, stabilize and fix the identities that they try to defend. Such a potential is an obvious threat to the plurality in a public space with respect to the framework which Arendt provides. In contrast with identity-politics, it is Allen's contention that Arendt's own point of view tries to develop a framework of solidarity which is against

essentialism and exclusion (Allen, 1999: 98). The matter at stake here is not that Arendt was blind towards the problems that the excluded groups in society were facing. To emphasize the importance of identities for political struggle, she remarked that "If you are attacked as a Jew, you have to defend yourself as a Jew, not as a human being" (Arendt, 1994: 12). So she was aware of the significant role that identities play in communities. However, although Arendt did not neglect identities, what she understood from action was not going to public and asking only for Jewish (or Women's and Workers') rights. Rather, action is the moment in which Jews and other groups are expected to create new identities, bonds of solidarity and common public spaces to be shared. These *in-between* spaces, as Disch asserts, stand for the "same but non-identical" object of public concern which is not based on an organic-common nature (Disch, 1997: 143). To put it differently, the basis of that public object, *res publica*, does not consist of group identities but rather the formation of different perspectives on the same issue through public debate. Therefore, understood in this manner, Arendtian notion of plurality entails both an element of sameness and an element of difference: It is the same world which discloses itself to us as a common matter, or as the table *in-between* our chairs, and this same world appears to each one of us differently. In Allen's words, there is a tension between what is same and what is different (Allen, 1999: 105). Without the same public object that stands *in-between*, there is no possibility for distinction since only by debating a common problem, a variety of angles discloses itself. On the other hand, without the presence of alternative outlooks, what is common turns out to be what is not common but rather belonging to a single idea. To elaborate this point with respect to the table metaphor, it could be said that if there is only one chair around the table, then the table cannot be defined as the common *in-between* space but rather it pertains to the one who sits on that sole chair.

The holder of that single chair might be understood as referring to the concept of sovereignty which is at odds with what Arendt denotes as plurality because, as it was discussed in this part, plurality is the essential element of action which cannot be reduced to the framework of a single ideology, single identity or any kind of singularity, with which the notion of sovereignty has a certain affinity. Therefore, the next part of this chapter is dedicated to the examination of the conflictual relationship

that Arendt establishes between politics and action on the one hand, and the concept of sovereignty on the other.

2.6. Action as Non-Sovereign: Is There Any Doer Behind the Deed?

In political theory, the concept of sovereignty plays a significant role and it prevails throughout the works of political theorists such as Jean Bodin and Carl Schmitt. Yet, for Arendt, the notion of sovereignty, which she defines differently, carries certain dangers for the existence of politics. These problematic implications can be divided into three headings: First, the sovereign instrumentalizes politics in order to reach one's specific ends. In the hand of the sovereign, politics degenerates into *poiesis* and ceases to be *praxis* (Arendt, 1958: 305). This exhaustion of action within the rationale of instrumentality sweeps away the very essence of political action that Arendt tries to reveal because as it was discussed earlier on, the meaning in action was to be found in that very act itself. Attributing an identifiable end to political action, the meaning becomes transferred to the end itself to which action turns out to be subordinated. Second, the underlying mentality behind sovereignty actually belongs to the private realm of necessities signifying the need for mastering them in order to be able to take part in public matters. The relationship between the ruler and the ruled reigns over the realm of privacy recognized as a relationship which is predicated on inequality, subordination and domination (Arendt, 1958: 32). To put it differently, sovereignty entails an unequal relationship of master and slave where neither equality nor freedom can appear. Third and most importantly, the term sovereignty has a non-ignorable element of "Oneness", which hauls a Totalitarian potential against the plurality in the spaces of appearance (Arendt, 1958: 234). By destroying the common space of *in-between* which men in plural share with each other, sovereignty aims at ultimate domination. Plurality vanquishes and melts.

This one dimensionality also bring into the question of political leadership. Understood in the sense of being non-sovereign, Arendtian action does not have a leading group or a person, since it would be nothing but attributing a sovereign to the action itself. To show the importance of leaderlessness in action, Arendt quotes from the Hungarian professor telling the United Nations Commission: "It was unique in history, that the Hungarian revolution had no leaders. It was not organized; it was not

centrally directed." (Arendt, 1958b: 8) This leaderlessness is mainly due to the fact that, Arendtian politics is based on the formation of opinions through words and deeds in the public realm. There are at least as many potential world views as the number of people that inhabit the world. With one another, human beings are to establish permanent bonds and lasting institutions to protect the very existence of their togetherness and plurality. However, assuming a sovereign behind action necessarily destroys this plurality since it divides people into the sovereign and the others, between which there is a relationship of inequality, as it was explained in the previous paragraph. The sovereign tends to rule, dominate and create obedience in the population. It is inclined to make people against each other, instead of the "being with" embedded in togetherness.

Furthermore, as Arendt carefully relates them, there is a link between the notion of sovereignty and the faculty of willing. According to Kalyvas, Arendt traces the existence of this faculty back to the Judeo-Christian tradition where the concept of *liberum arbitrum* signified both the capacity to receive grace as well as the supreme, absolute and transcendental divine power that is capable of creating *ex-nihilo* (Kalyvas, 2008: 214). This was the crucial point which the French Revolution reclaimed and reproduced without problematizing its essence. The motto "All authority comes from God" was simply replaced with the one saying that "All power comes from the people", a people alleged to have a *volonté générale,* in other words, a general will. In her analysis of the French Revolution, one of the most fundamental criticisms of Arendt against the very basis of the revolution is that, from the beginning to the end, the "Oneness" of the people with respect to a unified "general will" has been assumed by the revolutionaries (Arendt, 2006b: 156). She concludes as saying that, the term "people" has lost its connotation of manyness with respect to the element of plurality, and transformed into a mythico-essentialistic denominator of "Oneness" (Arendt, 2006b: 77). This is nothing but to replace the position of the king with that of the people, without questioning the main logic of the ruling relationship. Theoretically speaking, French revolutionaries rebelled against the "content" of the ruler/ruled distinction, but not the distinction itself. Therefore, they reproduced the logic of sovereignty with the declaration of the people as the new sovereign body. As it can be seen easily, this is the continuation of a Judeo-Christian line of thinking,

namely in the form of assigning a supreme and an absolute creative power that is transcendental, in other words, outside the web of human affairs. This identification of the people as the supreme ground of the regime established after the French revolution is an open invitation to violent boundlessness and arbitrariness. Since "the people" is outside the sphere of law, which indeed gives rise to that very law system, there can be no determining ground for the sovereign. Unlimited and boundless, sovereign can modify and switch its volition arbitrarily in the way it wishes to. Therefore, this is vital threat to the establishment of lasting institutions and collective bonds between men since the sovereign will may also lead to a total annihilation or destruction. The totalitarian motto, "Everything is possible", as a result, turns out to be very suitable to the logic of a boundless sovereign.

In contrast to the failure of the French Revolution in not being able to destroy the logic of sovereignty, in the American Revolution the Founding Fathers successfully excluded that notion in the process of constitution-making. Their main purpose was not to throne a new omnipotent sovereign but rather to aim at providing the institutional framework which would set the necessary conditions for the manyness in the publics as well as the pursuit of public happiness by ordinary citizens. In this context, with a beautiful passage in "On Revolution", Arendt distinguishes democracy and republic, in a very simplified, though, thought-refreshing fashion, by suggesting that democracy is essentially based on the rule and role of people whereas the word republic emphasizes objective lasting institutions (Arendt, 2006b: 120) In detail, she asserts that democracy originates from Greek words *demos* and *cratia*, which literally means the rule of the people (Arendt, 2006b: 30). In this logic, democracy may be argued to follow the logic of sovereignty as long as it remained within the boundaries of the mentality of ruling. This was at the core of the French Revolution when the revolution claimed the people with its unified collective will as the new sovereign (Arendt, 2006b: 156). On the other hand, the origin of the vocable republic, *res publica*, dates back to the Latin language, signifying basically the public thing, notably in the form of permanent, well-established institutions which provide and protect the variety of publics in which individuals act and speak, in other words, in the sense of its durability (Arendt, 2006b: 224). The focus is not on the doer behind the deed, which is in the case of democracy having *demos* as the sovereign doer, but

rather is on the deed itself as the beginning of lasting institutions and bonds. This is the major significance and success of the American Revolution, in Arendt's words. They did not apply to a metaphysical ultimate ground in order to explain and legitimize the newly established order and the political regime after the revolution. Their acts remained this worldly.

In addition to this repudiation of will as being essentially anti-political[11], one can also say that, Arendtian notion of action (and freedom in action) goes beyond the duality of positive and negative conceptions of freedom put forward by Isaiah Berlin. On the one hand, it is commonly agreed that traditional liberal understanding of freedom from politics, which is negative liberty, is clearly at odds with Arendt's theory of action and freedom: Withdrawal from politics, which is appreciated by Christianity and liberalism, is the deprivation of the agent of his/her freedom for Arendt. On the other hand, freedom in action neither does entail the fact that it is positive freedom in Berlin's sense because as Berktay suggests, the framework of positive-negative freedom presumes a sovereign (i.e. a subject) behind the deed (Berktay, 2012: 61). Therefore, even in the case of positive freedom one wills to engage in public-political matters as a citizen. However, Arendt's theory of action does not entail a sovereign. The notion of freedom she develops is nothing but the "act of freeing" and it does not refer to/assume a subject taking initiative in public-political matters.

Furthermore, the concept of sovereignty inevitably carries an element of violence within itself in Arendt's view since it tends to cut down alternative voices. The public realm is destroyed at the very moment when the multi-perspectival sharing of words and deeds between citizens transform into a single opinion. As Arendt puts it, violence always works with the logic of instrumentalization and aims at the silencing of the other, as it will be explicated later on. However, action, in contrast with the anti-political veins that violence carries within, is characterized by power in action. This distinction between power and violence, which will be vital for the

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[11] About the faculty of willing Arendt left us question marks in "The Life of The Mind" where she opens up the door for establishing a link between will and acting as beginning something new (Arendt, 1978: 102). Thus her perspective is not so clear with respect to the political or the anti-political nature of the faculty of willing.

interpretation of both of the cases, as well as their relationship with politics, will be dealt in the next stage.

2.7. Power in Action: What Keeps Public Spaces Intact

In conventional understanding within the sphere of political theory, power has been defined as the ability to make others act in such a way that it could be against his/her own volition. In this sense, it contained a strong element of force, command and coercion. Echoing the fundamental predicates of sovereignty, this notion of power held individuals (or groups) against one another. Therefore, one "used" power in order to reach one's own ends. In other words, power in its common conversant meaning was instrumental but what Arendt saw in the notion of power is obviously atypical. The concept of power corresponds to the capability to act in concert (Arendt, 1972a: 143). In this sense it is not an individual ability. It simply shines under daylight in action and disappears in the exact moment when action stops (Arendt, 1958: 200). To put it differently, power is dependent on the sheer togetherness of acting men and their plurality. Hence, it is always a collective matter. Being related to action, as the capacity to initiate, power acquires a revolutionary meaning; the power to constitute and protect the spaces of freedom. Regarding the question of becoming a revolutionary, Arendt gave a convincing answer: "Revolutionaries do not make revolutions! The revolutionaries are those who know when power is lying in the street and when they can pick it up." (Arendt, 1972b: 206)

Speaking of power, it might be useful to remember the distinctions Arendt made between the commonly confused notions such as strength, power, force and violence. Unlike strength which is the possession of an independent individual, power is based on mutual dependence and on collective bonds, unlike force, power is not a natural but a human-made phenomenon and unlike violence which is essentially goal-oriented, it is not based on coercion but consent and persuasion (d'Entrèves, 2001: 78). Togetherness is the quintessential keyword to grasp the core of Arendtian notion of power. In fact, power is what creates and keeps the public spaces of appearance in existence. Those spaces as well as other institutions in the community can be considered as the materialized bodies of power in action. They last as long as men who gave birth to them continue acting; otherwise those institutions are to perish.

Arendt points out the significance of the notion by indicating Mirabeau's statement that "ten men acting together can make a hundred thousand tremble apart" (Arendt, 2006b: 116). Even the most violent regimes always necessitate a certain power mechanism in order to operate. Totalitarian governments, where the means of ruling is nothing but terror, also need a certain secret service web and a police force that would serve the requirements of the system (Arendt, 1972a: 149). Such network cannot be established nor sustained without power.

However, power is very fragile: Especially against the utilization of the means of violence, power generally disappears immediately. In other words, power can be swept aside by violence which is incapable of creating power by itself (Arendt, 1958: 202). According to her, the confrontation between the Czech people and Soviet tanks in the "Prague Spring" of 1968 is a wonderful photo of power against violence (Arendt, 1972a: 152). Evoking the famous dictum of Mao Zedong, Arendt states that out of a barrel of a gun, the most instant and perfect obedience grows, then she adds: What can never grow out of it is power (Arendt, 1972a: 152). If one follows this line of argumentation, it can be argued that violence is essentially impotent. The means of violence are employed when and where the channels of persuasion, communication and generating consent do not matter anymore. It is the exact moment of powerlessness that marks the coming into the scene of violent means. If Melucci's well-known remark about the social movements' capability of "making power visible" (Melucci, 1989: 76) is remembered, it becomes relevant to develop a new dictum about Arendtian understanding of violence: "Violence makes powerlessness visible". Facing with a violent intervention, power in action makes the plain impotence of the call for violent means as a sole way of responding appear. As a result, the appeal to violent means by the government, even within the legal limits, signifies the incapability of that specific government in persuading its citizens in action and it is the mark of a government moving outside the boundaries of its power.

Violence, understood in Arendtian sense is mute, in other words, it is itself incapable of speech (Arendt, 1958: 26). As it is stated earlier, if politics is acting and establishing spaces of appearance through words and deeds, then lacking the ability to speak, violence always takes place outside and against the political realm since it is

itself silent and it aims at silencing the plurality of worldviews. At this point she makes a clear distinction between the notions of legitimacy and justification: Violence cannot be legitimate, it is in need of justification and it has been justified under certain circumstances with reference to the goals that it aims at reaching; on the other hand, legitimacy is a matter of power and action acquires its legitimacy from no other external source but from the very acting together of people in plurality itself (Arendt, 1972a: 151). It does not signal an absolute entity beyond the realm of human relations which transcends action, like God, the Idea or the People and etc. Therefore, power in action is self-legitimizing. The problem with the constitution, justification and maintenance of legitimacy with reference to an external source, as it was discussed earlier, is the potential threat of melting the manyness of men in plural into a "One-Man of gigantic dimensions", to use Arendt's phrase.

As another important point regarding the discussion about power and violence, Arendt states that violence is more reformist whereas power carries within a revolutionary potential. She supports this argument by claiming that government authorities tend to deal with ease when trying to cope with violent protests (Arendt, 1972a: 121). In other words, employing means of violence indicates the usage of a language that is very familiar to the government authorities against which one (group/individual) protests. When there is a violent revolt in a certain region, then it becomes allegedly "necessary" to counter-act with violence, which can immediately be justified with reference to the notions such as "maintenance of order" or "security". On the other hand, when faced with the power in action, the public authorities hardly know how to respond in a non-violent manner because power in action, signify the powerlessness and loss of legitimacy from the public authorities' side. Thus the only possible way of dismantling that emergence turns out to be violence. Moreover, since the sole aim of action is nothing but freedom, it becomes even more difficult to dwell with power for the government: It prefers the articulation of tangible demands, even if it is violent, which can easily be translated into the existing discursive system. There is an observable anxiety in the tone of public officers when they encounter men acting together. Unlike violence, power does not signify the desire to destroy the existing regime, but rather the act of founding a new one. In this sense, power is vigorously revolutionary and creative.

This dynamically creative potential of non-violent action as well as its irreducibility to instrumental concerns and interest politics brings forth the potential sign of arbitrariness into it. As it was discussed earlier on, action is spontaneous, unique and binding since it is about our collective matters. So in other words, its outcomes are unpredictable and its effects are irreversible, which will be analyzed in detail in the following part.

2.8. Unpredictability and Irreversibility of Action

As it was seen above, by the virtue of being born into this world, each and every man is a beginning himself, in other words he is capable of experiencing miracles since he is himself a miracle. Then the paradoxical formula comes into the scene: the unexpected can be expected from him (Arendt, 1958: 178). This unexpectedness is mainly due to the fact that, since action always takes place within the sheer contingency and plurality of human affairs, its outcomes are not controllable and foreseen at all. Each action spontaneously starts a new process that triggers further processes in the web of human relationalities. No one is the author of one's action (or its sovereign), but rather there is the agent who becomes disclosed in action (Arendt, 1958: 184). Moreover, the plurality of actors as well as opinions and motives makes it beyond control. If it was available to be controlled, then action would become subject to prediction, manipulation and instrumentalization. This unpredictable aspect marks the essential difference between action and behavior, where the latter only signifies the expected social activity with respect to the norms established by society, which tends to marginalize action or identify it as irrelevant with respect to the norms it established (Arendt, 1958: 40). In this sense, behavior is negative and reactive as well as being incapable of spontaneity and beginning something new.

Moreover, action is the revelation and sharing of a story, in Kristeva's views (Kristeva, 2001: 7). Although everybody can insert oneself into the realm of human affairs, nobody is its author, but its sufferer and actor. In other words, unpredictability shows that the story remains unfinished till (and even after) death and the effects of one single story upon the others within an innumerable multiplicity of them are almost impossible to identify. Hence, the boundless aspect of the outcomes of action also

demonstrates why it is unpredictable. Unlike the process of fabrication which exhausts itself within the end product, action is not absorbed within a single deed, but rather it grows as its consequences multiply. In other words, the ends of action cannot be clearly identified beforehand.

As the second character of action, there stands its irreversible dimension. Once again the process of fabrication is to be referred to: If the end product does not match the expectations, one can destroy and rebuild it in a different fashion. However, this cannot be valid for action which cannot be undone or stopped. As it was discussed above, action always takes place in a web of human relations where action always becomes reaction, enacts further actions and it goes on like that. To put it in simple terms, one cannot erase the new beginning that one creates in action (Arendt, 1958: 232). There is no way back to the starting point since the emergence of the new changes the present as well as the past and the future. Moreover, since action necessitates the presence of others and it discloses the agent to others, making the publicly seen unseen is simply impossible. Action becomes a story to be told just after the moment it happens. It is shared through words and deeds in the realm of human interactions; in other words it becomes immortalized and permanent in this world. Therefore, in the end, it is not possible to reverse action and turn back to the point of departure at the very beginning.

As a result, the conclusion that action is not predictable and is irreversible can be reached. Then how to avoid from potential dangers that it carries with respect to the notion of arbitrariness and how to keep the created spaces of togetherness and freedom healthy? At this point Arendt defines two potential remedies that would prevent the dangers that might arise from the unpredictable and irreversible character of political action: the faculty of promising and the power to forgive.

2.9. Bulwarks for the Deed: Acts of Promising and Forgiving

Arendt argues that the remedy for the unpredictability of action is the faculty of promising to protect action from the void of an unforeseeable future, whereas the power to forgive is the remedy for the incapability of human beings to undo the done, in other words its irreversibility (Arendt, 1958: 237). In this sense Arendt evaluates these two acts as stabilizing factors, which allows men to:

> …undo the deeds of the past, whose "sins" hang like Damocles' sword over every new generation; and the other, binding oneself through promises, serves to set up in the ocean of uncertainty, which the future is by definition, islands of security without which not even continuity, let alone durability of any kind, would be possible in the relationship between men (Arendt, 1958: 237).

As it can be inferred from the paragraph, these faculties are much related to time understood as the continuum of past-present-future. First of all, the power to forgive, in its literal sense, liberates men from a past action which is bound to have unintended consequences by definition. As it was debated earlier, nobody is the master of his/her deeds, since action itself does not assume a pre-existing subject or a sovereign behind the deed. One cannot know what he/she is doing in action. Hence, action is not a matter of self-consciousness, control and manipulation. Its consequences can never be estimated so that the power to forgive comes into the scene at this very point because without that power, the realm of human affairs becomes bound to a single act and its consequences, a situation which will shed its shadow on the freedom in action as well as on the capacity to bring forth further novelties (Arendt, 1958: 237). As a result, the power to forgive liberates men from the chains of the past. Second, the capacity to make promises entails a twofold moment; the first step is that it arises out of the basic unreliability of men in the sense that "one cannot guarantee who he/she will be tomorrow", and the second assumption is that within the plurality of actors who are entitled with the same capacity to act, it is impossible to foresee the consequences of an act (Arendt, 1958: 244). These two assumptions underlining the possibility of promising direct our attention to a single idea: the unpredictability of future. Understood in this sense, binding each other through promises, men are able to establish a sense of durability and continuity. As a result, the power to promise is a stabilizing element.

These two capacities remark some of the efforts to ordinarize the extraordinariness embedded in political action. In this manner, Honig holds the idea that in action, the gap between the ordinary and extraordinary is simply blurred since a daily act of promising acquires a different and a revolutionary meaning within the context of a radical act (Honig, 2013). She gives the example of "signing a document" as an act of constituting a binding element in the aftermath of the American Revolution, a deed which is generally considered to be a mundane occurrence but

which turned out to be everything but ordinary due to the uncommon context in which the act of signing took place (Honig, 2013). Therefore, it could be inferred that, in the ephemeral context of action, the most ordinary might turn out to be the most extraordinary and vice versa.

As a result, as Kalyvas suggests, that Arendt for sure knew the importance of stabilizing elements and institutional frameworks to protect and provide the necessary ground for action to flourish (Kalyvas, 2008: 255). The theories developed by Arendt regarding the acts of forgiving and promising are crucial in this manner since the extraordinary newness embedded in political action is complemented by this conceptualization of ordinary elements such as promising and forgiving, to save action from the abyss of past and future. The next part of this chapter is going to try to sum up the ideas which have been developed up to now and to reach a conclusive point in terms of Arendtian action.

