Arendt Re-defines “the Political” in Turkey: A Theoretical Analysis of the Gezi Protests

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In Turkish political culture, the political is usually associated with partisanship and manipulation. With regard to this, current political developments in Turkey show that both government officials and the opposition are embroiled in a constant battle of defining politics and how to be political to the public. This paper takes the Gezi Park protests in Turkey as a case study that illustrates the mentioned negative conceptions of being political. In the initial phase of these protests, even though the protesters and government officials were on opposing sides in this context, they comprehended “the political” from the same perspective. As a reply to this stance, the paper takes an Arendtian approach and argues that the Gezi protests epitomize political action for the very reasons employed to reject their political character.

KEYWORDS: Hannah Arendt, Gezi Park Protests, The Political, Public Sphere, Action, Violence.

INTRODUCTION


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