2.10. Ending Remarks

To conclude, I think that Arendtian notion of action is capable of bringing new and fresh spaces of appearance into being, without necessarily being performed in a pre-existing space. The question is not one of a "chicken and eggs" type. In other words, action can both be the outcome or the origin of public spaces. The problem is rather the following: It is very reductionist to claim that action is impossible without a pre-existing public realm. The relationship between the spaces of appearance and action is more diverse and richer in the sense of being irreducible to a single cause-effect relationship. Indeed, in some cases it might turn out to be problematic to diagnose whether there are any existing public spaces preceding action or not. Moreover, by focusing on action's creative dimensions, I argued that action is the moment of founding a new polity, establishing novel forms of solidarity and positing a new temporal flow. Departing from the negativity embedded in liberation movements, action, which might follow a successful liberation experience, is about and for freedom. It is inside and outside time, and it is always of a collective worldly interest.

Arendtian understanding of action is also unique in the sense that it implies a notion of politics different from the conceptions of politics as the competition for power or performative creation of the self, as well as from the concept of the political with regard to the assumptions of a sovereign behind the act. In its Arendtian sense, acting in concert is the name of establishing small islands of solidarity, to create new tables and chairs (to use Arendt's own metaphor) and to found new ways of governing. This novelty implicit in action, as mentioned above, can also be evaluated as a crucial source in order to rethink the alleged problematic inquiries in Arendt's theory such as the rigid separations between private and public, the political and the social. I argue that action (as an unintended consequence) can also challenge these dualities, though it is not to overcome them, allowing one to redefine what is public and what is private by "playing with boundaries". In other words, it shows the interplays and moments of liquidation within the dualities. In action, it can be shown that a social activity can obviously acquire a radically revolutionary meaning and direction under a different context whereas a supposedly political event can turn out to be based on social predicates.

By relying on the assumption of non-sovereignty, theory of action developed by Arendt provides a useful tool of analysis so as to assess the rich dynamics of spontaneous movements which are argued to be without a single or unified ideology, leader or a clearly identified Party-program. Action is never a matter of executing the formulas and plans that are put forward by, i.e. Professional revolutionaries. Such confusion is a historical one: Not distinguishing *praxis* (action) and *poiesis* (making) which dates back to the times of Ancient Greece. The logic of instrumentality which constitutes the basis for the act of making cannot be applied to action because it is irreducible to instrumental concerns and thus, to interest-based politics. Action transcends daily interests and means-ends relationships which are at the core of working activity.

The irreducibility of action to any kind of "oneness" signals the indispensable element of "manyness" or, in Arendt's words, plurality in action. People from many different worldviews, ideologies, ethnic backgrounds, sexual identities and cultures gather in action for the sake of creating new forms of solidarity between each other

through power in sheer togetherness. In other words, those ideologies, backgrounds and identities do not matter in the process of action, but rather the establishment of new spaces and new forms of government are the issues at stake. In this way, Arendt develops a way out of the potential danger of essentialism in encapsulating politics within the frame of ethnic/sexual identities and ideologies with rigid boundaries. She pursues this, ironically, in a phenomenological way: Essentializing action as the "emergence of the new" within the realm of human affairs. The powers of forgiving and promising are the "ordinarizing" elements of the extraordinariness, unpredictability and irreversibility embedded in political action. However, these powers also prove the fact that in a different circumstance, ordinary acts, such as forgiving and promising, turn out to be radical initiations.

As a result, action in its Arendtian sense is a precious treasure for evaluating the movements in the world from a different perspective. It might be asserted that with the framework about action she left behind, it becomes possible to say, to use Arendt's phrase, "the lost treasure" of contemporary times, namely revolutions, may not be lost at all. As long as there are men, there is always an open door for a beginning which will remain unclosed till the day men will perish from the earth. Therefore, in order to appreciate her conception of action well and to discuss the problem of political beginnings within two original contexts, the formation of People's Committee's in Fatsa, Turkey in the period of 1979-80 and "the Occupy Wall Street Movement" that emerged in the Autumn of 2011 will be examined[12]. The following chapter is dedicated to grasp the peculiarity of the brief municipal revolution in the Fatsa case in 1970-80 with an Arendtian glance and to think about one of the most thrilling narratives within the period of Republic of Turkey began, grow and disappear. This is the first story of freedom this thesis aims to examine.

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[12] I decided to interpret the cases within the framework of Arendtian action and not the New Social Movements Literature, such as the works of Tarrow (Tarrow, 2011) and Melucci (Melucci, 1989), because first of all, the question that I focus on during this thesis is the possibility of Arendtian action without a given public space, having its roots in Dana Villa's claim about action's impossibility. Second, I believe that the characteristics of Arendtian action such as plurality, spontaneity, non-violence and non-sovereignty are well-fit for the interpretation of the cases, providing an alternative angle for examining them.

CHAPTER 3

FATSA IN 1979-80: A LOCAL AND BRIEF REVOLUTIONARY ERA

In the previous chapter, I tried to present and discuss Arendt's theory of action, framing it as "the creation of the new". Following such conceptual background, this chapter is devoted to an interpretation of the local revolution in Fatsa in 1979-80. The core debate will be on the relationship between the spontaneous political beginning and the changes that took place after the election of Fikri Sönmez as the new mayor of Fatsa municipality. In this regard, I will try to claim: The formation of People's Committees in the town can be considered, to a great extent, as an original example of Arendtian action since it reveals the birth of a new form of government and alternative spaces of appearance. The processes that Fatsa experienced were indeed a unique demonstration of power in plurality, without being reducible to a specific group or movement. One can also observe in Fatsa the tension between political and social as well as that of labor, work and action which leads the way for formulating new questions about the rigid boundaries that Arendt marks between such concepts. Thinking about the "End to Mud" campaign will be helpful in this manner. Finally, the "Point Operation" in Fatsa will constitute an actual case in order to evaluate how violence and power contrast with each other in reality, in accordance with Arendtian framework.

3. 1. The Background of the Region and the Period of Elections

Fatsa is a municipality in the city of Ordu, located within the central Black Sea region, northern Turkey. The essential characteristic of the town was the importance of hazelnut production, which served as a basis for the economy of the region throughout 1970's. Fatsa was also identified with high degrees of exploitation in the hazelnut sector. In the market, there were dominant pawnbrokers who confiscated the products of hazelnut producers with low prices and made the producers indebted with great rates of interest between 100-200 percent (Aksakal,

1989: 125). Such situation worsened the conditions of living for the producers day by day and in the end, with the initiative of Dev-Yol[13] and the people concerned, some collective meetings were organized which were named as the "End to Exploitation in Hazelnut" and which, I argue, can be considered as resistance against the existing market conditions or as one of the steps of liberation in Arendtian terms. With these experiences, Dev-Yol came into wider appearance and acquired wider support from many sections of the people in Fatsa.

Apart from the problematic issues stemming from the hazelnut sector, the local inhabitants were also trying to cope with the black market dealers. Vital elements such as sugar, oil and gas were hardly available for the people, since the prices set by the black market dealers were unaffordable. The dealers indeed accumulated and hid great amounts of aforementioned materials in specific storehouses (Özden, 2013: 49). Under such circumstances, it was almost impossible to satisfy one's natural necessities, since the required instruments to reach such necessities were both scarce and expensive. In this context, the members of Dev-Yol and the people in need co-operated against the black market dealers, identifying their storehouses and preventing the illegal transactions that were taking place. The sites for storage were raided; the products were sold to the people with normal prices (Aksakal, 1989: 129). Like the hazelnut meetings, the resistance against the black market allowed revolutionaries to attain credibility and confidence in the region. This activity also marked another step in the liberation process.

I call the hazelnut meetings and the campaign of ending the black market as events which are based on liberation in Arendtian sense, because liberation, as it was debated in the previous chapter, is essentially negative and aims at overcoming the burdens to satisfy one's necessities in a community. In this manner, the

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[13] Dev-Yol [which is the abbreviation of Devrimci Yol (Revolutionary Path)] was the name of a radical-left revolutionary movement in Turkey which was based on Marxist principles and which also published a journal under the same name in late 1970's. At those times, Dev-Yol had a strong presence at the grassroots level nationwide. Ideologically, the movement fought for creating socialism, beginning with the establishment of strong collective bonds in a bottom-up sense. However, the movement distantiated itself from the strict "economism" of orthodox Marxism and took into account populist dynamics as well as the cultural, political and social peculiarities of Turkey (Erdoğan, 1998: 26-27). As an example of self-government in relevance with Dev-Yol, "Resistance Committees" in many different neighborhoods were spontaneously created with the participation of Dev-Yol and local people as defensive bodies against so-called "fascist attacks" (Erdoğan, 1998: 28).

aforementioned events in Fatsa can be understood as the negation of existing conditions imposed upon the hazelnut producers and the people encapsulated within the limits of necessities due to the structure of the humanly made black market. Therefore, the fundamental goal of such liberation activities was social and/or economic that can be portrayed as "collective housekeeping", in accordance with Arendt's conceptual framework, though not political. Strictly speaking, the changes that were to be brought into being with these protests were not about founding a new type of government with a sense of revolutionary creativity. To employ Arendtian terminology, it can be contended that the major determinants of both the hazelnut meetings and the resistances against the black market were life, with regard to mastering vital necessities, and the world of things, in the sense of altering the disposition of the market.

The final incident that disclosed the possibility of a political change was the worsening health condition of the existing mayor of the municipality, Nazmiye Komitoğlu, who was from the Republican People's Party, an incident which ended up with her death and a call for an early local election in Fatsa. So it can be asserted from an Arendtian perspective that, after this event, power turned out to be lying down on the streets of the town. In time, the revolutionaries together with the local inhabitants were able to articulate this power and open up a new way within such contingency. Boycotting the general elections, Dev-Yol decided to support revolutionary candidates for the local elections since local politics were evaluated as bearing more autonomy (Uyan, 2004: 54). In this regard, they supported Fikri Sönmez[14] who was commonly known by the people of Fatsa due to his presence in the past struggles within the region, and thanks to this, not only Dev-Yol but also the vast majority of the people in Fatsa asked him to be an independent nominee in the elections. After accepting this request, Fikri Sönmez summarized his views on municipal administration: "We revolutionaries support an understanding of municipality aiming at a people having voice and power to decide. And we say: People's rule in municipality." (Aksakal, 1989: 134) Such perspective was radical and unconventional: Opening up spaces of participation, targeting direct involvement

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[14] Fikri Sönmez was a politically active figure especially in Fatsa as a revolutionary and he was commonly referred to as "tailor Fikri" due to his occupation.

of the people in the collective matters and establishing the institutional framework to provide sustainability for this outlook. The content of the speech was apparently different from the representational approach to politics which was the ordinary case in Fatsa. Additionally, the focus on the rule of people as the primary aspiration of the potentially new municipality indicated the notion of democracy as the "rule of *demos*". In other words, the words of tailor Fikri explicated the mentality behind his candidacy was neither socialism nor communism but rather participatory democracy. However, in the previous chapter, it was argued that, according to Arendt, democracy assumed a sovereign behind the deed, which was "the people". Moreover, the logic of sovereignty was shown to be essentially anti-pluralistic and it inclined to instrumentalize action, in Arendtian framework. Therefore, in the subsequent parts of this chapter it will be discussed whether or not is it possible to attribute a sovereign body to the processes in Fatsa.

The elections were held in 14th of October, 1979 and the results were tremendous: Fikri Sönmez got 3096 votes whereas Zeki Muslu, the candidate of Republican People's Party, got 1133, and Rıza Özmaden from Justice Party got 859 (Aksakal, 1989: 134). Tailor Fikri easily won the elections with a substantial difference, and became the new mayor of Fatsa municipality. These outcomes and the process of elections in general clarify a crucial point: With the utilization of an ordinary mechanism in representational politics, such as the elections, an extraordinary political beginning that is based on participation emerged spontaneously. It is noteworthy that in Fatsa, there was not any kind of absolute negation of the existing procedures and regulations. To put differently, whatever had happened in Fatsa did not come out of blue sky. It was grounded in the legal and administrative framework of Turkey in 1979.

In the end, the results of the elections paved the way for a new emergence, a new type of government, which marked the core of the political processes in Fatsa: The People's Committees. Being one of the first major accomplishments that the municipality of Fikri Sönmez brought into reality, the People's Committees can be understood, in Arendtian terminology, as revolutionary spaces of appearance in which the inhabitants of Fatsa had the equal claim to appear through words and

deeds[15]. At this point, I will examine the establishment of the People's Committees in detail.

3. 2. A Novel Form of Government: The People's Committees

People's Committees (also known as the Neighborhood Committees) were formed as the quintessential element of the participation-based stance put forward by tailor Fikri's municipality. In other words, reminding the councils that Arendt mentions in examining the Hungarian Revolution (Arendt, 2006b: 266), the committees were the embodiments of power which were to stand as long as the people of Fatsa participated in. Initially, Fatsa, a municipality that consisted of seven neighborhoods, was divided into eleven units which were determined with respect to location and specific needs. Then, for each unit, one committee was established. So there was not a single unitary public space but rather a multitude of eleven spaces distributed all around Fatsa. Depending on the population of units, the people were to elect from three to seven People's Committee's representatives (Aksakal, 1989: 135). The role of these representatives, however, diverged from the conventional understanding of representatives in terms of representational/parliamentary politics: The essential duty of such representatives in Fatsa was merely to deliver the opinions and problems of the people which were to be shaped in the participatory processes within the People's Committees, to the Municipal Council and Municipal Assembly, which were the legal bodies in each and every municipality of Turkey. In this regard, the issues brought under daylight in the committees were evaluated and processed in accordance with the existing legal framework. To elaborate on this point, Mümtaz Soysal, in his newspaper article, claimed that the formation of People's Committees in specific, and all the steps taken in Fatsa by the new administration were legal: They remained within the confines of ordinary legal regulations about municipalities so there was hardly any illegality there (Aksakal, 1989: 330).

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[15] The processes in Fatsa can be read with reference to various literatures such as Marxism, urban politics and public administration. However, the framework of this thesis is limited with Arendtian political thought since I strongly contend that the theory of action that Arendt provides is a rich source to think of Fatsa from the aspects of spontaneity, plurality, natality and non-violent power. Furthermore, I argue that the Fatsa experience (which also allows to direct criticisms towards certain assumptions of Arendtian thinking such as the rigid gap between the social and the political) challenges Villa's arguments pertaining to the major problematic of this study.

In addition to the People's Committees, a new municipal entity was founded with the name of "Public Relations Office", which was developed to function as an intermediary, and a problem-solving body that aimed setting up a different understanding of the relationship between the people and the municipality (Türkmen, 2006: 93). The significance of the committees in general and the Public Relations Office in particular, was described as the breakdown of the ruler/ruled dichotomy, as Yıldırım suggested (Yıldırım, 2008: 283). The role of the municipality, in this sense, did not have any affinity with rulership; rather it was to serve as a legal body of approval for the issues which were to be developed at the bottom level in committees and transmitted to the municipal organs through representatives as well as the intermediacy of the Public Relations Office. In addition, the Fatsa case was also an explicit manifestation of the argument that the act of governing is not a technical "business" (Yıldırım, 2008: 285), which clings to "expertise" and instrumentality; it was rather the acting in concert of various individuals from diverse worldviews to establish durable bonds of solidarity and grounds of participation. To put it into relevance with Arendtian political thought, it can be argued that the issue of government in Fatsa relied mainly on as *praxis* and not *poiesis*. Through these channels of *praxis*, ordinary people, but not "professional politicians", were able to appear to each other immediately to develop their partial opinions for the *inter-est*, the common *in-between*. This point is crucial because the committees were the public things, *res publica*, which constituted the *body politic*, to employ Arendt's phrase, into which action leaks and brings further novelties.

The People's Committees were self-governing units in power to form the messages from below through active collective engagement. The meetings in the People's Committees were held periodically in each two or three months to deliberate on the problems of each and every district as well as to question the projects and acts of the municipality. The head of the municipality was also attending to these discussions (Uyan, 2004: 56). In addition, all the members of the Municipal Council and the Municipal Assembly were present in those public processes as the legally recognized administrative bodies, taking notes and observing the public tone during debates (Aksakal, 1989:135). The people of Fatsa enjoyed taking active part in such common issues. As Fikri Sönmez stated in his defense in the court (which

was established after the military takeover on 12th of September, 1980), the inhabitants of Fatsa became spontaneously too keen on participating in the public-political matters so that even if there emerged a decision for their advantage, they might react furiously since they were not there while the decision was being taken (Aksakal, 1989: 95). This is a prominent point as it illustrates well the irreducibility of Arendtian action to instrumental concerns. Indeed, the fundamental issues discussed in the committees were mainly goal-oriented, pertaining to the logic of *poiesis*: Access to vital elements, infrastructural problems, questions regarding economic matters and etc. However, there was an undeniable importance of the public activities for the inhabitants of Fatsa and their vigorous passion towards participation could not be neglected. In other words, people of Fatsa valued participation for the sake of participation primarily and not for the potential advantages they might have acquired from the processes in committees. Instrumental concerns were seen secondary. To put it differently, an obvious public enthusiasm was displayed by the people (Erdoğan, 2013: 375), reminding the notion of "public happiness" which Arendt employs within the context of American Revolution. Fitting well to the point of the positive attitude that the inhabitants of Fatsa held towards public issues, she describes a similar inclination in following terms with regard to the American people in the time of revolution:

> …that the people went to the town assemblies, as their representatives later were to go to the famous Conventions, neither exclusively because of duty nor, and even less, to serve their own interests but most of all because they enjoyed the discussions, the deliberations, and the making of decisions (Arendt, 2006b: 119).

The people of Fatsa did enjoy this freedom in action, as did the Americans. Although such thirst is something difficult to translate into the language of quantities, the number of participators in these meetings can be helpful to provide a clue: All of a sudden, more than 5,000 people became keen on appearing to the others in the committees and considering the fact that Fatsa had a population of 20,000 (with non-adults constituting almost the half of it), it was a massive achievement (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007).

After the meetings in the committees, the units in the municipality gathered to create solutions to people's problems which were to be dealt by the Municipal

Assembly and the Municipal Council. Finally the Municipal Assembly, as the last resort of decision, was to discuss these matters and develop alternative projects to make better the conditions of common life in Fatsa. As an important step, the meetings of the Municipal Assembly were made open to all public through amplifiers (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). In other words, the debates within the assembly became fully transparent to public and everybody was able to listen to and check whether or not the municipality was following paths differing from the ones proposed in People's Committees. Such point provided the dimension of accountability through which the participators in the public spaces were able to question and monitor the administrative processes in the municipality. In this way, the committee members were able to investigate the acts and, in the end, they had the power to take the members of municipality out of office. Therefore with the introduction of the amplifiers, the building of municipality lost its non-public character and became apparent and audible to all. Even the smallest villages that were far away from the center of Fatsa had these amplifiers and were able to engage in the debates taking place in the assembly. So in an Arendtian sense, the process of decision-making with regard to public and political matters, acquired "widest possible publicity" which is one of the major features of a public space. Similarly, the broadcasting of the discussions in the assemblies backs up an important point: If the political is to be, then all the opinions, purposes and acts were supposed to be brought into public (Deveci, 1998: 117). In this regard, action in Fatsa managed to bring a new sense of politics into being by establishing the necessary conditions for publicness to exist.

Also, being one of the most differentiating aspects of publicness and action, plurality flourished within the committees as something non-negligible. Comprising the worldly human condition for action, it was indeed everywhere present in the processes within People's Committees. Inhabitants from very different backgrounds, ideologies and lifestyles had the chance to develop their partial *doxa* about the common *in-between* and to appear to each other by participating in the political mechanisms that were recently established. Students, villagers, religious people, revolutionaries and workers were the exemplary figures of such participants coming together in public spaces with their power in togetherness. Even members of various

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parties appeared to public gaze including Justice Party, Republican People's Party, National Salvation Party and some of them were elected as the representatives because as Ketenci put forward in her article, those representatives were elected without any respect to party membership or social class (Aksakal, 1989: 318). In other words, this sort of background information or identity did not play any kind of role in terms of actively engaging in public-political affairs within committees. Theoretically speaking, inhabitants of Fatsa held the equal claim to participate, which Arendt puts as *isonomia*, as it was debated in the theoretical chapter. However, plurality in the People's Committees was not unlimited and boundless: The members and sympathizers of extreme-right Nationalist Movement Party and the black market dealers were carefully excluded from the publics by the decision of the local people in Fatsa (Özden, 2013: 60). To put it differently, ultra-nationalists and black market dealers were deprived of the claim to be a part of plurality and political processes in Fatsa. They remained as outsiders.

One possible consequence of the previous paragraph about plurality is worth further elaboration since this aspect marks the irreducible dimension of the processes in Fatsa to the activities of Dev-Yol itself or to any other single ideological framework. In fact, even those who were not sympathetic to the ideas of Dev-Yol or those who had nothing to do with the class-based worldviews also involved in the People's Committees. Right-wing individuals and conservative inhabitants were active in public issues as well. Thus, in Fatsa there was something more than what Dev-Yol aimed and realized. Strictly speaking, Dev-Yol was not the sovereign in the steps taken. To clarify this argument, Hakan Tanıttıran, in an interview with Kerem Morgül, claimed that "Fatsa was not a design of Dev-Yol from above" (Morgül, 2007: 131). So, the mainstream understanding of Fatsa as the implementation of socialism under the leadership of Dev-Yol (and Fikri Sönmez, who indeed served as an official body of approval but not as a leader, as it will be seen later on), an idea with the help of which the central government in Turkey tried to justify its intervention in Fatsa as it will mentioned in the following parts, becomes doubtful. There was almost nothing, apart from the motives and goals of certain individuals/groups, concerning certain changes in the societal-economic structures. Despite the presence of social and economic issues in most of Dev-Yol's

manifestations, there was not an aim of overthrowing the capitalist mode of production in Fatsa, as Bozkurt argued (Bozkurt, 2008: 101). The backbone of the matter was indeed political in Arendtian sense: Fatsa was the name for the new type of government that was created in action. With this, I certainly do not intend to mean that Dev-Yol did nothing. On the contrary, the meetings and all the efforts prior to the elections were significant in acquiring popular support in the region. Furthermore, they had a crucial role in picking power up from the streets together with the local people through the means of local elections. Yet, the spontaneous political change in Fatsa was in no ways predictable and it was really unique in the history of Turkey since it became manifest that ordinary people from various social backgrounds were capable of creating and protecting alternative political forms in solidarity by themselves, without any reliance to leadership which is to say that the movement was leaderless. Therefore, to limit the reading of Fatsa only to the acts of Dev-Yol and Fikri Sönmez, a reading which has been shared by the right and the left, would bring a narrow understanding of what actually took place there, preventing one from seeing what was essentially original.

Thinking about sovereignty, I find it more appropriate to ask whether or not "the people", and not Dev-Yol, can be considered as the sovereign body in Fatsa. This becomes a more challenging question if one begins to reflect on the concept "the people" in the speeches of tailor Fikri and in some other sources about Fatsa. For instance, in the documentary "Fatsa Gerçeği", it was argued that the important thing in the committees was not whether a person belongs to this or that wing of the ideological spectrum, but rather it was the people as the fundamental category implied to include everyone (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). From such remark, one can conclude that there was an explicit understanding of democracy, the rule of *demos*, in Fatsa. Reminding of Lenin's famous dictum, "All power to the soviets", the municipal head Fikri Sönmez argued all the time for "All power to the people". From a similar vein, Fatsa was perceived as a model imitating Athenian Democracy or participatory democracy (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007; Uyan, 2004: 104). Such participatory democratic strain cannot be denied. However, the issue at stake here, I think, is whether or not the understanding of people in the context of Fatsa can be regarded as a unifying sovereign, as understood by Arendt, beyond the realm of human affairs,

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constituting the legitimizing ground for the new government, as it was debated in the previous chapter. With respect to such an Arendtian sense, the notion of sovereignty was argued to carry elements referring to an absolute which is dangerous for the very existence of politics due to the potential melting of manyness into "One". In this context, I think the understanding of people in Fatsa was in some ways different. First, the usage of the term "the people" always referred to that very people participating in public spaces and not to an entity beyond the human world, which is one of the features of sovereignty for Arendt. The usage of the notion "the people" in Fatsa indicated the villagers, the students, the women, the leftists and the conservatives. In other words, it denoted the actual plurality of actors in action. Second, the legitimacy of the newly established municipal government was based on the People's Committees in action (Yıldırım, 2008: 283) and not on an external divine-absolute source with respect to which the sovereign legitimizes itself, according to Arendt. Therefore, I think the concept of people in Fatsa Revolution can be read as "manyness" in Arendtian sense which emerged through the processes in Fatsa and which departs from Arendtian conceptualization of sovereignty.

It is also possible to assert that the action in Fatsa gave birth to alternative spaces of appearance, without necessarily concerning for any given public space. If one asks the question "Were there any pre-given public spaces in Fatsa in which words and deeds might have appeared?" a clear answer would hardly be given: Did people act in the committees after the establishment of such spaces by the municipal administration or were the committees nothing more than the embodiment of spontaneous political inclinations of local people whose deeds preceded the constitution of the committees? This is undecidable. What is true is that the previous type of government in the region was the same as everywhere, based on representation and not direct appearance. The People's Committees as the spaces of appearance emerged unexpectedly within the context of the new beginning in Fatsa which came all of a sudden with the grabbing of power by Dev-Yol, Fikri Sönmez and most importantly by the plurality of actors which carried a strong tendency to participate. Therefore, even if there is indecisiveness about whether action or public spaces made possible the other, such aspect problematizes Villa's argument, as mentioned in the previous chapter, which was based on the idea that a pre-

established public realm making possible action: In some cases, it is almost impossible to establish a relationship of "Which one came first, action or public spaces?" It is also possible to suggest that the establishment of the committees by the new municipality may also be regarded as action in Arendtian sense. The issue at stake in Fatsa was about acting together and constituting alternative spaces of solidarity in the town. To put it differently, those spaces came into being with the establishment of a novel form of government through collective action. Then the constitution of People's Committees was the effort to channelize the revolutionary dynamism embedded in the process into durable mechanisms. This novelty indeed separates Fatsa from an ordinary protest movement. In fact, it is possible to contend that the people in action were not mainly against something; they were just actively participating in public-political matters without any concern of "Who do we oppose?" The main matter for them was to take care of their common spaces, set new relationships, appear to each other and discuss and decide on collectively binding topics. In this regard, a poet from Turkey, Ece Ayhan, differentiates between "being against the state" and "being outside the state" (Ayhan, 1995: 35). The political relevance of this statement is that it enables one to see that there are different ways of being political apart from being against something. It is not to say that the events took place in Fatsa were entirely outside the state nor the inhabitants of Fatsa were stateless in Arendtian terms. They were outside the state since they were not against it but rather were living in a new type of community, organized differently from all the previously known structures. In fact, they acquired this status of being outside, within the legal framework of the existing regulations. Hence, the political processes in Fatsa can be regarded as both within and without.

As a result, the People's Committees can be regarded as one of the most important aspects of brief Fatsa Revolution by constituting the founding of a new type of government that emerged unexpectedly. The committees were the open spaces for participation in which many different inhabitants of Fatsa had the chance to appear. Such revolutionary political experience has an undeniable originality in Turkish history, since the experience of a peculiar way of political engagement demonstrated a sense of politics that was not state-based but rather grounded itself upon grassroots involvement. However, the uniqueness of Fatsa revolution was not

limited with the formation of People's Committees. Another event that publicly demonstrated the ties of solidarity in Fatsa was the "End to Mud" campaign which resulted in a huge unpredictable success. Allowing one to question the sharp distinctions between the social and political as well as that of labor, work and action in Arendtian framework, the fight against mud will be the next focus of the thesis.

3. 3. Fight against Mud in Fatsa: The "End to Mud" Campaign

After the formation of People's Committees, there emerged a non-ignorable common issue which had been raised by all committees in the first meetings: Fatsa was almost drowning in mud. Due to a previous work in the sewage system which was unplanned and done carelessly, almost all the roads and streets of Fatsa were entirely in mud. The contractor of this work had probably manipulated the process with respect to his own interests and volition, which ended up with a terrible infrastructural problem in the town (Aksakal, 1989: 138). In addition, there were dozens of places which had been dug due to that incomplete business, making it almost impossible to walk safely. Transportation was not functioning properly because of the lack of suitable physical space for the movement of vehicles. Moreover, the dirt on the streets and the emergence of germs, mosquitoes and other types of potentially harmful organisms within the water system had created serious threats for human health, opening up the way for serious diseases such as cholera. These conditions made life in general very troublesome for the inhabitants of Fatsa. If such point is to be put into Arendtian terms, the conditions of labor, which is life, and of work, which is the world of artificial things, were insufficient and in danger. In other words, realizing two elements of the human condition was troublesome: First, the dirt in the water and the circulation of diseases were directly against the satisfaction of vital necessities and the continuation of life. Second, for instance, the problems regarding transportation disrupted the function of hospitals, schools, fire stations and workplaces which were built artificially by human hands. Therefore, this problem was brought into daylight as by far the most important one and it had to be solved rapidly. All the committees called for the development of a project to fix the case of mud as soon as possible.

After the channelization of this problem into the municipal organs, tailor Fikri arranged a meeting with the engineers working in the municipality to discuss the issue of mud to reach a solution. The proposition of the engineers to Fikri Sönmez was worrying: "Even if the municipality of Fatsa manages to arrange all its resources effectively and even if the state gives us money as a support, this job would take at least four years, even more" (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007), the engineers suggested. Predictions were signaling that the issue at stake was difficult to cope with. This response to tailor Fikri was in no ways acceptable since this argued time period was too long if one considers the seriousness of the problem in terms of vital well-being of the inhabitants. Tailor Fikri contended that the engineers were used to follow the old-school way of doing things, bureaucratized and mechanized, acting slowly and getting their salaries without putting too much effort in it (Aksakal, 1989: 46). In the end, a new meeting with the committees was organized to talk about the reports of the engineers and to try to find alternative solutions to the issue. As a consequence of the meeting to which all the members of the municipality, People's Committees representatives and the people attended, there emerged a new idea that if everybody would clean the places in front of their own houses, the problem would have been solved more quickly (Türkmen, 2006: 105). With this insight, a campaign named "End to Mud" was set and its program was developed.

Accordingly, all the vehicles of the neighbor municipalities were borrowed for six days by the Fatsa municipality. Moreover, it was asked from some institutions of the central government as well as from the inhabitants of Fatsa to give their useful vehicles to the control of Fatsa municipality during campaign (Aksakal, 1989: 47). The demands were met beyond expectations: The villagers of Fatsa provided their tractors and wheelbarrows, while even the inhabitants of other municipalities wanted to help with their own vehicles and tools. To do the digging activity, ten people from each village as well as students, people from various neighborhoods were picked as participants. Moreover a schedule regarding the days, hours and division of labor was prepared to clarify the program. Everything was ready and awaiting the start of the campaign.

Just after the beginning of the process, one thing was undeniably obvious: The participation was massive. More people from villages than a mere number of ten as well as a great amount of students were digging together, people from other municipalities were joining them with their efforts, the heads of other municipalities were present in the digging areas, looking for any kind of alternative ways to supply further help whereas some other people were preparing foods and teas to support the ones in the activity itself (Özden, 2013: 60). Almost everybody was doing something. To put it differently, a great amount of people in and around Fatsa came together to demonstrate their care for the common problem which had become a seriously binding issue for the inhabitants of Fatsa. They worked days and nights, established new relationships with each other and tried to show that these kinds of administrative issues could be solved differently, without any compliance to "old school scientific methods".

In the end of the campaign, the achievements were incredible: Mud was swept entirely out of Fatsa, which was said to necessitate at least four years to be cleaned, only in six days (Aksakal, 1989: 139). So the predictions were completely plunged due to the immense participation of the people in the "End to Mud" campaign. In addition to the unexpected success in cleaning the streets from mud, a new road which was four kilometers long was built as an extra attainment (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007)[16]. Strictly speaking, the campaign did not settle with taking care of what was necessary, i.e. cleaning; it also gave rise to something durable, namely that single new road. Thereby, Fatsa became a healthier place for the satisfaction of vital necessities and for the functioning of the artificially constructed world of things. To put it in theoretical terms, it can be suggested that the conditions for labor and work, in Arendtian terms, were made better.

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[16] With regard to the cleaning of mud and the construction of a road in Fatsa, the Self-Help literature which has its roots in the sixties and seventies can be applied to as well. Self-help is mainly based on the conjoint efforts by the people from western countries and local inhabitants of African and Asian countries to improve the conditions of living in the regions in-need and to develop infrastructures in order to make them self-sufficient in common issues such as water supply, schooling, roads, healthcare and etc. (Hunter & Stewart, 1973: 439) However, I do not take into account the Self-Help literature in this thesis since its project-oriented outlook would fall short in grasping the relationship of the fight against mud with the spontaneous, extraordinary and revolutionary aspects of the processes in Fatsa.

This campaign did not only show the falsification of scientific forecasts, nor did it only highlight a simple process of an administrative task. It also demonstrated that the campaign was not only about mud but also about something more (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). It was a monumental manifestation of solidarity between people (Erdoğan, 2013: 371). With the dense efforts of the people from different backgrounds, social groups and geographies, it was shown that collectivity and strong common bonds shall overcome seemingly impossible tasks in an incredibly rapid fashion. In other words, it constituted a new story. In this regard, if one employs Arendt's distinctions, the rigid line that she draws between the social and the political becomes questionable. From an Arendtian standpoint, this campaign would have been considered as an ordinary administrative matter or as "collective housekeeping" that pertains to the social realm. It also included the elements of necessity and instrumentality to solve the problems. There was labor and there was work in it, so there was nothing to do with politics. However, I want to argue that this line of thinking is not acceptable if one starts to consider the magnitude of the success of and the intensities took place during the campaign. As Özden asserts, the fight against mud was transformed into an "open air festival" with the enjoyment that the people had in solidarity (Özden, 2013: 60-61). After such remark, I think it becomes possible to assert, *contra* Arendt, that the "End to Mud" campaign was not ordinary at all. Emerging within the context of Fatsa and reaching unexpected results, an ordinary act of cleaning which belongs to the logic of housekeeping was an astonishingly extraordinary demonstration of what solidarity and togetherness in administrative issues is capable of. The campaign due to its reference to necessity and instrumentality can be thought as a deviation from the newly established political regime, yet I think just the exact opposite was the case: The ties of togetherness in Fatsa, which were obvious in the activities of People's Committees, became even more consolidated in the "End to Mud" campaign. To put it differently, during the fight against mud, the three elements within *vita activa* did not exclude but rather complemented each other in Fatsa. Such a point is clearly at odds with Arendtian framework. It was genuinely original. So to use etymology, it can be said that things were handled with respect to the notion of *imece*, a Turkish word originated from the Arabic *amma* (amme in Turkish), indicating a collective way of working while also

meaning "public". This point is significant, since with respect to this etymological play, against Arendt, it becomes possible to assert that labor and work may have the potential to acquire publicness. With this effort in six days, the solidarity among people became apparent to the community as the display of what they could do in their togetherness. Moreover, a campaign like this might also carry alongside the dimension of unpredictability which essentially belongs to action in Arendtian framework. As it was put forward earlier on, it was not seen possible to finish the cleaning in less than four years as the best case scenario. Such an achievement in six days was unexpected and extraordinary. Therefore, "collective housekeeping" is not necessarily ordinary.

With all these arguments I do not intend to mean that the "End to Mud" campaign was indeed political action. The point is rather that certain characteristics of action such as extraordinariness, publicness and unexpectedness might also be attributed to labor and work as well as to the realm of social under specific circumstances. As a result, the Arendtian rigid line that differentiates the social and the political becomes more fluid and the interplays between these two show up to be more often than Arendt thought. In addition, such emerged fluidity is not a threat to the very existence of politics, as Arendt would have argued; rather it is a source of diversity and richness that reveals the uniqueness of each human activity.

Having discussed the peculiar success of "End to Mud" campaign which exhibited well the intense solidarity in Fatsa and which paved the way to question and criticize Arendtian separation between social and political, I would like to move to another important event in the local revolution of Fatsa which was the organization of "Public Culture Festival" as the disclosure of the town to the public of Turkey in general and as a step to constitute the cultural groundwork for the new type of community established in the region.

3. 4. Fatsa Discloses Itself to Turkey: The Public Culture Festival

As the activities of the municipality went on, the Municipal Assembly decided to organize a public festival annually in the April of each year, beginning with the April of 1980, to set the ground for cultural, artistic, sportive and intellectual

developments for the region. In this regard, the municipality designed brochures and handbooks to draw attention for the forthcoming public festival. Moreover, the municipality used the legal means of propaganda such as Turkish Radio Television Institute to constitute awareness in the whole country about the event. Many invitations were sent to public bodies such as the President, the Prime Ministry, Ministers of Culture and Domestic Affairs, and municipal heads of large cities like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir (Aksakal, 1989: 47). Tailor Fikri stated these invitations as an answer to the accusations directed against him at the court, regarding "the communist propaganda which the municipality of Fatsa intended to do by organizing this festival": He suggested that it would have been totally absurd and silly to invite these high ranked public officials to a "display of a communist propaganda" in a manner of "come and see what we have done here" (Aksakal, 1989: 48). At the very end, the preparations were completed and Fatsa was ready to host the guests from the rest of Turkey to reveal the recently born type of government as well as the bonds of solidarity established in the region. In other words, the *inter-est* in Fatsa was waiting to appear in "widest possible publicity" to the other parts of Turkey.

The festivals started in April 8, 1980, with the messages from the President and the Prime Ministry being read and the speeches of head official of Fatsa and Fikri Sönmez were made. Turkish Radio Television Institute covered the opening days of the festival (Türkmen, 2006: 116). One important noteworthy thing in the speech of Fikri Sönmez was that the organization of the festival was seen not as a simple means to joy and fun but rather as an indispensable part of the political struggle which was characterized by him as "the power of the people created righteously and patiently" (Aksakal, 1989: 315). So, the solidarity that was present in the whole process of Fatsa was to be consolidated through cultural, artistic, intellectual and sportive ways.

The events took place in the festival were ranging from concerts to intellectual discussions, from plays taking place in theaters to football matches and art exhibitions. The participants in these activities, indeed, witnessed the plurality in action during the local revolution in Fatsa. As Ketenci noted in her observations, the panel discussions led by intellectuals such as Can Yücel and Murat Belge were

followed by villager women aged between 40 and 50 as well as religious hodjas; also, in a concert, a young student from a university accompanied the songs being played with a woman wearing headscarf next to him (Aksakal, 1989: 317). Ketenci added an important question to her description of the plurality in Fatsa, "Could you ever think of this?" which was asked beneath the meaningful sub-heading, "Outside the Ordinaries" (Aksakal, 1989: 317). Yes, this plurality was deeply surprising for the attendants of the festival who were accustomed to the established relationalities outside Fatsa and they were obviously not expecting to see such an event there. Facing with new values, relationalities, solidarities and political spaces, the people invited to Fatsa were feeling like they were in a new world, and they seemed like as if they were coming from another planet due to their facial expressions (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). It was even argued that, after they failed to respond the questions of the people after a panel, a unit consisting of Turkish Radio Television Institute workers confessed that they came to Fatsa to teach something, however, during the festival, they became aware that they would learn from the people-in-struggle of Fatsa indeed (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). Such experience was due to the contention of the intellectuals outside Fatsa who considered themselves as those who knew and the people in Fatsa as those who acted but did not know[17]. However, in our context, it turned out, after the observations of the participants to the festival in Fatsa, to be that those who knew and those who acted were indeed the same and there were no gulfs between them at all. As a result, the distinction between the ruler and the ruled could not be applied there. To support this point, it was argued in the documentary that the events in Fatsa was not about the leadership of Fikri Sönmez, whose duty as the head of municipality was merely a symbolic means to an end, but the movement was rather about all the town, a town which consisted of active and equal participants as opposed to the passive recipients of what there was in political terms (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). The action in Fatsa was leaderless, as mentioned above. In this sense, Fatsa

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[17] In this sense, such intellectuals remind the Arendtian reading of Plato in terms of the ruptured tie between *archein* and *prattein*, between ruling, beginning and carrying through, acting, as it was discussed in the previous chapter. Such separation, according to Arendt, is seen as a step to identify politics as an "expertise" which would result in the domination of those who "know" politics over who do not" know". However, domination and inequality, in Arendtian framework, does essentially belong to the private realm since the public realm is created with the acts of equals.

demonstrated what political parties were unable to do due to their strong ties with the representational understanding of politics (Aksakal, 1989: 326).

During the festival, an important aspect of the local revolution in Fatsa was disclosed to the attendants from other parts of Turkey: There was peace (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). This point holds significance as it shows well the non-violent aspect of the process in Fatsa. Neither the process of elections nor the establishment of People's Committees came into being through any violent means. They rather occurred due to the power of the people acting in concert. People were not forced or coerced to involve in the processes in Fatsa. Rather, they consented to put effort together while enjoying speaking and acting with each other for the sake of creating an alternative human world. As it was discussed earlier in the previous chapter, violence is mute, according to Arendt, meaning that it aims at silencing alternative voices and thus, destroying plurality. Yet, in the case of Fatsa, contrary to the shutting up of different perspectives, the presence of plurality in the committees was promoted and protected. Apart from the excluded groups which were extreme nationalists and the black market dealers, everybody had the equal claim to partake in the collective matters of Fatsa with their partial and distinct standpoints.

In the end of the festivals, the total number of participants was estimated: At around 30,000 people attended to the event in Fatsa which was a town with a population of 20,000 (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). The people of Fatsa and the guests from other parts of the country had the chance to experience this newly established world together for a couple of days. Due to acquiring the chance to participate in the festivals, the people from other parts of Turkey became able to engage in the narrative of Fatsa, not as the ones in action but as spectators who were to tell the story of the local revolution there to make the event everlasting in the artificial human world. With their articles in the newspapers and through other means indicating the experiences in Fatsa, the participants in the festivals were not making Fatsa a simple object of knowledge to dominate or control it; rather it was transformed into a story to be enacted and to be made permanent. This is indeed a completion that, according to Kristeva, functions with respect to thought and memory through which the political life in Fatsa is "turned into an organization that

is creative of memory and/or history" (Kristeva, 2001: 16). Thus, the festival might be understood in the sense of being an important step to the establishment of the Fatsa narrative.

However, one of the most crucial features of the Public Culture Festival in Fatsa, namely the attainment of "widest possible publicity" in the publics of the country in general, also became the source of the events leading to its destruction. This is due to the fact that those who got an increased awareness of what was going on in the region included high ranked public authorities who had their eyes on Fatsa for a long time and who began accusing the political processes in the region as dangerous.

3. 5. The Increasing Pressure on Fatsa and the "Point Operation"

Actually the pressure on Fatsa did not emerge all of a sudden after the Public Culture Festival. Indeed there was a constant surveillance upon the region before and after the local elections. Just after Fikri Sönmez declared his candidacy to the local elections, there emerged three violent attacks; two of them were to assassinate tailor Fikri and the other one was directed against people: The first attempt to kill Fikri Sönmez ended up with him being injured by gunfire whereas in the second the assassins confused someone else in a taxi with him and they opened fire, resulting in the wounding of the taxi driver; the final attack took place in a public cafe, one person was killed and three were injured (Aksakal, 1989: 133).

Moreover, one of the first acts of the Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, who was elected from the Justice Party, after the local elections in Fatsa was to replace the existing governor of the city of Ordu, Cafer Eroğlu with Hikmet Gülsen, who executed two minor operations, one in January and the other in March 1980, including the raid of the municipality as well as the physical harassment of its employees (Uyan, 2004: 173). Thus, it can be concluded that the central government was obviously not happy with what was taking place in Fatsa. To elaborate further on this point, Fikri Sönmez declared in public that there was an economic embargo applied to Fatsa by the central government in terms of the supply of some vital materials such as oil and coal whereas some other municipalities such as the ones

under the administration of the Justice Party were enjoying these materials much more than necessary (Aksakal, 1989: 313). Obviously, the central government was behaving in a very partial and an unequal manner to Fatsa.

The gradual culmination of the pressure on Fatsa took place just after the organization of the festival in April, especially with the appointment of a new governor to Ordu, Reşat Akkaya, who was widely known as an extreme nationalist-right wing person in terms of his political views and who had the experience of working in many different public offices. After becoming the governor, his first words was showing the increasing tension in Fatsa: "I would do my best to secure order and peace, by showing the power of the state after I determine the staff with whom I can cooperate" (Aksakal, 1989: 145). According to this statement, the opinion of the state about Fatsa was in no ways positive: There was supposedly lack of order and peace which was to be established and maintained by the necessary acts of state institutions. Thereby with respect to maintaining order as the objective, any possible violence by the state became easily justified, as it could be argued from an Arendtian outlook. In accordance with these alleged necessities, governor Akkaya formed a staff group consisting mainly on Nationalist Movement Party sympathizers among which there were individuals affiliated with some murders and violent acts (Aksakal, 1989: 145). After constituting such a group, the governor organized civilians in many attacks who used masks or even official uniforms in order not to be recognized and identified. With the help of these groups, there had been assaults in the other parts of Ordu such as Ünye, Aybastı and Gölköy, as Aksakal mentions (Aksakal, 1989: 150). The total number of murders during the time of Reşat Akkaya, compared to the previous periods showed a dramatic increase: There had been 34 people killed in 3 years prior to Akkaya whereas in 5 months of his governorship a total of 130 people were killed (Aksakal, 1989: 150). Therefore the employment as well as the threat of violence in the period of Akkaya was significantly present.

While such events were taking place in and around Fatsa, one of the most bloody events in the history of the Republic of Turkey happened in May 1980, which was named as "Çorum Massacre": In Çorum, a city located in the north of the capital Ankara, extreme right-wing nationalist groups, according to Morgül, with the help of

some police forces, attacked the local people: In the end tens of people were murdered and more than a hundred of them were injured (Morgül, 2007: 185). After the events in Çorum, a journalist asked the opinion of the Prime Minister Demirel about it and his response meant a lot: "Leave Çorum, look at Fatsa!" (Morgül, 2007: 186). This anxiety in his tone proves the fact that the "non-violent but powerful" processes in Fatsa were considered to be a more severe threat than an event in which violence ended up with more than 50 killings. This was probably because, as a relevant debate took place earlier in the previous chapter, according to Arendt, the states tend to deal with ease when faced with violent events, yet they hardly know how to cope with non-violent processes taking place[18]. The power which created new public spaces was in Fatsa and this fact made visible the powerlessness of the state in the region of which the Prime Minister was very well aware, and if powerlessness becomes disclosed, the means of violence as the last resort were there to be applied to. In other words, the period of pressure on Fatsa was completely in line with Arendt's views on power, violence and state.

The presence of non-violence in Fatsa also demonstrated that people from different world-views may be able to live together and cooperate to create common spaces in solidarity. Considering the conflictual atmosphere that surrounded the country during late 70s, which resulted in the killing of 9 to 12 people each day according to the New York Times (Morgül, 2007: 187), the values that Fatsa brought into daylight such as "being with others" were unbelievably extraordinary. This strong aspect of "being with" manifested itself in the public statements of the Fatsa heads of Justice Party, Republican People's Party and National Salvation Party, as a response to what the Prime Minister had said. To begin with, the local head of the party of the Prime Minister, Justice Party, argued that: "We live peacefully with our siblings from Fatsa. When we go to Ünye and Ordu, we encounter troubles. We got

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[18] The Gezi Park events which took place in Turkey during the summer of 2013 can also be considered as a relevant example to think of the relationship between non-violent power and violence. Beginning in the end of May with the resistance to the destruction of trees in Gezi Park and then suddenly spreading to many other parts of the country, the events were mainly characterized by the non-violent collective demonstrations on the streets. Facing with such power of people from various and conflicting worldviews, the Justice and Development Party government had difficulties while trying to cope with such outburst without applying to the language of "They burn, destroy and harm." In the end, the state responded with violence: The police intervention ended up with injuries and killings due to the gas canisters, pepper sprays, water cannons, beatings and even bullets.

beaten, we got humiliated… There is no blood, no fire, no gunpowder in our town…" Following the same vein, the Fatsa head of National Salvation Party claimed that: "There is not fire and gunpowder in Fatsa, why there is the demand to create conflicts in such a peaceful place? We are together with different views… There is no coercion, no pressure; everybody is regarded as human…" Finally, the words of Republican People's Party head backed up other two statements: "There is no communist occupation in Fatsa; there are the people, the rule of people… We are in peace…" (Aksakal, 1989: 154) Despite the articulation of such stances from plural actors to decrease the rapidly growing pressure on Fatsa, the Prime Minister did not take a step back: "We must defeat Fatsa." (Aksakal, 1989: 153)

At July 9, 1980, one of the most popular newspapers in Turkey, Hürriyet announced the intervention in Fatsa with the main title, "The Point Operation in Fatsa", by arguing that the reason behind this state act was Dev-Yol militants' kidnapping two military officers of Turkish Army, a reason which was soon proved to be wrong according to Aksakal (Aksakal, 1989: 153). The day after this public declaration of the intervention, Hürriyet disclosed the words of the Prime Minister about Fatsa on the main page: "Law will be brought to Fatsa" (Özden, 2013: 76). Labeling Fatsa as lawless and "liberated zone", the ground for the intervention was easily prepared. The Point Operation in the "lawless" Fatsa was initiated on July 11, 1980. In the operation there were the army members, gendarmeries, police officers as well as masked civilians. These forces encountered almost no resistance in the region. Many of Dev-Yol members and some inhabitants of Fatsa escaped to rural areas. The first day resulted with taking into custody of around 300 people including the mayor Fikri Sönmez (Türkmen, 2006: 138), who decided to stay in Fatsa after learning the operation was to take place (Özden, 2013: 75). The operation was very brutal: According to the documentary, Fatsa Gerçeği, many police stations were established inside and outside the town for interrogations and allegedly torture, the masked civilians attacked the inhabitants of Fatsa on the streets and raided their houses, and as a result, between 5,000 and 10,000 people out of the total of 19,000 inhabitants of Fatsa were taken into custody, tortured or physically and psychologically damaged (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007). The courts established after the military takeover in following September, decided the imprisonment of almost two

hundred participants in Fatsa events (Morgül, 2007: 202-3), thus, in Arendtian sense, Fatsa was not forgiven.

To back the state intervention up, some well-known columnists such as Oktay Ekşi in Hürriyet was arguing for the necessity of the intervention by characterizing Fatsa as "dangerous" and "the source of evil" which must be eliminated as soon as possible (Fatsa Gerçeği, 2007), whereas Nazlı Ilıcak, was defining Fatsa as the 18th province of the Soviet Union reminding her the Parisian Commune as well as the public committees in Allende's Chile, and as a result she regarded the harsh intervention in the region an appropriate move (Türkmen, 2006: 159).

In the end, the new form of government and the political spaces in Fatsa were totally destroyed by the armed forces of the Turkish State, showing once again the fragility of power against violence. The excessive use of the means of violence set the people in Fatsa apart from each other, damaging severely the bonds established *in-between*, hence, the power holding the spaces of appearance in Arendtian terms, was swept away. This operation was also considered as the rehearsal of the military *coup d'état* in September 12, 1980 which was one of the most dramatic and traumatic experiences in the history of the Republic of Turkey. It has become a public knowledge that in order to justify the takeover, Kenan Evren, who was at the top of the Turkish Armed Forces during the event, put forward an important statement about Fatsa: "If we did not come, those in Fatsa would have". Hereby, it becomes undeniably obvious that there was a revolutionary power in Fatsa. Such revolutionary creative aspect made the region be considered as a serious threat by the state, and violence brought the end of the alternative living space there.

3. 6. Ending Remarks

The local and brief revolution in Fatsa has a very peculiar place in the history of political movements in Turkey. First of all, it was in no ways reducible to a simple protest. Through an Arendtian gaze, the creation of a new type of government in the aftermath of the local elections can be regarded as an extraordinary beginning in political action. The moment of founding a novel regime was the one of the most distinguishing factors of Fatsa and its originality can be grasped well with respect to

Arendt's conception of action. Second, the Fatsa Revolution brought alternative spaces of appearance into being, namely the People's Committees which problematized Villa's argument about the possibility of action without an established public space. It is hardly answerable in the case of Fatsa whether the formation of People's Committees or the spontaneous action of local people came first. Rather, both of them co-emerged with each other in the emergence of a unique way of political engagement. Moreover, the Fatsa case could not have been argued to be possible with respect to the existing conditions within Turkey and region: It was unpredictable. It spontaneously came into being and established new spaces, new stories and new relationalities. Third, plurality was the key to disclose these new relationalities as being the human condition of political action. People with many different worldviews acted in concert for the sake of the common *in-between* with the joy of engaging in public-political matters. So the matter at stake there was not all about specific goals and purposes which were present during the processes in People's Committees, but also participation as an end in itself was appreciated. Fourth, the events in Fatsa paved the way for problematizing the rigid boundaries that Arendt draws between social and political as well as ordinary and extraordinary. Especially the "End to Mud" campaign opens up a door to raise further questions regarding such rigid separations: An ordinary mundane issue of "collective housekeeping" which has been ignored by administration for a long time turned out to be an extraordinary public manifestation of solidarity between ordinary people, resulting in a totally unpredictable success in terms of the betterment of the conditions of life and world through labor and work. Fifth, the organization of the Public Cultural Festival has led to the establishment of narratives about Fatsa outside Fatsa by opening the town to Turkey. It was understood from the reactions and experiences of the outsider participants to the festival that Fatsa was indeed a new world where those who knew and those who acted were essentially the same, a situation which revealed the destructed separation between the ruler and the ruled that has been persistent in most polities. Finally, the end of Fatsa experience in actuality, namely the "Point Operation" as well as the statements of highly ranked public officials about the new life there signified both the weakness of power against

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violence and the difficulty which violent means face while trying to react to a non-violent and powerful political event.

Within the context of the non-violent revolutionary action in Arendtian terms, the case of Fatsa displayed a lot. However, in order to understand this novel experience comparatively and Arendt's conception of action better, another unique political event is going to be helpful. This will bring a grand shift of attention and focus on a completely different context. Yet, such a comparison, I will try to demonstrate, will be very valuable for understanding the collectivity of power, creativity, solidarity and plurality in action with respect to Arendt's political thought. In this regard, the "Occupy Wall Street" movement which emerged all of a sudden in the autumn of 2011 will be analyzed. Thus, the next chapter is dedicated to this discussion of the Occupy movement with respect to Arendtian reflections on action and the case of Fatsa.

CHAPTER 4

THE OCCUPY WALL STREET MOVEMENT

The previous chapter was on the local revolution in Fatsa in 1979-80 with respect to Arendtian conception of action as the formation of a new type of political space, namely the People's Committees. To provide a second case so as to refresh the debate, in this chapter I will focus on the "Occupy Wall Street Movement" which emerged in New York City on September 17 of 2011, and rapidly spread to various cities around the world. I will pursue a discussion pertaining to the creation of an alternative public space in Zuccotti Park where a peculiar sense of politics based on participation, debate, leaderlessness and plurality began to grow up. In this context, I will try to argue that the occupation of Zuccotti Park demonstrated the fact that novel public spaces can be brought into being in action, without necessarily relying on existing political spaces. Moreover, the processes in Zuccotti Park were not only about developing a different way of political engagement but also about laboring and working activities as well. Therefore, the relationship between the social and the political, as well as the distinctions among labor-work-action will be explicated and the strict separations assumed by Arendt will be criticized. Furthermore, the founding and the original "demand-less" aspects of the movement will provide a crucial point for a different understanding of politics and for reflecting on the reactions to the occupations in terms of the Arendtian distinction between power and violence.

4. 1. The Background of the Movement: Sources of Inspiration

The year of 2011 was the time when the Arab Uprisings, such as the occupation of the Tahrir Square in Egypt and protests in Tunisia, Libya and Bahrain took place. During the same year, collective demonstrations in Spain, which were named as the "15-M Movement" (referring to the 15th of May which was the first day of the movement), or *Los Indignados* (The Indignants) were experienced. The uprisings in the Arabic region were mainly against the rulers such as Hosni Mubarak

and Muammar Gaddafi, as well as against political corruption, the lack of citizen rights, absence of democracy and violent acts of governments, whereas the movement in Spain was mainly due to the economic crisis that the country was trying to cope with and the austerity packages planned to introduce strict implementations on the economic conditions of the citizens (Calhoun, 2013: 28). It is noteworthy that the Arab uprisings also had economic motives (such as high levels of poverty) and the Spanish movement carried along political reasons (such as a lack of trust against political representation). The uniqueness and significance of these movements, especially those in Egypt and Spain, mainly resided in the following feature: They did not only protest the present political and economic structures but also managed to create and maintain dynamic experiences of alternative participatory spaces in which they wanted to live (della Porta, 2013: 80-82). In other words, these actions; the encampments in the Tahrir Square and the "Indignants" in Spain posited something while at the same time negating the existing social, political and economic regimes. On the one hand, taking place in the form of autonomous assemblies which were constituted as open spaces of deliberation and participation, the movements in Spain was an example of collective decision making process based on consensus; on the other hand, the transformation of Tahrir Square into a strong symbol of freedom and a space for those who wished to make their voices heard through involvement in the encampments, was a novel experience which showed the world an alternative way of political engagement with respect to common problems (Adbusters Blog, 2012). In the end, both, the Spanish movement and Arab uprisings were unique experiences which remarkably shaped the image and the meaning of politics.

By taking these events as a vital source of inspiration, a Canadian anti-consumerist magazine, Adbusters, which was founded in Vancouver, in 1989, declared an invitation for an occupation in lower Manhattan, New York City, on the 17th of September, 2011. Before this open call for occupation, on the 9th of June, Adbusters board sent an e-mail to their followers which ended up with a brief idea that began with the catchy sentence, "America needs its own Tahrir encampment" (Adbusters Blog, 2011a). However, the main call came with a blog post by Adbusters on July 13. The quintessential line of that text was the following: "Are you ready for a Tahrir moment? On Sept 17, flood into lower Manhattan, set up tents,

kitchens, peaceful barricades and occupy Wall Street"[19] (Adbusters Blog, 2011b). So the major issue at stake was to occupy peacefully a public space in order to exert the right to assemble non-violently. Moreover, this blog post included a remarkable quotation from an academician and an activist from Pompeu Fabra University of Barcelona, Raimundo Viejo:

> The anti-globalization movement was the first step on the road. Back then our model was to attack the system like a pack of wolves. There was an alpha male, a wolf who led the pack, and those who followed behind. Now the model has evolved. Today we are one big swarm of people (Adbusters Blog, 2011b).

Such quotation is relevant to the discussion concerning political action within Arendtian framework, because according to the quote, the old model consisted of a leader (an alpha male who was capable of *archein*, to lead through) and followers (who were capable of *prattein*, to carry through). Recall the debate in the second chapter of the thesis: It was claimed that this separation between those who lead through and those who carry through contrasted with Arendtian conception of action since such distinction introduced as rulership into politics. However, Arendt's understanding of politics is more closely affiliated with the new model that was mentioned in the quote, where a big swarm of people can lead and carry through at the same time. This kind of "grassroots" form of action was at the heart of Adbusters' post which called for the articulation of a "single and simple demand in the plurality of voices" and that demand was the removal of the economic influence over politics in America (Adbusters Blog, 2011b). However, as it will be discussed later on, the movement would go far beyond the perspective of this single demand and spontaneously transform into something unexpected and extraordinary. After the blog post by Adbusters on the 13th of June, many supports came from online activist groups including the "hacktivist" team "Anonymous" which restated the call for action by Adbusters, in late August. (Adbusters Blog, 2011c). Meanwhile, ideas of occupation for many other cities inside and outside the U.S. were also developed.

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[19] The date and the proposed site of occupation held symbolic meanings: September 17 is the American Constitution Day whereas Wall Street has been regarded by the activists as the core of the economic influence over politics as well as huge gaps of inequality in society.

Apart from these events which mainly constituted the "idea" for action and sources of inspiration for the Occupy Movement, certain groups organized rallies in the New York City during July and August. In the gathering on the 2nd of August, some participants disagreed with the organization of a traditional rally which was identified as having predetermined set of demands and goals (Kroll, 2011). Rather, the actors tried to gather in the form of a general assembly which is not fixed on a specific topic or a person but which rather embraces a participation-based space of open dialogue. In other words, rather than limiting the frame of the movement with articulated demands such as "Implement progressive taxation!" or "Better healthcare!", the assemblies constituted an alternative political form which would try to provide and protect the plurality of voices and the process of mutual sharing among participants as open-ended as possible. Such experiences of assemblies resulted in the formation of the New York City General Assembly (NYCGA) (Kroll, 2011), which constituted the political cornerstone of the Occupy Wall Street Movement. The General Assembly will be discussed in the following parts of the chapter in detail.

To conclude this section, it can be suggested that the Arab uprisings and the Spanish experience were the major sources of inspiration for the Occupy Movement which led Adbusters to develop the idea of occupying Wall Street on 17th of September to use the right to assemble peaceably in a public space. Moreover, the experiences in July and August which ended up with the constitution of the New York City General Assembly were the practical background of the occupation. Apart from all such preceding events, a slogan demonstrating the underlying reasons of the occupation was created before the movement itself: the 99%. At this stage, I want to examine the essential characteristics of that famous slogan of the Occupy Wall Street Movement.

4. 2. The 99%: "Who Are We?"

After the Adbusters' call for action in lower Manhattan, a new name to identify those who would be eager to participate in the Occupy Movement was

found: the 99%. Having its basis in the "wearethe99percent" web site[20], this term 99% originated with respect to its counterpart, the 1% who is considered to be the richest of the country by holding a great percentage of the total of economic resources that the world had (van Gelder, 2011: 1). In this website, it is asserted that the world was owned by the 1% and the remaining 99% was to live in such a world which was not made for them (Wearethe99percent Tumblr Site, 2011). In other words, the 1% was identified as the possessor of big companies, banks, insurance industries and stocks. Then the 99% turned out to be signifying those who did not have jobs, who lacked the opportunity to access education and those who were in need of shelter. To put it differently, the 99% did not have easy access to vital necessities as well as the opportunity to engage in working environments comfortably[21]. In Arendtian terms, life and worldliness, as the human conditions for laboring and working activities were in serious danger for the 99%.

Hence, the origins of the slogan can easily be identified as resistance against existing inequalities in the economic system which was the source of huge gaps in income levels between individuals. Other common problems in society such as proper education, progressive taxation and housing were also amongst the motives of the 99%. Such issues, examined from an Arendtian perspective, are to be regarded as the administration of things, in both economic and social senses. Thus, these matters are not by themselves political; rather they are related with liberation since there is an explicit negation of the conditions imposed by the opposed structures. Though such negativity remained persistent throughout the events, it will also be manifest that the movement and the unique meanings that it carried along do not mainly reside in such negative feature (the 99% being against the 1%) but in the processes it set anew positively.

Moreover, the existing political functioning of the United States was thought to serve the interests of the 1%, not the 99% (Rise like Lions, 2011). It was argued that wealthier and richer people were to have significantly higher impact on politics.

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[20] wearethe99percent.tumblr.com
[21] The analysis of Zuccotti Park events in the following part of the chapter will shed light on the profile of the 99% in terms of their opinions, backgrounds, ideologies which will be debated with respect to Arendtian notion of plurality.

To use their terminology, current system was defined as the rule of wealthy, "plutocracy" or "corporatocracy" (which was a term that Adbusters' main call for action stated, referring to the rule of big corporations) (Adbusters Blog, 2011b). Therefore, power of affecting worldly affairs and having a voice were in the hands of the property owners. This was to say that the 99% was muted. Understood in this sense, one of the motives of the slogan, 99%, was to reduce and even destroy the strong effect that economy imposes upon politics. In other words, economy and politics should be separated so that politics would not remain subordinated and contaminated by the interests and decisions of the rich.

The distinction between the 99% and the 1% might remind one the exclusion of extreme right-wing nationalists and black market dealers from the political processes in Fatsa. However, I contend that the non-violent exclusion of aforementioned groups in Fatsa is not the same as the separation between the 99% and the 1% because in the Occupy Wall Street Movement, there was not a strict and explicit exclusion of the 1% from the public spaces. Rather, the distinction denoted a slogan and a call for action, in which, the people from the 1% who might want to appear to others through words and deeds could also take part. In contrast, the People's Committees in Fatsa were not at all open to the excluded groups and the participatory spaces were carefully protected from them.

To finish this part, it can be claimed that the aspect of "being against the 1%" constituted the slogan for the movement. By opposing the existing inequalities and breakdowns within the American economic, social and political systems as well as those of the world in general, the 99% explicitly tried to liberate themselves from the chains imposed upon them. Yet, as it was discussed in the theoretical chapter, liberation and freedom in action are not the same. There has to be something new posited, something brought into being and some spaces created if there is to be action and freedom. Such positive moment for the movement came into being with the actual occupation of a Privately Owned Public Space (POPS), Zuccotti Park, from which the Occupy Wall Street Movement derived its uniqueness which had then become a source of inspiration worldwide. At this point, I will examine the occupation of Zuccotti Park and this examination will provide a fresh perspective to

evaluate the relationships between action and liberation, action and public spaces, as well as labor, work and action as the elements of human condition.

4. 3. The Occupation of Zuccotti Park: Founding a New Common World

On September 17, more than a thousand people physically occupied Zuccotti Park, and renamed it as the Liberty Plaza (Liberty Square)[22] (reminding the name of Tahrir Square since *tahrir* in Arabic means "liberation"). Initially, Zuccotti Park was not the first choice as the site of occupation. The New York City General Assembly deliberated and decided on the One Chase Manhattan Plaza and identified Zuccotti Park as an alternative (Writers for the 99%, 2012: 13). The New York City Police Department (NYPD) managed to close down the One Chase Plaza and therefore Zuccotti Park turned out to be the actual place of occupation. Such choice of Zuccotti Park was not accidental: Unlike many other parks which belonged to New York City, Zuccotti Park, being privately owned, was to remain open 24 hours a day like many other Privately Owned Public Spaces (Foderaro, 2011). However, it could not be said that Zuccotti Park was a pre-established public space in Arendtian sense since the space was not designated for active political engagement and deliberation. It was simply an area of recreation for the citizens to relax and spend some refreshing time. If a simple question was asked, could anyone say that the transformation of a recreational site such as Zuccotti Park into a dynamic participatory political space was possible, before the occupations actually took place, the answer would be no because the new name attributed to Zuccotti Park did not only indicate a nominal change. Being Liberty Plaza and hosting the occupation of the thousands, Zuccotti Park ceased to be a mere geographical location or a site of recreation: Rather it constituted the spontaneous beginning of the movement and the people gathered there to celebrate the birth of a new world (Occupy Love, 2012). The birth came with action and the usage of the word "birth" should take one back to the aspect of natality which the concept of political action in Arendtian framework holds as one of its most essential features. In Zuccotti Park, a novel public space was created in and through action, without having a pre-established space of appearance.

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[22] The first name that the park had when it was created in 1968 was "Liberty Plaza Park", so the change in the name of Zuccotti Park can be considered as a return to the original name.

In terms of political spontaneity, it might first seem that there are the Adbusters' campaign and call for action as well as the practices of the General Assembly which can easily be evaluated as the planning processes that contrast with spontaneity. Such preceding events cannot be neglected at all: It is true that the idea behind the events on the 17th of September has been developed and shared repeatedly during the summer before the actual occupations took place. However, to reduce the movement to the efforts of Adbusters as well as of the participants in earlier assemblies would fall short in understanding the impact and unexpected significance of the occupations, because the number of participants, the intense feelings that arose out of sheer togetherness, the power to influence the world that came into being with acting in concert and the wave of effects that the movement triggered inside and outside the U.S. were in no ways planned. Rather, all these features came into being spontaneously with the actual occupation of the Zuccotti Park. Whatever was done was done by ordinary people on the streets, acting together in freedom and not by Adbusters or by any other person preceding the movement. Even some people from Adbusters referred to what has happened during the occupations as "miraculous", stating that they were not expecting the movement to spread rapidly around the world and to become a possibility of "global mind shift" (The Canadian Press, 2011). As a result, there was genuine spontaneity in the Occupy Movement which cannot be reduced to the previous events and campaigns.

Occupying Zuccotti Park was the initial and the most important step to transform the movement into something more than a negation. To support this claim, della Porta suggests that the occupation site was not only an occasion to protest, but also carried experiments with participation and deliberation (della Porta, 2013: 83). From a similar vein, it is relevant to quote from an occupier in this manner: "We are not protesting; we are just discussing." (Occupy Love, 2012). Such words explicitly signify the emergence of political action with the occupation of Zuccotti Park. The movement ceased to be simply negating existing institutions; it also gradually began to create and develop novel political forms. Similarly, as it was written on a banner during the events, the occupy movement was not a protest; rather it was a movement, an action for change (Graeber, 2011). According to Graeber, protests ask existing authorities to take a different stance whereas action takes place as if the existing

structures do not exist (Graeber, 2011). Such point is crucial since, according to Arendt, actors would seem as if they were thrown out of the temporal order, as it was mentioned in the second chapter. In this regard, Adams argues that the occupy movement was the occupation of time, alongside with space (Adams, 2011). In other words, the Occupy Movement managed to create a new temporal flow and an alternative way of experiencing time, change and spontaneity, "as if" the existing temporal orders were ignored. If one compares the Occupy Movement with the revolution in Fatsa in the sense of the ways in which they related themselves to the existing structures, legal frameworks and temporalities, an interesting conclusion can be drawn: The processes in Fatsa were much more successful in establishing a link with what was ordinary because the existing legal dimensions were always respected and applied whereas in the Occupy Movement, what was ordinary did not get such attention and was more or less neglected. In other words, if the debate about political action's being inside and outside time is remembered, it could be asserted that even though both cases managed to develop novel forms of acting, working and laboring (this is the dimension of being outside), the people in Fatsa also managed to remain inside (i.e. the existing legal regulations).

If the discussion in the second chapter pertaining the combination of speech and deed in Arendtian action is recalled, it could be argued that by physically occupying a park, the people in action managed to begin a new process; this is the deed, whereas on the other hand, by deliberating and talking, the participants appeared to each other as well as to the general public of the U.S. and the world; this is the word. Thus, such merge between the word and the deed, revealed the forging of a new chain, a new flow and a novel story to be told. As a result, with the occupation of Zuccotti Park, the Occupy Movement managed to go beyond a liberation movement which takes place within a pre-established chain and a given temporal structure. Such remark is important, since as Rieger and Pui-lan suggest, protesting and criticizing were not enough; something new should be created and experienced (Rieger & Pui-lan, 2012: 40). The occupiers successfully accomplished positing something, and such thing is the creation of a new space of appearance in the park itself. The difference is obvious: The protesters could have settled down to traditional rallies and street protests, standing against something in the existing

system and asking the public authorities to supply their specific demands, but they did not. Rather, they began to build a new community actively and immediately.

But what was created in Zuccotti Park? What was the novelty that came into being with the occupation? First of all, Liberty Plaza hosted New York City General Assembly which was developed during July and August, as it was mentioned in the previous sections. General Assembly was the political body of open deliberation and participation. Individuals were equally able to take part in the processes within the General Assembly and make speeches to the audience. Moreover, decisions were being taken by assuring consensus, without the presence of coercion (Graeber, 2011). So it could be asserted that the General Assembly included elements that were reminiscent of the logic of *poiesis* as well as that of *praxis*. It can be contended that the consensus-based decision making process was instrumental, in other words, "consensus" as an end, constituted the meaning of the process, so it pertains to the mentality of making. Decisions belonging to the realms of labor and work were also being debated in the Assembly. However, at the same time, the participants in the processes were simply enjoying speeches and sharing with others for their own sake. In other words, the enthusiasm of the occupiers exhibited towards the matters in General Assembly was indicating public happiness arising from solidarity and a valuation of participation for its own sake. This double aspect of the General Assembly signifies an important point which is at odds with an Arendtian framework: In a political beginning which created new spaces of appearance, new forms of solidarity and new relationships, making and acting went together. The combination of consensus-based decision making process which had a predetermined purpose (of reaching an agreement) and the joy of speaking and acting with peers were at the core of Zuccotti Park occupation's political aspect. Instrumentality could not be dismissed out of the processes within the assembly. So again, *contra* Arendt, it could be inferred that the logics pertaining to making and acting do not necessarily disrupt each other but rather can function together, by also at the same time, being distinct orientations. The importance of this conclusion can be summarized as following: The processes in the General Assembly demonstrate a different understanding of the relationship between performativity and instrumentality which is not conflictual, and it is shown that the injection of an instrumental mentality into

politics does not necessarily threaten the existence of action, as Arendt would have contended.

The General Assembly included within itself many different Working Groups/Thematic Groups which were specialized with respect to specific topics. Such groups ranged from Food Group to Medical Group, from Legal Group to Direct Action Group and etc. (NYCGA, 2011d). The role of these groups was to deliberate about specific topics within themselves and bring important and common problems regarding these issues into the consensual decision making process in the General Assembly. In addition, the Working Groups were to find immediate actual solutions to the necessities of the occupiers and the provide resources for the sustainability of the encampment itself. Financing the movement was also among the tasks of the Working Groups and mostly, the funding was provided through donations from individuals as well as enterprises (Goodale, 2011).

An interesting point concerning the General Assembly was the decision of the New York City government and the New York City Police Department prohibiting the usage of sound amplifiers and megaphones (Calhoun, 2013: 30). So the occupiers had to develop a new form of communicating the speeches to those who stood far away from the speaker and who could face difficulties in hearing what was going on. The so-called "Human Microphone" (also known as the People's Microphone) was the way of dealing with this problem. Its function was simple: Somebody who asked to make a speech in the assembly was to draw attention by shouting "Mic check" (indicating "Microphone check"), and those who were nearby repeated the call by shouting "Mic check" to the other parts of the audience until everybody became aware of the fact that a speech was going to take place. Then, the speaker began the speech, completed some sentences or some parts of a sentence, and then stopped. Those who were nearby (those who were close to the center where the speech took place) repeated those words to the other parts of the audience (to the periphery). So everybody took active part in the speech and everybody turned out to be able to hear the entire speech with the help of this human microphone. Hence, through this method, "widest possible publicity" was acquired in the park, if one is to remember Arendt's definition of public. Revelation of the speeches to the entire audience

marked the publicness within the General Assembly. Apart from such public aspect, the absence of megaphones allowed the occupiers to create an alternative way of communication which even intensified the participatory processes and feelings of solidarity (Wanenchak, 2011). In addition to the establishment of human microphone, another novel form of interaction was applied in the Occupy Movement: Hand signals. The employment of hand signals was a way of expressing feelings and opinions when a speech on a specific topic was being made. Communicating through hand gestures was innovated in order to find an effective (and possibly affective) way of reaching consensus and of knowing how the audience felt regarding the proposals being debated. Indications of agreement, disagreement, neutrality, request for clarification, necessary information and blockage were among these hand gestures (NYCGA, 2011d)[23]. Through these responses, a proposal and consensus process was negotiated with the help of facilitators; and the proposal passed if consensus was achieved whereas it was to be changed and revised if there was disagreement from the audience. The final novelty in method used by the General Assembly was called "progressive stack" which indicated the priority of the groups of people whose voices were less heard, such as the blacks, women and other ethnic minorities, to make speeches before the white and male participants (Writers for the 99%, 2012: 30). This point of priority showed the sensitivity of the General Assembly to the inequalities within society and the Assembly tried to provide more participating opportunities to those with fewer opportunities in the ordinary establishment of public space. The "progressive stack" was closely related with what is called the "step-up/step-back" approach which indicated that it was the duty of the dominant voices (white-male-heterosexual) to "step-back" and create the space for the traditionally marginalized groups to "step-up" to make their voices heard primarily (NYCGA, 2011e). Such an approach to the political processes in the

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[23] For agreement, hands must be turned upwards with open palms and twinkling fingers. For disagreement the same gesture must be done but this time with hands looking downwards. Holding hands flat and twinkling fingers means neutrality and being unsure about the proposal. Making the letter "I" with a hand means the signaler has important information (though not opinion) for the speech being made. Making the letter "C" with a hand means there is need for clarification or there is a question in order to make the process to continue. Making a triangle with the fingers of both hands means "Point of Process", indicating that the process by which the discussion should take place is not followed and the facilitators should put the discussion back on the track again. Finally, crossing both arms on the chest and making the letter "X" means there is strong opposition by the individual to the proposal being debated (NYCGA, 2011d).

assembly shows one thing that Arendt did not see: Positive discrimination problematizes the principle of *isonomia* by reference to existing inequalities in society. Even in an allegedly equal space of open deliberation, some voices might remain concealed due to the reflection of asymmetries in a community upon public spaces. In this regard, the movement managed to introduce positive discrimination into Zuccotti Park which did not constitute threats to plurality and politics, as Arendt would have contended, but rather enhanced diversity, differentiation and partiality. In other words, the employment of the "step-up/step-back" approach let action flourish and allowed the public space to be more inclusive.

Therefore, the General Assembly was at the core of the Zuccotti Park occupations as the body politic which publicly turned out to be an alternative form of politics based on active involvement. This was undeniably the political aspect of the Occupy Wall Street Movement. Yet, the occupation of Zuccotti Park and its transformation into a living experiment of a novel world was not only about such political feature: A clinic, tents, a media center, a legal issues center, a library called "People's Library", a sacred area, a sanitation area and a kitchen were established in the park (NYCGA, 2011d). In addition, a newspaper called "The Occupied Wall Street Journal" (reminding "The Wall Street Journal") was being issued on a daily basis. These points are very vital in order to grasp the movement because the occupation of Zuccotti Park was about forming a new space for human condition in general. Life and vital necessities in general were to be satisfied in the kitchen, the clinic and tents. So the occupiers did labor. A world of work was established in the form of media centers and libraries among which the occupiers could move along. A newspaper was published in order to expose to the American public what was taking place in the encampments as well as the ideas being proposed (Rise like Lions, 2011). An art center was located within the park too. Such sites would have been regarded by Arendt as durable things. Yet, I suggest that, the occupiers did not have any concern regarding the durability of their establishments. On the contrary, they were very well aware that those libraries, media centers and kitchens could be destroyed and rebuilt with ease. This remark paves the way for questioning the clear line of demarcation that Arendt draws between what is durable and what is not: There was a dynamic exchange between them which blurred their distinction.

Moreover, these aspects of the movement regarding life and work were not ordinary at all. To elaborate on this point more clearly, it is beneficial to mention the words of a librarian: An ordinary act of organizing books in the shelves was an extraordinary act given the circumstances that the movement has created (Writers for the 99%, 2012: 61). So at this point, the boundary that separates ordinary and extraordinary seems to be disrupted as well within the context of Arendtian action, simply because an ordinary act such as organizing books, taking place in the unique context of the occupation and the creation of a novel world, turned out to bear extraordinary dimensions. So the Occupy Wall Street Movement was not only about action and politics, but also about labor and work, both of which contained extraordinariness, contrary to Arendt's identification of work and labor with ordinariness. Like in Fatsa, these three essential human activities were hand-in-hand with each other, disrupting Arendtian characterization of labor, work and action as conflictual, and all of them played crucial roles to build up the novel story of the Occupy Wall Street.

In the declarations of the Occupiers, such as the "Principles of Solidarity" and "The Statement of Autonomy", it could easily be seen that the movement in general embraced direct action which was non-violent and peaceful (NYCGA, 2011a; NYCGA, 2011b; NYCGA, 2011c). In other words, the people in the parks were using their rights to peaceably assemble in various public spaces to create new relationships as well as to deliberate on collective issues. This non-violent aspect of the movement also demonstrated its powerful aspect – in Arendtian sense – as the occupiers created novel spaces of appearance with the power which originated from their initial gathering together through words and deeds. The people were not at all forced to occupy spaces or to take active part in the processes within General Assemblies. On the contrary, they consented to act together, to deliberate and share opinions with others. This absence of force was also accompanied with the absence of violence, at least in the declarations of the General Assembly. There was a strong emphasis on non-violent principles and zero tolerance towards any violent deed, including verbal or physical abuse towards individuals or properties was shown (NYCGA, 2011g). This stance has been officially accepted by the General Assembly in principle, but there had been some incidents of violence, for sure. These incidents did not represent the actual principles of the Liberty Plaza occupations since the

negative attitude towards violence could be observed in various manifestations. Such glorification of non-violent politics, though, was not equally accepted in certain other occupation sites such as Oakland, where, rather than a strict commitment to non-violence, a diversity of tactics were debated including violence under certain circumstances (Park & Molteni & Lyons, 2011). However, any employment of violent means would lead to the loss of legitimacy for the movement: In this regard, the New York City General Assembly supported such Arendtian stance by suggesting that "…mutually harmonious, non-violent struggle is far superior to violent struggle" which was believed to be capable of delivering a truly convincing message (NYCGA, 2011f). Therefore, it could be concluded that the embracement of non-violent and powerful principles was at the heart of "Occupy Wall Street".

One of the most vital characteristics of the occupation site in Liberty Plaza was that the people embrace non-hierarchy and horizontal way of assembling (Graeber, 2011). This meant that there was not an identifiable leader or an affiliated political party which was in charge of the movement (NYCGA, 2011c). There was not a hierarchical relationship system within the park. Equal opportunity to appear and participate in collectively binding matters was indispensable for the occupiers. The opinions of each and every participant in the deliberative processes of the General Assembly were treated as equally important. Since there was not any kind of leadership, the amorphous occupy movement did not have any sovereign in Zuccotti Park which hardly fitted any kind of conventional political category. This aspect of "not fitting" also fits well to the Arendtian conception of political action in terms of non-sovereignty and plurality. First, regarding non-sovereignty, it can be asserted that the movement rendered the issue of sovereignty irrelevant and looked for the possibility of engaging in politics by neither being pro-sovereign, nor anti-sovereign. The issue at stake in the movement was not to counter the sovereignty of the existing U.S. state or to establish an alternative sovereign body in the park itself[24]; rather the matter was to engage in politics differently. Second, regarding plurality, the profile of the 99% demonstrated the fact that there was an undeniable diversity of actors in the park ranging from students (which were the majority of the population in the

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[24] The 99% is not to be considered as a sovereign body but as a "simple invitation for action", as my supervisor, Cem Deveci, put it nicely during one of our conversations.

movement) to veteran activists, from Black people to LGBTT members, from Anarchists to Liberals and even conservatives (Rise like Lions, 2011). As John Adams has put it, occupy was a togetherness between different individuals and groups, not a homogeneous collectivity (Adams, 2011). This was simply due to the fact that the movement was not about the accomplishment of a goal, set by a specific political ideology. Rather, the movement was about taking care of common public spaces, establishing solidarity with each other within the variety of values, beliefs and worldviews. So this pluralistic aspect of the movement is very important for understanding it from the framework of Arendtian action: Individuals, who were complete strangers prior to the occupation, got to know each other in Zuccotti Park through their words and their acts. They acquired the opportunity to develop various worldviews regarding common problems without declaring a single identifiable demand, but rather by caring mostly about the existence of alternative voices. This absence of an explicit single demand or of an easily identifiable answer to the question "What do you want?" was one of most thought-provoking aspects of the Occupy Movement which will be debated in the next part of this chapter since such "demand-less-ness" caused great controversies in terms of the reactions, mainly from the American media.

4. 4. "Demand-less-ness": What Do the Occupiers Want?

Traditional protests and rallies are characterized with issuing a demand; increasing the taxes for the rich, decreasing military spending, providing a better healthcare and etc. Yet, the Occupy Movement was not about the articulation of any clear set of demands at all, because when something is demanded, the legitimacy of existing political institutions is automatically accepted, as Graeber argues (Graeber, 2011). This movement, however, tried to demonstrate that the existing political mechanisms fail to represent the interests of the people thus, they have lost their legitimacy. Rather, legitimacy pertained to the deliberative processes in the General Assemblies in which people in power engaged in unrestricted communication with each other about common issues, with respect to Arendtian understanding of legitimacy. The point here is not that the movement totally neglected social, economic and political demands. As it was discussed earlier on, the emergence of the

99% was fundamentally based on the economic and social inequalities and the lack of opportunity for certain sections of society to take active part in the political and working environments in America. In addition, instrumental issues pertaining to the logic of *poiesis* in the General Assemblies were argued to be about the satisfaction of the demands and necessities of the occupiers to some extent. The issue at stake here was that the Occupy Movement could not be exhausted by its demands. There was something more than the language of supply-demand could comprehend and cover. What was it? Well, the answer is clear: Rather than demanding something and waiting for the authorities to handle the issues, the occupiers tried to create a new community by themselves. Demanding nothing, in the case of Occupy Wall Street, was building something (Lang & Lang/Levitsky, 2012: 22). By occupying a park and transforming it into an alternative living space, the occupiers demonstrated this fact.

This aspect of rejecting to articulate any set of demands to define the movement certainly made the occupation events more difficult to be articulated by the existing institutions, because the traditional way of protesting, as it was argued earlier on, was to issue a demand or a set of demands that takes the government as its addressee and waiting for a response within the context of those demands. It could be asserted that the traditional way took place within the framework of supply-demand with which the governmental bodies were familiar. Going beyond a simple protest, the Occupy Movement rejected to articulate demands which were thought to be easily absorbed by the existing discursive structures (Rise like Lions, 2011). Perhaps, that is why the movement avoided the language of supply and demand. Moreover, awaiting response from the public bodies to handle the requests was undesirable in the sense that it reproduced the passivity of the ordinary citizens in terms of solving actual problems. Even if the citizens were the protesters, at the very end, the ones who took care of these problems were the representatives. Yet, as it was shown, one of the cornerstone tenets of the Occupy Movement was the understanding of politics as active involvement and participation. Therefore the rejection of demands is understandable. This absence of demands obviously caused distress in the spectators, especially those who were against the movement and all of them held one concern in common: What do they want? (Rise like Lions, 2011) This question was also addressed by those who were supporting the movement as well. At the end, the

movement did not have any leader, any single ideology and any feature that would have allowed the spectators to grasp the movement in conventional categories of understanding: First, those who were against the movement interpreted this demand-less aspect as a way to criticize and caricaturize events by holding upon the idea that "These people do not even know what they want" (Rise like Lions, 2011). According to them, the occupiers were hippies who tried to spend some nice time in the park and entertain themselves and that was all (Rise like Lions, 2011). While mocking on them in this way, there was an obvious anxiety in the tone of their voices, because it was believed by the occupiers that those who were against the movement were hardly able to deal with it in the absence of demands (Rise like Lions, 2011). This point was mainly due to the creative and autonomous dimension of the occupations, which immediately brought into being and affirmed new ways of political engagement rather than relying on the existing ones. Second, those who were sympathetic to the movement criticized the rejection of demands since without any kind of clear message, the occupations carried the risk of being weak (Millner-Larsen, 2013: 113). This line of criticism, I argue, can also be applied to the context of leaderlessness: Without assuming a leader (individual/party/group), the movement would not "lead" any positive consequences within the existing order. In other words, the existence of plural voices would be silent in terms of the ordinary flow of things and would turn out to be insignificant and non-binding, lacking a sense of durability. However, as Prashad argues, demand-less-ness was not passivity, it was an opening (Prashad, 2012: 203). In other words, it did not remain in the muteness of a void, but it managed to bring such a novelty into being which the language of demands would fail to comprehend.

So rather than being encapsulated within passivity and impotence which were to be the result of the demand-less aspect according to the aforementioned commentators on the events, the Occupy Movement succeeded in enacting a story which was based on an alternative sense of politics, understood as "communities governing themselves in assemblies" (Gitlin, 2012), as well as the creation of new spaces for labor and work in Arendtian terms. Thus, it could be said that the aspect of demand-less-ness was one of the most original characteristics of the Occupy Wall Street movement which should not be interpreted as lack of activism; just the exact

opposite. The people in action participated regardless of the satisfaction of their individual economic, social and political motives. As it was stated earlier on, there was a joy, not only in entertainment with others, but also, and most significantly in the engagement in public matters with one's peers. There was passion, which is the human faculty that Arendt identifies with the faculty of action (Arendt, 2007: 152). The passion was due to the strong bonds of solidarity that spontaneously emerged immediately with the beginning of the occupations. As della Porta mentions the definition of Juris, the occupied spaces were vibrant spaces of human interaction that was based on the creation of alternative communities with intense feelings of solidarity (della Porta, 2013: 83).

To conclude this part, it could be asserted that rejecting to issue a single demand was one of the most original and fresh aspects of the occupy movement. The point is not that the movement did not have any demands such as progressive taxation, provisions to fix the unequal income levels, better healthcare, better education, better opportunities for employment, democracy and etc. (Rise like Lions, 2011). Yet, the uniqueness of the movement itself, did not mainly reside in these social and economic demands; rather it lied in the demand-less creation of participatory spaces and their spontaneous transformation into novel forms of living together to deliberate, to work and to satisfy one's necessities. It could even be asserted that the movement held demanding and demand-less aspects and between these two, there was a tension, an interplay and dynamic exchange. Instead of accepting the legitimacy of the existing institutions to satisfy the demands of the movement, the people in occupations developed alternatives, talked to each other and directly involved in collectively binding topics which ended up with a new sense of politics which acted and did not wait for the authorities to handle the issues. The media in the U.S. faced much difficulty in trying to cope with the Occupy movement in the absence of a bucket list, a leader and for sure, violent outbursts. In this regard, the reactions from media, the governmental bodies and police forces in the United States would be the next focus of the thesis. Such examination will be helpful in terms of reflecting on the sharp contrast between power and violence in Arendtian framework.

4. 5. Reactions to the Occupations: Media, Government and Police Forces

The Occupy movement has attracted great attention both from the American Public and foreign countries' publics as well. For sure, the usage of online media services such as Facebook and Twitter helped the movement to draw attention as quickly as possible worldwide. Not only has the news of the occupation, but also the processes of physical occupations spread within the country as well as outside it. There were occupations in Oakland, Philadelphia, Portland, Vancouver and even Amsterdam, to exhibit support for Occupy Wall Street movements as well as to create alternative living spaces in various locations. Such a widespread movement, of course, could not be ignored and neglected and there were immediate reactions which were as thought-provoking as the direct actions of occupation were. When his opinion about the occupations was asked, the American President Barack Obama publicly announced his sympathy and support for the occupiers by declaring that he understood the concerns of the citizens of the United States who were unhappy with the existing system and he was with them in the democratic spirit that they carried along (ABC News, 2011). Mayor Bloomberg also embraced the occupations by saying showing full respect to people's "right to protest" (IBTimes, 2011). However, at the same time, the media members and political commentary programs, showed serious suspicion and a negative attitude towards the movement in general. For example, the occupiers were identified as "zombies" who were just acting to have some fun, to entertain themselves with guitars in a party-wise atmosphere (Rise like Lions, 2011). They were argued to be purposeless and they lacked cohesion amongst themselves, due to the absence of demands and a clear agenda. This caricaturized evaluation of the occupiers went even harsher when a speaker in a program openly called the people in action dirty in physical sense and the speaker suggested them to take a bath as soon as possible (Rise like Lions, 2011). Such line of argumentation was also used against the occupations by the owner group of the Zuccotti Park, Brookfield Properties and by the New York City Police Department according to whom sanitation was a serious concern threatening the public life in general (Rise like Lions, 2011). Finally, on November 15, the New York City Police Department entered in the park at around 1 a.m. and took the occupiers away from Zuccotti Park violently: The police intervention allegedly included the employment of pepper

sprays and ended up with some injuries as well as arrests around 200 (Willis & Irvine, 2011). In addition, this incident included the destruction of the working environment of the occupiers, including the People's Library and in the end; the New York City was sentenced to pay $360,000 for the harm caused by the New York City Police Department's deeds (Kelley, 2013). After this eviction of the actors from the park, an occupation with tents and sleeping bags was not allowed again. In the meantime, the acts of police forces started to be criticized severely because of the employment of pepper sprays, physical coercion and of the degree of harshness[25].

Compared to the intervention in Fatsa, which took place with the help of military forces, police forces, gendarmeries and special masked groups, the intervention in the Occupy Wall Street movement can be thought as minor. Whereas the reactions from State officers such as the Prime minister and the Mayor of Ordu demonstrated harshness, the Occupy Movement did not encounter such obvious aggression from Obama as well as other state officials. However, these two cases had one thing in common; the power of the people in action could only be responded through violent means. This included the acts of military, police forces and masked militants on the streets of Fatsa as well as the employment of pepper sprays, tear gas and physical violence that the New York City police forces used in order to evict the occupiers from Zuccotti Park and end their encampments by coercing the occupier people in action to make them abandon the area. In both of the cases, the reactions by the official bodies did not have anything to do with acquiring the consent of actors but rather the interventions were about coercion, because such consent lied within the power of the people who were creating and experiencing something novel. In other words, governmental bodies did not try so much to persuade people in action to deliberate or act differently about political matters. The New York City Police Department forces were used in order to smash the occupation site. Overall, more than 2,500 actors were arrested in New York City and around 8,000 in the

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[25] Such excess of violence by the police forces was also experienced during the Gezi events in Turkey which suddenly triggered massive demonstrations in many parts of the country. The Gezi Resistance was marked by the absence of a leader, by an unexpected plurality of actors and by spontaneous outbursts of the crowds, holding certain similarities to the Occupy Movement.

country[26](Occupy Arrests, 2011). Brooklyn Bridge arrests, which were experienced during a march protesting the economic inequalities and problems that the American society faces, counted for the greatest amount of arrests in at a single event with a huge number of 700 (Occupy Arrests, 2011). In the end, a great majority of the occupiers who appeared in court were released without any sentence (McKinley Jr., 2014). So, it could be said that the occupiers were forgiven in Arendtian sense about their deeds during the Occupy Movement whereas, as it was debated in the previous chapter, many actors in Fatsa were not forgiven and they were mostly punished with serious sentences and were imprisoned.

4. 6. Ending Remarks

To wrap up with, it can be said that the Occupy Movement has been a source of inspiration worldwide and it was an event which demonstrated alternative ways of living together. Its importance lies not only in the fact that the movement opposed the unequal distribution of wealth which mainly belongs to the 1% of the population. It is true that the movement initially articulated itself with slogan indicating the negation of the 1% and at that point it was a liberation movement against the social and economic conditions of living due to the existing structures. However, the significance of the movement mainly resides in the living experience of an alternative world which took place with the occupation of Zuccotti Park. With that occupation, the movement ceased to be carrying a merely negative attitude and started to be positive, in the form of a new public space of appearance in which the participants appeared to each other through words and deeds. In other words, rather than limiting the frame of the movement with protesting, the occupiers managed to actively create the dynamic spaces of interaction which were the demonstrations of power in sheer human solidarity. Such spaces could not be argued to exist prior to the occupation. It is true that there were such spaces (though not public spaces in Arendtian sense), yet it could not be asserted beforehand that the transformation of Zuccotti Park from a mere geographical space of recreation into a space full of novel stories of action that constituted sources of inspiration to many parts of the world

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[26] With respect to the criminal context of the Occupy Movement, FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) identified the participants in the events as potential criminal threats and terrorists (Hines, 2012).

was possible. Therefore, Villa's line of argumentation has been reversed by Zuccotti Park events since it was action which created a novel public space of appearance.

The General Assemblies were the political bodies in the occupation sites and they were the stages to deliberate on collectively binding matters. Being inspired of the Tahrir encampments in Egypt and the "Indignants" Movement in Spain, the General Assemblies were spaces for direct participation and deliberation. Taking place in the persistence of representative form of government in the United States, such assemblies constituted a novel form of government, if one understands by government something Arendtian: Revolutionary spaces of politics based on direct appearance and equal opportunity to share words with each other. However, the Zuccotti Park occupations were not only about the creation of a new space for politics. Occupiers managed to create working and laboring spaces by bringing into being durable things such as libraries and areas to satisfy the basic human needs such as kitchens and tents, which were at the same time non-durable as well. Therefore, the second case the thesis tried to examine also proved the fact that labor, work and action might not conflict but cooperate with each other for developing a healthy human condition. Furthermore, the line that separates what is durable and what is not, a line which is clearly drawn by Arendt, became more fluid and questionable. Probably the most striking aspect of the movement was "demand-less-ness" which managed to bring into being an alternative way of political engagement. Rather than referring to the denial of demands, "demand-less-ness" signified a process of politicization which is not state oriented and which, rather than being encapsulated within a determined set of demands from the existing authorities, indicated the actors' relentless efforts to create the world in which they wanted to take part collectively.

The reactions from the U.S. Government, like the case of Fatsa, revealed the inability of violent mechanisms to generate power while facing with non-violent political events, as well as the point that Arendt makes regarding the fragility of power against the means of violence: The power of people in Zuccotti Park and the ties of togetherness between them were crushed by the intervention of the New York City Police Department with pepper sprays, teargas and physical coercion, and the

libraries, kitchens and other working and laboring sites in the park were destroyed. Yet, in contrast with the activists in Fatsa who were legally punished, the occupiers were forgiven.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Various approaches to action in political theory provide alternative frameworks in order to reflect on particular cases in politics. The significance of conceptualizing action probably stems from the increasing role played by social and political movements in contemporary world: Many movements take place in different parts of the world and they articulate themselves in diverse forms which necessitate further consideration and fresh outlooks. What are their essential features? What distinguishes them from other movements? How do they shape the meaning of politics? What kind of novelties they bring into the social and political realities of their respective contexts? These questions hold importance in understanding the dynamics of actual experiences. Moreover, investigating political events with an action-based theoretical background opens up the way, not to bridge the gap between theory and actual reality, but to disclose the tension between them. Therefore, employing the concept of political action in examining political movements is about taking seriously strong challenges directed towards theory by displaying the dynamic and unpredictable characteristic of the tangible political reality.

Apart from establishing a theoretical base so as to examine actual events, judging social and political movements from the angle of action is crucial since it is a step away from the rigid boundaries between conceptual tools to reflect on such events. Judging is a dynamic activity which tries to grasp the peculiarity of novel happenings, their historical significance and the emergence of unexpected occurrences which existing theoretical instruments fall short in making sense of. Judging movements, indeed, is an attempt to escape from the stability of theoretical frameworks (or comprehensive doctrines) and an indirect involvement in the experiences of the world we live in. As a result, combining theory with the judgment

of particular cases is of central importance if there is something to be written about political and social movements.

Given such background, my major aim in this thesis was to question the possibility of Hannah Arendt's theory of action without a pre-established public space with respect to two different cases: The brief revolutionary era in the local town Fatsa, in 1979-80 and the occupation of Zuccotti Park during the Occupy Wall Street Movement that took place in the autumn of 2011. I thought it would be suitable to ground this thesis upon Arendtian conception of action since the elements that pertain to action such as spontaneity, plurality, non-violent power, non-sovereignty and creativity would establish a link with the cases easily. Regarding the cases, first of all, I decided to elaborate on the local revolution in Fatsa (although it took place a long time ago) which has not been evaluated in political theory at all. Such reconsideration might be fruitful in terms of questioning the relationship between public spaces and action, with a focus on the formation of People's Committees. Second, I chose the Occupy Wall Street Movement as the second case, which was not touched academically due to its current occurrence, because I thought that the movement was unique due to different forms of political activism it managed to unleash. In addition, I tried to establish a dialogue between these two movements on one side and Arendt on the other. The cases would direct strong challenges towards certain assumptions of Arendt's political thought. For instance, the "End to Mud" event in Fatsa as well as the establishment of clinics, media centers and sanitation areas during the Zuccotti Park occupations, in my view, problematized the sharp distinctions between labor, work and action as well as between the social and the political in Arendtian framework because first of all, in both experiences labor, work and action did not conflict with each other but rather they became manifest as complementary. Second, some characteristics of politics in Arendtian thought such as extraordinariness, publicness and creativity might disclose themselves in laboring and working activities or efforts pertaining to the social realm. The unexpected success of the fight against mud in Fatsa and the extraordinary feelings emerging from organizing books in the library of Zuccotti Park were among these activities which Arendt would have regarded as ordinary social tasks, yet, as I suggested, they carried along the aforementioned characteristics of action. In the end, these events

(which will also be mentioned in the following paragraphs) revealed the necessity to revise some of the rigid conceptual distinctions in Arendt's line of thinking.

In order to accomplish the aforementioned goals of the thesis I dedicated the first chapter to a debate on Arendt's theory of action. Since her conceptualization of politics caused controversies and a variety of interpretations, I tried to narrow down the scope of my examination to her understanding of action as "the creation of the new". Following this specificity of action, I focused on the possibility of political action where there were not any existing public spaces of appearance or where the existing spaces did not hold any political relevance. In this regard, I emphasized the creative, collective and republican dimensions of action which turned out to be the founding of new common spaces and alternative ways of engaging in political activity that founds itself on direct participation, solidarity, equal claim to the public object – *isonomia* - and the absence of ruler/ruled dichotomy. Without any appeal to a leading group or basing itself upon a specific ideology, Arendtian action, as I claimed, is the demonstration of what ordinary people are capable of when they come together through words and deeds to form common *in-between* spaces. From this point, it could be asserted that politics is not the "business" of political experts, political parties, or professional revolutionaries; rather it is the open process of grassroots engagement. Thus, I claimed that Arendt's understanding of political action constitutes a challenging criticism towards representational mechanisms and party politics and she is persuasive while disclosing their non-political and anti-action features.

Moreover, I tried to contend that there is a peculiar dimension pertaining to politics which distinguishes it from private and social spheres: Politics is, as Arendt saw it, about founding new public spaces, changing the "form of government" and bringing into being new relationalities with a worldly interest. Approaching the nature of politics like this, I suggested, Arendt provided a tool to distinguish between a street protest based on demands about education, healthcare, minorities or workplace problems on the one hand, and founding an alternative public space of deliberation such as revolutionary councils or collective bottom-up assemblies on the other. Such *body politic* is not about the satisfaction of instrumental concerns but

about displaying public happiness which arises out of the enthusiasm and passion of engaging collectively with others in common matters. The question whether or not instrumentality was totally out of stake in a particular movement (or whether social concerns were neglected altogether) was left to the discussion of the cases. Such analysis gives the ground for a hypothetical dialogue between Arendt and the movements under consideration.

In terms of the oppositional relationship between power and violence, by relying on Arendt's insights, I claimed that non-violent yet powerful political events are considered to be more serious threats to existing regimes than violent outbursts. This is mainly due to the fact that when faced with protests which employ violence, the states tended to deal with ease since they could justify their violent responses upon law and legitimacy that came out of the necessity to provide security, order and peace. However, advocating the principle of non-violence in collective action confused the states since legitimizing the collective action became easier but legitimizing violent responses remained highly problematic. Furthermore, the power that came from the gathering of people and from nowhere else revealed the impotence of the means of violence in the created public spaces since it was incapable of penetrating into such spaces through debate and persuasion by itself. This point was formulated with a simple sentence: Violence discloses powerlessness, as I put it.

Following this line of argumentation, I moved to the examination of the first case, Fatsa, which took place between October, 1979 and July, 1980. The processes in Fatsa were indeed very unique in several ways. To begin with, it was contended that the formation of People's Committees by the municipal administration of Fikri Sönmez just after the local elections was the establishment of alternative public spaces allowing direct involvement in the affairs of Fatsa by the inhabitants. Such aspect separated Fatsa from other municipalities in Turkey as well as from conventional street protests (such as the meetings against black market and exploitation in the hazelnut sector). The peculiarity of People's Committees was essentially due to the fact that the committees were revolutionary political bodies which came into being as the changes in the type of government that used to be

based on ordinary municipal framework and representation. Through their engagements in the committees, the inhabitants of Fatsa directly shaped the affairs of the local town by themselves and displayed a public enthusiasm which did not neglect instrumental concerns but regarded them as secondary compared to the value of participation as an end in itself. The people in Fatsa were indeed active creators of a new common world, rather than those who committed themselves to the potentially arbitrary decisions of professional politicians. Meanwhile, the existing municipal bodies such as the Municipal Council and Municipal Assembly were not disregarded; they stood as the legal bodies of approval for the decisions being raised above from the committees. Therefore, existing legal framework of Turkey pertaining to municipal administration was respected and applied to. Accountability was established by making the debates within the municipality open to the public of Fatsa through amplifiers so as to change the non-public character of the municipal building. Arendt's term, "widest possible publicity" was attained. Moreover, the political change in Fatsa was in no ways predictable and reducible to the activities of Dev-Yol. Rather, it emerged spontaneously with the death of the existing mayor, the victory of Fikri Sönmez in the early local elections and the immense tendency of the ordinary people to participate in collectively binding matters in Fatsa. Such contingencies led the way for the emergence of a new local political regime. As another significant aspect of the period in Fatsa, the committees were identified with the plurality of actors where ideological issues, social backgrounds or political party membership did not play any role at all. Conservatives, revolutionaries, villagers, students and members of various political parties took active part in the processes of People's Committees. Only ultra-nationalists and black market dealers were deprived of the equal claim to appear in public-political matters. As a consequence of such pluralistic aspect, I argued that there were no leaders and no sovereign attributable to the changes in Fatsa.

One of the most important activities during the administration of Fikri Sönmez was the organization of "End to Mud" campaign which was held as the most urgent problem of the region that necessitated immediate solution. Although the forecasts of scientists in the municipality showed that such project would take several years to be completed, the people in and around Fatsa proved the estimates

wrong through immense participation: The local town was cleaned out of mud only in six days. Also a road was constructed during the campaign as an extra durable accomplishment. In this regard, I argued that the process of cleaning mud was not only about mud. It was a massive demonstration of solidarity and joy in engaging the matters of community. In addition, I contented that such a case directs strong criticisms towards Arendt's separations between labor, work and action as well as social and political. Cleaning mud would have been considered by Arendt as an ordinary administrative task or an effort pertaining to her term "collective housekeeping". However, the intensified ties of solidarity during the campaign, alongside with its unexpected success that disrupted scientific predictions were everything but ordinary. A social task turned out to be extraordinary and to have a public dimension, revealing to Fatsa and other municipalities what collective efforts of people in common issues were capable of, compared to old school scientific ways of handling such issues. Therefore, certain aspects of political action in Arendtian framework might in some cases be connected with a laboring activity such as cleaning or with work, such as constructing a new road. Then, I suggested, the distinction between social and political was not as sharp as Arendt argues, but there could be points of interplay between them which were not necessarily dangerous to the very existence of politics. Rather, as Fatsa showed, three types of human activities that constitute human condition, labor, work and action, might complement, and not conflict with each other.

After the examination of the "End to Mud" campaign, I argued that another significant event during the local revolution in Fatsa was the organization of "Public Culture Festival" through which the novelties in the region disclosed themselves to the general public of Turkey. Many intellectuals, journalists, poets and university students outside Fatsa joined the events and witnessed the opening of a new world, unexpected bonds of solidarity and an alternative way of political engagement. The Public Culture Festival also contributed to the story of the revolution in Fatsa: The participants in the festival made the novel processes in the region permanent with their newspaper articles, poems, memories and any other durable means. The town acquired the status of a narrative to be told and shared in the realm of human affairs.

The opening up of Fatsa to the general public of Turkey, however, led to the intensification of the pressure by the central government on the region. The appointment of Reşat Akkaya as the new mayor of Ordu resulted in the culmination of the cases of violence. Despite experiencing the Çorum Massacre in the meantime, the Prime Minister Demirel identified Fatsa as a more dangerous happening. From such remark, I claimed that Fatsa was considered by the existing central government as a more serious threat since there was no violence but power. As the Fatsa heads of three different political parties mentioned in their public statements, there was no gunpowder, no fire and no blood in the town; there was peace. Consequently, the non-violent power of the people was crushed by the state: The Point Operation in July of 1980, which was later on identified as the rehearsal of the military takeover in following September, violently ended the revolution in Fatsa. I interpreted such violence as the disclosure of the impotence of the means of violence to generate power themselves in the region. The employment of military, police forces and masked militants in coercive activities also proved a point that Arendt made: Power is fragile against the means of violence. In the end, Fatsa was not forgiven; many legal punishments were decided by the court for many among those who were involved.

Following the interpretation of the local and brief revolution in Fatsa, I jumped into another historical period and took into consideration the emergence of Zuccotti Park as a new public space during the Occupy Wall Street Movement. Taking its roots from certain preceding movements such as the occupation of Tahrir Square in Egypt and the *Indignados* Movement in Spain, I argued that the transformation of Zuccotti Park from a site of recreation into an alternative common world is unique in many aspects. Although the gathering on September 17 of 2011 was announced beforehand with the initial call for action by Adbusters, the events went beyond expectations spontaneously and all of a sudden, the park was identified as a new participatory space of the 99%, which had carried its economic motives through the way, but managed to develop a novel "form of government" within the park.

As in Fatsa, the profile of occupiers at Zuccotti Park included a diversity of social, cultural and ideological backgrounds. Conservative groups with anarchists, feminists with black people, and young students with veteran activists stood together during the processes of establishing different spaces of human interaction. Such aspect of the movement fitted well to Arendtian understanding of politics with its explicit rejection of leaders, any party affiliation or a sovereign body. Actually, the movement was neither pro-sovereign nor anti-sovereign; it was just non-sovereign. In addition, I contended that the horizontal way of political engagement that the Occupy Movement embraced was closely associated with the term that Arendt uses, *isonomia*, indicating that everybody in the park held equal claim to appear and make one's voice heard by others. The 1% as opposed to the 99% was not as strictly excluded from the collective spaces as the extreme right-wing nationalists and black market dealers from the People's Committees in Fatsa since the slogan of the 99% indicated a simple call for action. Apart from advocating *isonomia*, the "step-up/step-back" approach in Zuccotti Park problematized *isonomia* and Arendtian framework of action as well, providing an alternative which was based on positive discrimination that enhanced plurality even further.

The *body politic* of the Zuccotti Park events - the General Assembly - was the open space of deliberation as well as the stage of collective decision making. I reflected on the characteristics of the General Assembly by suggesting that performativity and instrumentality went hand-in-hand with each other through the political processes in the assembly. The element of performativity was mainly based on the joy to participate in such a common space, collective spirit being displayed by the occupiers and the concern for appearing to others by making one's voice heard through endless speech. However, such performative dimension was accompanied by an instrumental approach as well: When there was a decision to be made, a consensus-based orientation was accepted by the General Assembly. In other words, such decision making processes were "in order to" acquire the consent of every single occupier in the park. I interpreted this combination as a departure from Arendtian rigid separation between acting (*praxis*) and making (*poiesis*): In a public space established through action, interests, goal-oriented outlooks and purposeful engagements may also complement the value of acting for the sake of acting. As in

the case of Fatsa, social issues were not neglected by the People's Committees altogether. Furthermore, the processes of deliberation within the assembly was also the stage for an important novelty: Due to the ban on the usage of sound amplifiers, the occupiers managed to develop a peculiar way of acquiring - to employ Arendt's term - "widest possible publicity" in the park, namely the Human Microphone, through which closer occupiers to the speaker repeated the words being spoken by shouting to the more peripheral parts so as to make everybody hear what was going on.

The encampments in Zuccotti Park, as I asserted, were not only about the creation of a new public space but also of different working and laboring spaces: Kitchens, clinics, libraries and artistic areas formed within the park demonstrated this point clearly. Occupiers satisfied their vital necessities by laboring in the kitchens and sanitation areas whereas they created working environments such as the media centers and libraries, which would have been identified by Arendt as durable things, yet for the movement, they were not regarded as durable and persistent; they were *in-between* durability and temporariness. All those activities held the feature of being public and open to all. Moreover, as I argued in the case of fight against mud in Fatsa, such activities in the park like organizing books which would have been regarded by Arendt as ordinary administrative tasks were indeed extraordinary due to the intensity of efforts by occupiers and to taking place in a different collective space of participation. In the end, labor, work and action shared each other's certain characteristics in Zuccotti encampments and turned out to be complementary, not conflicting as Arendt would have argued.

Probably one of the most influential and peculiar features of the Occupy Wall Street Movement was the rejection of a clearly identified set of demands. I claimed that the people in Zuccotti Park tried to take an active stance in making social and political changes themselves, rather than demanding something from existing mechanisms or authorities. Articulating demands was understood as legitimizing current ideologies, discourses and bodies which were evaluated by the occupiers as the sources of massive inequalities and political problems. By disrupting the language of demand-supply (or input and output of political system) the Zuccotti

Park activists managed to cause distress in those who held a negative stance towards the events, as well as those who were sympathetic. Indeed, the activists were not against state *per se*, neither they were supporting it. They had demands but at the same time, their movement was not about demands, it was demand-less. Such absence of demands made it more difficult to "name" the movement. Yet, demand-less-ness urged people to think about politics in a different way. It demonstrated the possibility of political engagement that was not state-centered. However, ignoring the ordinary mechanisms made it more troublesome for the movement to establish a direct link with common sense. The case of Fatsa was much more successful in articulating itself within the framework of existing legal regulations and ordinary functioning of institutions. Such might be one of the reasons of the harshness of the intervention in Fatsa compared to the deeds of police forces in Zuccotti Park.

The destruction of the collective space in Zuccotti Park was caused by the New York City Police Department intervention, due to alleged sanitation concerns raised up by the owner of the park. The exclusion of the occupiers from the park allegedly included the employment of pepper sprays, tear gas as well as beatings. The means of violence were impotent of establishing power in the park, and they turned out to be the resort to crush the non-violent deeds of the people. Once again, power was shown to be fragile against violence and the occupation of the Zuccotti Park ended: Actors were coerced to leave the park, libraries, tents and other common things were either destroyed or severely damaged by the police. In the end, in contrast with the trials after Fatsa events, most of the occupiers who were taken into court were forgiven. On the contrary, it was the brutal deeds of the police forces which were punished.

In the end, I would like to argue that Arendt's insights on political action in terms of spontaneity, plurality, non-sovereignty and most remarkably its founding aspect provides political theory a valuable outlook for understanding actual political experiences from an original angle. Especially in terms of the relationship between public spaces and action which is at the core of this study, my thesis contrasts with Villa's understanding of action which was identified with going out and acting in pre-established public spaces. The relationship between publicness and action is

inverted and questioned in my thesis at the same time: First, in Fatsa, the question whether there were any given public spaces or not in the region is hardly answerable. It can be argued that local people acted just after the establishment of People's Committees by the municipal administration of Fikri Sönmez; yet it is equally possible to assert that such committees came into being spontaneously through the processes of debate and action in common spaces of the town, and what the municipality did was nothing more than serving as an official body of approval. What was obvious is that, without any concern for whether there were any pre-established spaces of appearance or not, local people just acted collectively and it was this acting together that marked the unpredictable novelty in the processes in Fatsa. Second, the Occupy Movement, allowed me to ask a similar question: Was Zuccotti Park a public space, in Arendtian sense, previously? The answer turned out to be clear while examining the case: No, it was not; rather, it was a site of recreation, relaxation and joy, owned by a private company. The park took the shape of a common public word with the actual occupations and political action on the streets of New York City created a new public space. Therefore, as both cases indicated, the line of argumentation put forward by Villa, claiming that action is impossible without a given public space (which also implies that without a given public-political culture) was problematized and challenged. The activists in Fatsa and Zuccotti Park, did not yearn as "Where are those old-sweet publics?" They just went out to streets instead and by acting in concert, they created unique forms of political engagement and stories to be narrated. Perhaps their followers in the Gezi Park events in the Turkey of June 2013 were also able to create new forms of public appearances, solidarity and political demonstrations spontaneously which also received huge attention. The backbone of this thesis which is based on certain premises of Arendtian action such as creativity, plurality, leaderlessness and non-violent power may constitute a relevant framework for the original story of "The June Resistance" to be told and transformed into a permanent narrative in the world we share.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu çalışmada geliştirilmeye çalışılan ana düşünce, Arendtçi anlamda eylemin, zorunlu olarak verili bir kamusal alana ihtiyaç duymadığı, tam tersine kendi başına farklı kamusal alan biçimleri yaratabileceğidir. Çünkü Arendt'in siyasal düşüncesi üzerine yapılan bazı çalışmalarda ve ana akım Arendtçi çerçevede eylem-kamusal alan ilişkisi okumalarında öne sürülen fikir, her zaman kamusal alanların eylemi öncelediği ve eylem yoluyla siyasallaşmayı mümkün kıldığıdır. Örneğin Dana Villa bu tartışma bağlamında şunu söyler: "Eylem alanının ortadan kalktığı yerlerde, eylem artık mümkün değildir." (Villa, 1992: 718; Villa, 1995: 206) Bu çalışma Villa'nın eylem ve kamusal alan ilişkisine dair öne sürdüğü bu düşünüş biçimini kendisine doğrudan muhatap olarak alır ve onu tartışmaya açar. Villa'ya göre özellikle modernite koşullarında, Arendt'in tabiriyle sosyal alanın da yükselişiyle birlikte kamusal alan ile özel alanı birbirinden ayıran çizgiler muğlâklaşmış ve artık Arendt'in Antik Yunan örneği üzerinden betimlediği nitelikte bir kamusal alan kalmamıştır. Buradan hareketle varılması gereken sonuç, Villa'ya göre eylemin artık mümkün olmadığıdır. Çalışmanın giriş bölümünde böylesi bir kavramsal tartışmanın birçok açıdan sorunlu noktaları olduğu ortaya konulur: Birincisi, eğer kamusal alanların varlığı eylemin ortaya çıkışını her zaman önceliyorsa, mevzu bahis kamusal mecraların nasıl oluştuğu sorusu cevaplanmalıdır. Gökten zembille mi inmişlerdir? Yoksa belirli yasal-kurumsal düzenlemeler sonucu mu kurulmuşlardır? Bu ikinci soruya evet cevabı verilebilir. Ancak aynı şekilde şu da sorulabilir: Eğer yasal-kurumsal düzenlemeler farklı kamusal alanlar oluşturabilmeye muktedirse, en önemli özelliklerinden birisi doğurganlık (*natality*) olan eylem nasıl olur da aynı şekilde yeni kamusal alanlar yaratamaz? Villa'nın varsayımlarına dair ikinci temel sorun ise eylemin mi yoksa kamusal alanların mı bir diğerini öncelediğine dair verilecek

kararın her zaman o kadar da kolay olmadığıdır. Bazı durumlarda ikisi birlikte ortaya çıkabilirler ve hangisinin ötekini mümkün kıldığına karar verilemez. Üçüncü sorun ise, Villa'nın seçici bir Arendt okuması yaptığıdır; Arendt'in eserlerinde birçok farklı eylem anlayışına rastlamak mümkündür. Özellikle Antik Yunan örneğinde belirginleşen anlayış, önceden oluşturulmuş bir kamusal mecraya, özel alanda ihtiyaçlarını gideren insanların müdahil olup diğer eşit vatandaşlarla ortak meselelere dair müzakere etmeleridir (Arendt, 1958: 41). Ancak aynı "İnsanlık Durumu" (*The Human Condition*) kitabının ilerleyen bölümlerinde de Arendt eylemin, insanların konuşarak ve eyleyerek bir araya geldiği anda ortaya çıktığını ve her zaman kamusal alanların oluşumunu öncelediğini belirtir (Arendt, 1958: 199). Bu iki kavramsallaştırma ele alındığında, eylemi her zaman verili bir kamusal alanın varlığında indirgemek, onu ikincilleştirmek ve sonuç olarak imkânsızlaştırmak Arendt'in kendi kuramsal çerçevesi açısından da sorun teşkil etmektedir. Bu çalışmanın ortaya koymak istediği esas düşünce, Villa'nın geliştirdiği kamusal alan-eylem ilişkisini basitçe tersine çevirmek değildir. Yukarda Arendt'in farklı eylem nitelemelerinden de anlaşılabileceği gibi eylem verili bir kamusal alanda kolektif varlığa gelebileceği gibi kendi başına yeni kamusallıklar da kurabilir. Tezin esas derdi "Önceden kurulu bir kamusal alan yoksa eylem imkânsızdır" şeklinde kısaca özetlenebilecek kavramsallaştırma şeklidir. Bu anlayış Arendt'in eylem kuramını belirgin bir biçimde sınırlamakla ve insan eylemliliğine dair karamsar bir tablo çizmekle kalmamakta, farklı toplumsal-siyasal hareketlerde yeni mücadele, dayanışma ve siyasal etkileşim biçimlerinin nasıl ortaya çıktığına dair makul bir inceleme çerçevesi sunamamaktadır.

Yukarıda bahsi edilen kuramsal çerçevenin fazla soyut kalmaması, pratik siyasal olaylar üzerinden daha açık bir şekilde tartışılması ve işlerlik kazanması için, giriş bölümünde toplumsal-siyasal hareketlerden ikisinin ele alındığından bahsedilir. Üçüncü bölümde 1979-80 döneminde Fikri Sönmez'in belediye başkanlığına gelmesiyle birlikte oluşan Halk Komiteleri, yeni ilişkiselliklerin, dayanışma biçimlerinin ve siyaset yapma şeklinin ortaya çıktığı bir deneyim olarak ele alınır. Fatsa'da yaşanılanlara şimdiye kadar siyasal teori alanından hemen hemen hiç yaklaşılmamıştır. Bu çalışma, özellikle Arendtçi anlamda eylem çerçevesi bağlamında bakıldığında, Fatsa süreçlerinin getirdiği özgünlüklerin ortaya

çıkabileceğini ileri sürer. Dördüncü bölümde ise, 2011'de ABD'de gerçekleşen Wall Street'i İşgal Et hareketi ele alınır. Özellikle Zuccotti Park'ın bir mesire yerinden yeni bir ortak alana dönüşmesi, hem tezin temel sorunsalı bağlamında önem arz eder hem de alternatif bir siyasal mücadele tarzının başlangıcını temsil eder. Ayrıca bu deneyimlerin incelemesi ilerleyen bölümlerde de görüleceği üzere, Arendtçi kavramsal ayrımlardan bazılarını (şiddet-iktidar) haklı çıkarırken bazılarını da sorunsallaştırır (emek-iş-eylem, sosyal olan-siyasal olan). Yani bir yanda Arendt, diğer yanda da iki toplumsal-siyasal vaka arasında bir diyalog inşa edilir.

Giriş bölümünün ardından gelen ikinci bölümde Arendt'in eylem kuramı derinlemesine ele alınır. Bu bağlamda Arendt'in iki eseri "İnsanlık Durumu" (*The Human Condition*) ve "Devrim Üzerine" (*On Revolution*) önemlidir. İkinci bölüm ilk olarak eylem etkinliğinin diğer insani faaliyetler olan emek ve iş ile ilişkisi üzerine yoğunlaşır. Eylem hem dünyevi koşulu yaşamın ta kendisi olan ve insanın biyolojik süreçleri, doğal ihtiyaçları ile türün devamını konu alan emekten hem de dünyevi koşulu dünyalılık olan ve insan eliyle yaratılan yapay şeyler dünyasına işaret eden işten farklıdır. İnsan çoğulluğunu kendisine dünyevi koşul olarak alan eylem, doğrudan insanlar arasında gerçekleşerek dinamik bir biçimde ortak varlığa yeni ilişkisellikler ve farklı dayanışma biçimleri getirir. Bu "yeni" farklı kamusal alanlar doğurabilir, alternatif siyaset yapma formları geliştirebilir ve umulmadık bir kamusal coşku/tutku sergileyebilir. Bir başka deyişle eylem, başla(t)mak (*initium/archein*) anlamına gelir. Dolayısıyla, tezin temel sorunsalı bağlamında Villa'nın öne sürdüğü fikir, yeni olana yapılan bu vurguyla eleştirilir. Önceden kurulu bir kamusal alana muhtaç olmadan farklı siyasal etkileşim biçimleri yaratabilir eylem. Ayrıca doğrudan katılıma/görünüme dayanan eylem için çoğulluk (*plurality*) olmazsa olmazdır. Yani bir başka deyişle farklı dünya görüşlerine sahip insanların ortak meseleler etrafında bir araya gelip tartışması ve mücadele etmesi eylem açısından hayati önem taşır. Tartışmanın olmadığı yerde, tek bir düşünce hâkimdir ve orada siyasal olan eylem gerçekleşmez. Çoğulluğa ve dolayısıyla siyasal olana bu anlamda bir tehdit egemenlik (*sovereignty*) mefhumudur. Arendt'e göre egemen, siyaseti kendi keyfi kararları doğrultusunda araçsallaştırabilir ve ikincilleştirebilir. Böylesi bir siyaset anlayışı da egemen tarafından geliştirilen programların/planların gerçekleştirilmesinden ibaret olur. Ayrıca alternatif seslerin bir aradalığına karşıt

olarak egemen, Arendt tarafından tek bir ses olarak değerlendirilir ve farklılığı eritir. Buna ek olarak değişik sesleri yok etme tehdidi barındırdığından ötürü, egemen şiddete (*violence*) gönderme yapar. Çünkü şiddetin kendisi konuşamaz, sessizdir ve susturmayı amaçlar. Siyasetle uzlaşmaz olan şiddetin karşısına Arendt, insanların birlikte hareket etmesinden doğan iktidarı koyar. İktidar her zaman bir şeyler yaratmaya "muktedir olmak" (*power to*) olarak nitelenebilir. İnsanlar söz ve eylem yoluyla bir arada bulundukları müddetçe iktidar varlığını sürdürür; insanlar ayrıldığında iktidar da söner. Arendt'e göre hükümetler tarafından daha büyük bir tehdit olarak algılanan iktidar, şiddet karşısında kırılgandır ve kolayca dağılabilir. Eylemin ikinci bölümde sözü edilen diğer iki özelliği ise tahmin edilemez ve geri alınamaz olmasıdır. Yani eylem tahmin etme ya da formül hazırlama işi değildir. Kendiliğinden ve umulmadık bir biçimde ortak dünyaya geliverir. Geldiğinde de geri alınması mümkün olmaz zira kamusal bir şekilde görünüre giren eylem artık açık uçlu bir paylaşım zincirine müdahil olmuş demektir ve kontrol edilemez. Arendt eylemin bu iki niteliğinin doğurabileceği çeşitli sorunlara karşı iki deva (*remedy*) bulur: Söz vermek ve affetmek. Eylemin tahmin edilemezliği içerisinde insanlar birbirlerine sözler vererek küçük ve sınırlı da olsa bir güven alanı oluşturabilir; geleceğin belirsizliği ve barındırdığı olası tehlikeler bir nebze de olsa dizginlenir. Affetmek ise eylemin geri alınamaz özelliğine istinaden mevcuttur: Önceki eylemlerin etkisini azaltmak ve olası yeni eylemliliklerin önünü açmak için, insanlar affetme edimi sayesinde geçmişe hapsolma tehdidinden bir ölçüde kurtulur.

İkinci bölümde detaylı bir eylem incelemesiyle geliştirilen kuramsal çerçeveden sonra, üçüncü bölüm, çalışmanın ele aldığı ilk vaka olan Fatsa deneyimi üzerine şekillenir. 1979'da Fikri Sönmez'in belediye başkanı olarak seçilmesiyle birlikte Fatsa'da ortaya çıkan Halk Komiteleri'nde yeni bir siyaset anlayışının hayata geçirildiği söylenir. Çünkü Halk Komiteleri, bir anlamda Arendt'in eylem kuramının da işaret ettiği gibi doğrudan katılıma dayanan, farklı görüşlerden insanların bir araya gelerek ve ortak meselelerini müzakere ederek kurduğu alanlar olarak göze çarpar. Siyasal temsil, yerini Fatsa sakinlerinin aktif olarak tartışma süreçlerine katıldığı bir katılımcı oluşuma bırakır. Bu oluşumun kuruluşu mevcut yönetmelikler ve yasal düzenlemeler dikkate alınarak gerçekleşir; yasadışı bir durum söz konusu değildir. Buna ek olarak mevzu bahis oluşum, ülkedeki diğer belediyelerde eşine

rastlanmayan benzersiz bir siyaset biçimine işaret eder. Bu anlamda da Fatsa'da olanlar Arendtçi anlamda eylemin yaratıcı ve doğurgan yanıyla örtüşür. Eğer tezin temel sorunsalı olan, verili bir kamusalın olmadığı koşullarda eylemin mümkün olup olmadığına dair Villa'nın ortaya koyduğu düşünce Fatsa bağlamına çekilirse, ortaya karmaşık bir durum çıkar: Fatsa sakinleri, Terzi Fikri yönetimi tarafından Halk Komiteleri'nin kurulmasından sonra mı eylemeye başlamışlardır (kamusal alan eylemi mi önceler), yoksa Halk Komiteleri zaten halkın hâlihazırda bulunan kendiliğinden mücadele eğilimlerinin resmiyete dökülmüş hali midir (yoksa eylem mi kamusal alanı önceler)? Bu soruya net bir cevap vermek zordur. Bilinen şudur ki Fatsa'da Fikri Sönmez öncesi dönemde Arendt'in tabir ettiği gibi bir kamusal mecra yoktur. Ancak Halk Komiteleri'nin mi yoksa eylemin mi önce geldiği sorusu karar verilemez olarak göze çarpar. Bu da Villa'nın kamusal alan ve eylem arasında varsaydığı öncelik-sonralık ilişkisini sorunsallaştırır. Zira ikisi aynı anda ve dinamik bir etkileşim içinde varlığa gelmiş olabilir. Fatsa sakinlerinin esas derdi, verili bir kamusal alan var mı yok mu pek de umursamadan farklı ilişkisellikler yaratmak, ortak süreçlere iştirak etmek ve oluşturulan yeni dünya meselelerine kayıtsız kalmamaktır. Fatsa'daki bu deneyimi de eşsiz kılan esas nokta bu kendiliğinden gelişen katılım isteği ve onun ortaya koyduğu benzerine az rastlanır kolektif yaşayış şeklidir. Öyle ki, her ne kadar komitelerde tartışılan şeyler araçsallık dilini belirgin bir şekilde içerse de, araçsallığı ikinci plana iten bir kamusal coşku mevcuttur: Fikri Sönmez'in belirttiği gibi, kendi yararlarına bir karar çıkmış olsa bile, o karar alınırken süreçlerde aktif olarak yer almadıkları için Fatsa sakinleri yönetime tepki gösterebilmektedir. Esas mesele komite tartışmalarından bir fayda/çıkar elde etmek değil, sonuçtan bağımsız olarak ortak konularda söz sahibi olmaktır. Bu kamusal coşku ve tutku Arendt'in Amerikan Devrimi dönemini anlatırken bahsettiği "kamusal mutluluk" (*public happiness*) kavramıyla neredeyse birebir örtüşür.

Çalışmanın kuramsal bölümünde öne sürüldüğü gibi, Arendtçi eylemin dünyevi koşulu olarak çoğulluk, Fatsa'daki Halk Komiteleri'nde de kendini belirgin bir şekilde açığa vurur. Çünkü öğrencilerle köylüler, muhafazakârlarla devrimciler komitelerdeki müşterek süreçlere yan yana iştirak eder. Bu da gösterir ki, Fatsa'da yaratılan kamusal alanlara bir ideoloji ya da egemen bir grup hâkim değildir. Farklı dünya görüşleri bir araya gelerek etkileşim içine girme fırsatı bulurlar. Hatta

Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Milli Selamet Partisi ve Adalet Partisi gibi siyasi partilerin bölge yetkilileri de komitelerde aktif rol alır. Zira parti bağlılığı komitelerde söz sahibi olmak açısından herhangi bir önem teşkil etmez. Ancak komitelerdeki bu çoğulluk sınırsız değildir: Aşırı sağ milliyetçiler ve karaborsacılar yöre halkının kararıyla ortak alanlardan dışlanmışlardır. Çoğullukla birlikte komitelerdeki en önemli noktalardan birisi, aktif siyasal deneyimin herhangi bir gruba indirgenemeyeceği gerçeğidir. Özellikle ana akım Fatsa okumalarında, bölgede olan bitenin Dev-Yol ya da Fikri Sönmez liderliği ile ele alındığı görülür (ki bu okumaya yaslanarak merkezi hükümet kendi müdahalesini meşru kılmaya çalışmıştır). Ancak Dev-Yol, seçimlerden önce yerel halkla birlikte düzenledikleri mitingler önemli olmakla beraber, komitelerdeki siyasal süreçlerin sol görüşten olmayanlar, muhafazakârlar ve diğer sade vatandaşlar gibi yalnızca bir parçasıdır. Fikri Sönmez'in ise belediye başkanı olarak konumu resmi bir onay mercii olmaktan öte geçmez, Terzi Fikri bir lider değildir. Hareket bütün Fatsa'nın ortak hareketidir ve hareketin derdi devlete karşı olmak değil, müşterek meselelere iştirak edilen alanlar yaratmak ve onları korumaktır. Bu çerçevede, çalışma şunu söyler: Arendtçi eylemin lidersiz olma ve egemen olmama (*non-sovereignty*) gibi özellikleri Fatsa'da yaşanılanlarda da gözükür. Ayrıca, bütün bu süreçlerde herhangi bir şiddet uygulaması yoktur. Onun yerine, farklı görüşten insanların söz ve eylem yoluyla bir araya geldiği ve bu bir aradalıktan doğan iktidarın mevcut olduğu bir durum söz konusudur.

Komitelerdeki süreçlere dair önemli noktalardan birisi, belediyede gerçekleşen tartışmaların hoparlörler aracılığıyla bütün Fatsa'da duyulabilir hale getirilmesidir. Bu şekilde belediye binası tamamıyla kamuya açık hale gelir ve Fatsa sakinleri, belediye mercilerinin komitelerdeki tartışma süreçlerini ne denli takip edip etmediğini denetleme şansına sahip olur. Olası bir gizlilik engellenir ve belediye içerisindeki müzakere süreçleri siyasallaşır. Böylelikle Arendt'in kamusal alanın niteliklerinden birisi olarak sözünü ettiği "mümkünat dâhilindeki en geniş kamusallık" (*widest possible publicity*) sağlanmış olur. Sonuç olarak, Fatsa bu çalışmaya göre yeni bir kamusallık anlayışı geliştirme konusunda başarılı olarak değerlendirilir.

Fatsa'da yaşanılanlar arasında, Halk Komiteleri'ne ek olarak "Çamura Son" kampanyasının önemi büyüktür. Komite tartışmalarında ilçenin en acil ve ivedilikle çözülmesi gereken sorunu olarak ortaya konan çamur problemi, ulaşımın ve yerleşimin önünü büyük ölçüde kesmekle kalmamakta, doğrudan yaşamı da tehdit etmektedir. Çünkü içme suları kirlenir, üzerlerinde sivrisineklerin türediği çamur alanları oluşur ve kolera salgını tehlikesi artar. Eğer Arendtçi tabirlerle konuşmak gerekirse hem emek hem de iş etkinliğinin dünyevi koşulları tehlikededir: Emeğin koşulu olan yaşamsal ihtiyaçların karşılanması ve genel anlamda türün devamı yukarıda sözü edilen ve sağlık açısından ciddi sorunlar doğuran unsurlardan ötürü pek mümkün değildir. İş etkinliğinin koşulu olan dünyalılık da saldırı altındadır çünkü okullar, hastaneler, iş alanları vs. ulaşıma dair temel sebeplerden ötürü işleyemez hale gelmişlerdir. Ancak belediyedeki mühendislerin "Bütün imkânlar seferber edilse bile 4 yılda bitmez" diyerek rapor verdiği çamur sorunu, komitelerde geliştirilen fikirlerle başka bir şekilde çözüme ulaştırılır. "Çamura Son" kampanyası çerçevesinde birçok farklı bölgeden temizleme araçları ödünç alınır ve Fatsa sakinleri ile komşu ilçelerden yardıma gelen insanların da müthiş katılımıyla Fatsa çamurdan yalnızca 6 gün içerisinde temizlenir. Bu beklenmedik başarının yanı sıra kampanya süresinde 4 kilometrelik yeni bir yol da inşa edilir. Arendtçi anlamda emeğin (yaşamın devamı için zorunlu temizlik) ve işin (kalıcılık arz eden yeni bir yol) dünyevi koşulları iyileştirilir. Ancak kampanyanın gösterdiği bununla sınırlı değildir. Çünkü çamura karşı mücadele esnasında beklenmedik bir dayanışma örneği sergilenmiş, ortak dünyayı ilgilendiren bu konuda yeni ilişkisellikler ortaya konmuş ve tahminleri altüst edercesine şaşırtıcı bir netice elde edilmiştir. Arendt'in kolaylıkla sosyal alana ve emek-iş etkinliklerine atfedebileceği bu çamur meselesi, aslında eylemin de birçok niteliğini taşır: "Yeni" bir temizleme kampanyası ile "beklenmedik" bir başarı elde edilir, "sıra dışı" bir dayanışma örneği sergilenir ve Arendt'in "sıradan" bir temizlik işi olarak adlandırabileceği bir faaliyet coşkulu bir "kamusal" festival alanına dönüşür. Her ne kadar bu çalışmada çamur temizlemenin kendisi eylem olarak değerlendirilmese de, "Çamura Son" kampanyası Arendt'in sosyal olan ile siyasal olan ve emek-iş-eylem arasında yaptığı keskin kavramsal ayrımları muğlâklaştırır. Belirli koşullarda, sosyal bir etkinlik siyasal olanın (eylemin) niteliklerini taşıyabilir. Bu durum da Arendt'in öne sürebileceği gibi

siyasal alanların varlığına bir tehdit değildir; aksine çamura karşı mücadelenin de gösterdiği gibi siyasal olanı sosyal olan, eylemi emek ve iş tamamlayabilir, birlikte değişik bir insanlık durumu yaratılmasına katkıda bulunabilir.

Çamurla mücadeleye ek olarak, Halk Kültür Şenliği'nin düzenlenmesi, Fatsa'nın Türkiye'ye açıldığı olay olarak değerlendirilir. Özellikle ülkenin farklı bölgelerinden Fatsa'ya gelip adeta başka bir gezegene gelmişçesine şaşkın gözlerle olan bitene tanık olan aydınlar, gazeteciler, öğrenciler ve diğer katılımcılar Fatsa hikâyesinin oluşmasına önayak olurlar. Fatsa'da yaratılan "başka bir dünya", yalnızca eyleyenlere ait olmaktan çıkar ve izleyenler tarafından ortak insan varoluşunda kalıcı bir hikâye olmak üzere yerini alır. Bu da Arendtçi anlamda eylemi kolektif hafızaya kazıyan tamamlayıcı bir aktarımdır. Ancak Fatsa'nın şenlik sayesinde Türkiye çapında görünürlük elde etmesi, aynı zamanda uzun süredir gözünü Fatsa'da tutan merkezi hükümetin yavaş yavaş harekete geçmeye başlamasına da neden olur. Valiliğe aşırı sağ milliyetçi Reşat Akkaya'nın getirilmesiyle birlikte şiddet olayları tavan yapar. Bu dönemde Çorum Katliamı yaşansa da, Başbakan Demirel kan gölüne dönen Çorum'dansa Fatsa'yı daha büyük bir tehdit olarak gördüğünü gösteren "Çorum'u bırak, Fatsa'ya bak" açıklamasını yapar. Ve sonunda Fatsa'da yaratılan benzersiz ortak varoluş biçimi, 11 Temmuz 1980'de düzenlenen "Nokta Operasyonu" ile ortadan kaldırılır. Bütün bunlar da Arendt'in iktidar ve şiddet üzerine söyledikleriyle örtüşür: Şiddet içermeyen (muktedir) bir hareket karşısında, şiddet araçları kendi başına iktidar üretmekten acizdir. Dolayısıyla tek çözüm şiddet uygulayarak iktidarı silmektir, çünkü iktidar şiddet karşısında fazlasıyla kırılgandır. Kurulan karakollar, iddialara göre işkencehanelere dönüşmüş, sokak ortasında birçok saldırı gerçekleşmiş ve sonuç olarak Fatsa'daki süreçlerde yer alanların birçoğu 12 Eylül mahkemelerinde yargılanıp hüküm giymiştir: Arendtçi tabirle, Fatsa'da olan bitenler affedilmemiştir.

Fatsa'da gerçekleşen yerel ve kısa devrimin ardından, çalışmanın dördüncü bölümü 2011'in sonbaharında Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde vuku bulan "Wall Street'i İşgal Et" eylemlerinin incelenmesine ayrılmıştır. Çalışmanın çerçevesi ise New York'ta gerçekleşen Zuccotti Park işgalinden oluşmaktadır. Kendisine Mısır'da 2011'in başında Tahrir Meydanı'nın yerel halk tarafından günlerce işgal edilmesini ve İspanya'da ekonomik krizin ardından geliştirilen kurtarma paketlerine tepki olarak

2011 Mayıs'ında ülkenin bazı meydanlarında kamp kuran eylemcilerin yarattığı farklı siyaset biçimini - uzlaşmaya dayalı müzakere meclisleri - ilham kaynağı olarak alır Wall Street'i İşgal Et hareketi. Bu hareketin fikri, çevreci ve tüketicilik karşıtı Kanadalı bir kuruluş olan *Adbusters*'ın internet üzerinden paylaştığı birkaç yazı ile ortaya atılır. Buna ek olarak, harekete katılacak olanları ve hareketin altında yatan belli başlı etmenleri tanımlayan bir slogan bulunur: %99. Bu %99, dünya zenginliğinin büyük bir miktarına sahip olan %1'den ayrılır ve işi-evi olmayanlar, eğitim ve sağlık hizmetlerine erişemeyenler ile hiçbir şekilde rahat bir yaşam süremeyenleri simgeler. Hareketin esas başlangıcı ise, aynı zamanda Amerikan Anayasa Günü de olan 17 Eylül'dür. Beklenmedik bir kalabalık, mevcut ekonomik adaletsizliğin ve siyaset üzerindeki ekonomik baskının esas kaynağı olarak görülen Wall Street'e yakın bir konumda bulunan Zuccotti Park'ı işgal eder ve orada kamp kurar. Bu işgalle birlikte önceden yalnızca bir park ve mesire alanı olan Zuccotti Park, bambaşka bir siyasal ifade mecrasına ve ortak bir yaşam alanına dönüşür. Yani tezin Villa'nın eylemin imkânsızlığına dair ortaya attığı temel sorunsalı düşünüldüğünde, Zuccotti Park işgali Villa'nın düşünce şekline tam ters bir örnek ortaya koyar. Çünkü az önce de sözü edildiği gibi, Zuccotti Park eylemler öncesi Arendtçi anlamda bir kamusal alan değil, bir dinlenme ve eğlenme alanıdır. Park kamusal (siyasal) niteliğini eylemlerle birlikte kazanır: Eylem, Zuccotti Park içerisinde yepyeni bir kamusal alan yaratmıştır. Bu da demektir ki eylem kamusal alanların varlığını önceleyebilmekte, hâlihazırda kurulu bir kamusallığa ihtiyaç duymadan kendi başına farklı siyasal alanlar ortaya koyabilmektedir.

Buna ek olarak, Fatsa örneğinde de göze çarptığı gibi Zuccotti Park işgali de katılımcı profiline bakıldığında bir çoğulluk arz etmektedir: Siyahî vatandaşlar, muhafazakârlar, öğrenciler, anarşistler, LGBTT hareketi içinde yer alanlar, "kıdemli" eylemciler vs. Bu çoğulluk önemlidir çünkü hareket bir gruba ya da ideolojiye değil, isteyenin içerisinde kendine yer bulabildiği, farklı görüşlerin bir aradalığına aittir. Bu çoğullukla birlikte görünüre gelen bir diğer nitelik ise hareketin yatay (*horizontal*) örgütlenme biçimini kabul etmesidir. Bu da şu demektir: Park içerisindeki süreçlerde herkes eşit söz hakkına sahiptir. Bir lider ya da hiyerarşi kesinlikle reddedilir. Hareketin kendisini "lidersiz" olarak açıkça adlandırması da bu noktayla alakalıdır. Zuccotti Park işgali herhangi bir ideolojik gruba, sınıfa, lider figüre ya da

plan/program çerçevesine hapsedilemez. Bu noktada da Arendtçi anlamda eylemin egemen olmama ve lidersiz olma gibi özelliklerini tamamen bünyesinde barındırır. Egemenlikle ilgili şu söylenebilir: İşgal hareketi egemenlik karşıtı (*anti-sovereign*) ya da kendi bünyesinde alternatif bir egemenlik anlayışı geliştirme yanlısı (*pro-sovereign*) değildir, egemen olmayandır (*non-sovereign*). Wall Street'i İşgal Et hareketinin Zuccotti Park özelindeki en açık niteliklerinden biri ise şiddete başvurmayı net bir dille reddetmesi ve şiddete başvurmadan eylemeyi benimsemesidir. Hatta çeşitli bildirilerde hareketin şiddet dışı eylemi, şiddete başvuran mücadele biçimlerinden çok daha üstün değerlendirdiği görülür. Hareket Arendtçi anlamda insanların eylem ve söz yoluyla bir araya gelmesiyle ortaya çıkan iktidarla yetinmiş, siyasal olana karşıt olan şiddete başvurmamıştır.

Zuccotti Park işgallerinin siyasal ayağını New York Şehri Genel Meclisi (*New York City General Assembly*) oluşturur. Mecliste gerçekleşen süreçler olabildiğince açık uçludur; belli bir konuya çok da sabitlenmeden tartışmalar yürütülür. Bir karar alınacağı zaman ise uzlaşmaya dayalı olarak alınır. Bu anlamda araçsal bir nitelik barındırır: Uzlaşı, sürecin hedeflenen sonu olarak tartışmaları değerlendirirken baz alınan kriter olur. Sosyal, ekonomik ve siyasal sorunlar tartışılan temel sorunlar arasındadır. Ancak burada araçsallık, Arendt'in ileri sürdüğü gibi siyasal alana yönelmiş bir tehdit değildir. Tam aksine, ortak meselelere katılmak ve diğerleriyle birlikte eylemekten duyulan kamusal coşkuyu bu araçsallık tamamlar. Bir başka biçimde söylemek gerekirse, Genel Meclis araçsallığın (*instrumentality*) ve edimselliğin (*performativity*) bir arada hareket ettiği katılıma dayalı siyasal mecradır. Lakin Zuccotti Park işgali yalnızca bu siyasal nitelikten ibaret değildir çünkü park içerisinde kütüphane, mutfak, basın merkezi, sanat bölgesi ve temizlik alanı da kurulur. Hem mutfakta ve temizlik bölgesindeki emek etkinliği ile ihtiyaçlar karşılanır hem de kütüphanelerde ve basın merkezlerinde yürütülen çalışmalarla iş faaliyeti yürütülür. Bu etkinlikler, gerçekleştikleri bağlam göz önünde bulundurulduğunda Arendt'in tabiriyle "olağan" olmaktan çıkar. Kütüphanede çalışan bir işgalcinin de söylediği gibi, "Kitapları düzenlemek bile olağanüstü bir edimdi". Sonuç olarak Fatsa'da olduğu gibi, Zuccotti Park'ta yaratılan yeni ortak dünyada da emek-iş-eylem etkinlikleri ile siyasal olan ile sosyal olanı ayıran çizgiler muğlâklaşır. Bu farklı alanlar ve değişik etkileşim biçimleri birbirlerini dışlamaz,

tamamlar. Dolayısıyla Arendt'in yaptığı keskin kavramsal ayrımlar bir kez daha sorunlu hale gelir.

İşgallerin dünyaya getirdiği belki de en benzersiz mücadele biçimi talepsizlik (*demand-less-ness*) olarak ön plana çıkar. Hareketi izleyenlerin sorduğu "Ne istiyorsunuz?" sorusu, eylemciler tarafından "Hiç, öyle" minvalinde bir belirsizlikle cevaplanır. Bu cevap hareketin içindekilerin ne yapmak istediklerini bilmediğini ya da amaçsızca ortalıkta salındıklarını göstermez. Zaten talepsizlik de taleplerin tamamen reddedilmesi değildir. Talepsizlik hareketin belirli bir talepler listesine indirgenemeyeceğine, harekete katılan ve farklı dünya görüşlerine sahip insanların mücadelesinin "hazır reçetelere" hapsedilemeyeceğine işaret eder. Buna ilaveten, talepsizlik pasif bir tutum değildir; tam tersine, talepler geliştirip mevcut hükümetten adım atmasını beklemektense, işgalciler kendi başlarına içerisinde yaşamak istedikleri dünyayı aktif bir biçimde yaratırlar. Kendi deyişleriyle, "Hiçbir şey talep etmemek, bir şeyler inşa etmektir". Bu sayede eylemciler tüm dünyaya devlet odaklı olmayan yeni bir siyaset anlayışının mümkün olduğunu gösterir. Talepsizliğin doğurduğu sonuçlardan biri ise mevcut yönetim ve eyleme katılmayan sıradan vatandaşlar tarafından adlandırılması ve anlamlandırılmasının bir ölçüde zorlaştığıdır. Uzun süren işgallerden artık rahatsız olmaya başlayan belediye başkanı Bloomberg ile Zuccotti Park'ın sahibi Brookfield firması parkta temizliğin giderek büyüyen bir sorun halini aldığını söyler ve işgalcilerden parkı terk etmelerini ister. Buna yanıt olarak eylemciler kendi temizlik çalışmalarını arttırsalar da sonunda New York polisinin müdahalesiyle park boşaltılır. Bu müdahale şiddet içerir: Biber gazları, coplar, göz yaşartıcı bombalar kullanılır ve park bünyesinde bulunan kütüphane gibi alanlar yok edilir. Zor kullanılarak eylemciler dışarıya çıkarılır. Her ne kadar uygulanan şiddetin büyüklüğü arasında belirgin farklar olsa da, tıpkı Fatsa'daki gibi, şiddete başvurmayan iktidarın sonunu şiddet araçları getirir. Böylelikle Arendt'in şiddet ile iktidar arasında kurduğu zıt ilişki her iki tecrübede de doğrulanır. Eylemciler bir daha bu kadar uzun süreliğine Zuccotti Park'a dönemezler ve kamp kurmaları engellenir. Büyük yankı uyandıran Wall Street'i İşgal Et hareketi sonunda bazı eylemciler yargılanır ancak davaların hemen hemen hepsi düşer. Arendtçi tabirle, işgalciler affedilmiştir (Hatta cezalandırılan, tam tersine polislerin Zuccotti Park'taki tahribatın müsebbibi olan müdahalesidir).

Çalışmanın Zuccotti Park işgali incelemesini takip eden beşinci ve son bölümünde ise çalışma boyunca yürütülen kuramsal tartışmalar ile ele alınan siyasal deneyimler derli toplu bir biçimde ortaya konulur. Fatsa ve Zuccotti Park deneyimleri, Arendtçi eylemin egemen olmama, lidersiz olma, şiddete başvurmayan iktidar kurma, farklı dünya görüşlerine sahip insanların çoğulluğunu bünyesinde barındırma, plan-program işi olmama ve kendiliğinden gelişiverme gibi özellikleriyle örtüşür. Buna ek olarak Arendt'in şiddet ile iktidar arasında yaptığı keskin ayrım iki örnekte de doğrulanır: Şiddet kendi başına iktidar üretmekten acizdir; şiddete başvurmayan (muktedir) eylemler şiddete başvuranlara nazaran daha zor baş edilebilir olarak öne çıkar ve iktidar şiddet karşısında kırılgandır. Arendt doğrulandığı gibi eleştirilir de: Özellikle Fatsa'daki "Çamura Son" etkinliği ile Zuccotti Park işgalleri esnasında kurulan mutfak, kütüphane, basın merkezi vs. gibi oluşumlar Arendt'in çerçevesindeki kavramsal ayrımları sorunsallaştırır. Sosyal olanla siyasal olan, eylem ile emek-iş birbirinden o kadar da ayrı değildir ve birbirlerini zorunlu olarak dışlamazlar. Tam tersine, yaşanmış tecrübelerin de gösterdiği gibi bu farklı alanlar ve etkinlik biçimleri birbiriyle etkileşim halindedir. Hatta bazı durumlarda birbirlerinin özelliklerini taşıyabilirler ve birbirleriyle zıtlaşmaktan ziyade ortak hareket edip tamamlayıcı rol üstlenebilirler. Mesela "basit" bir çamur temizleme etkinliği olağanüstü bir dayanışma gösterisine dönüşebilir ve aynı şekilde kitap düzenleme gibi bir iş, belirli durumlar altında bambaşka anlamlar kazanabilir. Yani Arendt'in keskin ayrımlarını tekrar gözden geçirmek gerekir. Son olarak da tezin esas sorunsalı bağlamında şu temel sonuca varılır: Villa'nın eylemin her zaman önceden kurulu bir kamusal alana muhtaç olduğuna dair ortaya koyduğu fikir sorunludur. Çalışmanın ikinci bölümünde de kuramsal olarak öne sürüldüğü gibi, Arendtçi anlamda eylem eğer "yeni" olanın ortak insan dünyasına beklenmedik bir şekilde getirilmesiyse, bu "yeni", bir kamusal alan olarak da düşünülebilir. En ayırt edici özelliklerinden birisi doğurgan olması olan eylemi imkânsızlaştırma fikri ne makuldür ne de temeli sağlamdır. Zira bu çalışmada incelenen her iki tecrübe de bu temeli sarsmayı başarırlar: Fatsa'da Halk Komiteleri'nin mi yoksa ilçe sakinlerinin eylemlerinin mi önce geldiği sorusu pek cevaplanabilir değildir. Bu deneyimde temel mevzu ortak meselelere katılmak, birlikte karar almak ve bir şeyler paylaşmaktır; esas dert eylemdir. İkinci siyasal hareket olan Wall Street'i İşgal Et

hareketinde ise durum biraz daha nettir: Önceden verili bir kamusal alan olmayan Zuccotti Park, eylemcilerin aktif işgaliyle birlikte kendiliğinden yepyeni bir kamusal alana dönüşmüştür. Villa'nın dediğinin tam tersi gerçekleşir ve kamusal alanın eylemi öncelemesinden ziyade, eylem kamusalı önceler. Aslında hem Fatsa'da hem de Zuccotti Park'taki sade vatandaşlar, "Nerede o eski kamusal alanlar?" diye yakınmaktansa sokağa çıkıp eylemişler, ortak dünyayı paylaştıkları diğer insanlarla etkileşime girmişler, sonuç olarak da dayanışma içinde hareket ederek bu dünyada anlatılacak benzersiz hikâyeler yaratmışlardır.

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