

Postmodern Status of New Social Movements: A Research on Yellow Vests

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ABSTRACT

Technological, cultural, political and economic developments with social change have transformed the form of social relations and brought new structures and conceptualizations. In this study, postmodern movements, which have been changed by technological innovations, are examined specific to Yellow Vests. Organizational forms, structures, agendas and horizontal communication of social movements that transform by the new communication technologies are studied. The study focused on the conversion of social movements by asserting the postmodern aspects of the Yellow Vests, which started in France and globalized in a short time via new technologies. In this context, to compose a general perspective on Yellow Vests, the news in the media is examined. Moreover, by the content analysis with Orange3, the tweets of "@_Gilets_Jaunes_" are assessed so as to understand the agenda and how Yellow Vests shapes the movement by the new communication technologies. Emotions and the general subjects of tweets are examined. This study aims to demonstrate how the movement emerged from traditional to postmodern with a descriptive approach by focusing on prominent themes and the organizational form of the Yellow Vests. According to the findings, it is possible to indicate that the Yellow Vests used new communication utilities to mobilize the movement as well as to convey their demands.

Keywords: New social movements, postmodernity, yellow vests, new communication technologies, social change

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The social change experienced in the historical process has led to radical transformations in the structure of social movements. New communication technologies, an important consequence of this change, have turned social movements into a postmodern movement. These technologies having brought a new character to the social movements completely transformed the organization and mobilization of movements. These movements, different from traditional movements, have provided the opportunity to support the identity of the movement through new communication technologies that enable participation and interaction. This study including the social movement literature in general puts forward the themes, the content of discourse and the emotion analysis of the Yellow Vests movement that are highlighted in the new communication environments. In other words, how the Yellow Vests are organized through social networks, the issues they discuss and how they are mobilized are evaluated in terms of postmodern social movements.

This study discusses the social movements, the conditions in which they are formed and the transformations they undergo by focusing on social change and postmodern movements. It also elaborates on changing leader structure of the movements and how the new communication technologies and identity affect the participation in the movement. In general, social movement can be defined as people's opposition who join around a demand against any disorder that exists in the social life. These movements can lead to more awareness of the problems in the social life in the historical process. Movements can arise with broader demands when necessary and combine with other movements in the social sphere to find opportunities to expand to large areas. The development and rapid expansion of new communication technologies has enabled these movements to spread to a wider area.

The Yellow Vest Movement, which aims to gather people who are excluded from the system, has become a global movement thanks to new communication technologies. The petition of The Yellow Vest Movement to reduce taxes on the change.org was signed by more than 850,000 people (Tapiero, 2018). The movement that starts online and hosts many people from different groups has been transformed into street actions organized in online environments as a result of non-fulfilment of

their demands. The non-leader structure, the lack of belonging to a particular political ideology, the collective identity created by using the yellow vest symbol, the horizontal communication and its spreading to a global space make it possible to characterize The Yellow Vests Movement which is organized by new communication technologies as a postmodern movement.

This study aims to reveal the change in the structures of social movements, which is a shift from working class-based labour movements to postmodern social movements, through social changes and new communication technologies on the basis of the Yellow Vests example. The study is unique because it evaluates The Yellow Vests Movement as a postmodern social movement which is a current and new issue. It analyses the Gilets Jaunes (@_Gilets_Jaunes_) Twitter account that is page of Yellow Vest via data mining technique and reveals how the movement is organized and how people communicated through the new communication technologies.

The study which examined 95 tweets that were shared on Twitter page of the Yellow Vests Movement between 17 November 2018 and 31 December 2018 with the help of the Orange3 software reveals a descriptive analysis. In addition, the news about the movement were analysed in order to understand the background and structure of the Yellow Vests Movement better.

The study has found that Yellow Vests Movement's @_Gilets_Jaunes_ Twitter account has frequently used the words "continued", "17 November 2018", "support", "blockage", "movement" and their tweets contain negative emotions mostly. It is possible to state that the movement organizes street actions through new communication technologies and conveys its demands through this medium. The study concludes that new communication technologies have an impact on the way of organizing, the action and the discourse of social movements. Although traditional methods of participation in social movements continue in part, it can be concluded that movements have reached a global dimension through the use social networks. From this point of view, it can be concluded that the movements have become postmodern as a result of social change by reaching the global dimensions with technological development.

INTRODUCTION

Each period is shaped by social, political, economic, cultural, philosophical and technological dynamics. It can be said that these dynamics create a unique society and individual. The social movements, which are important structures of the political and social spheres, have come to a postmodern state with the effect of these dynamics that have been subject to change from past till present. Both the organization and self-expression style of postmodern social movements, which differ from traditional social movements in both agenda and structure under the influence of new communication technologies, have changed radically. Thanks to these developments, movements have been able to spread to a broad area in a very short time via social networks and started to be effective on a global scale.

Although the history of formation and character of these social movements are highly dependent on the changing nature of national policy, international connections have caused considerable differences in terms of movements. The expansion and internalization of social movements gained great momentum in the 20th century and the activities of the movements were transformed in parallel with the change of communication tools (Tilly, 2008). By the 20th century, the social movements gained a universal character with the tremendous change seen in communication tools and common mass actions were started on the same subject in various parts of the world.

Some thinkers emphasized the collective identity as an important facilitator of individuals' decisions to engage in collective action within the context of discussions inspired by the work of Mancur Olson called "The Massive Action of Logic". On the other hand, other thinkers evaluated the "social movement networks as the structure of links between the multiplicity of organizations" and individuality. In this respect, they considered movements as a result, rather than a prerequisite for collective behavior (Diani, 2015, p. 1).

With the social movements against the mediocre order emerging as a result of an unsatisfied sense of justice and insecurity against the power (Hira, 2016, p. 143), the large segments of the society have started to participate more in the political life and take an active role (Çetinkaya, 2015, p. 28). The ability to access all over the world that is provided by the social networks has given a global structure to social movements.

Thanks to the new communication technologies, a movement that broke out in one place has started to show itself in different parts of the world in a short span of time.

Since 1960s, the agenda of the social movements has consisted of the labour market as well as the patriarchal family and the roles and status it imposed on women, children and young people. However, the university and school systems that shaped the society considerably have been among the subjects that constitute the agenda of this structure. Social movements, which included institutions such as prisons and military that form the repressive parts of the welfare state in addition to the issues that are mentioned, have also taken the elements of the forgotten class, which was described by Offe (1985, pp. 68-69) as the wealthless, on the side of the middle class.

These movements, which may be called new social movements, emphasize the quality of life and lifestyle concerns rather than focusing on economic redistribution as an expression of a fundamental break from industrial era movements. Therefore, new social movements question the welfare-oriented materialist goals of industrial societies (Pichardo, 1997, p. 414). In other words, issues about “peace, nuclear energy, local autonomy, homosexuality and feminism”, which replaced the class-based political mobilization in Europe in the 1970s and 1980s, constitute the agenda of social movements (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 286).

The postmodern social movements, which address different topics from traditional movements in their agenda, began to be organized and strengthened rapidly with the spread of new communication technologies. Looking at recent developments, with the Arab Spring that occurred in Tunisia and Egypt in 2011, researchers sought to understand how Internet and social media have affected political change in authoritarian regimes (Tüfekci & Wilson, 2012, p. 1). In 2013, Gezi Park protests emerged as actions demanding political freedom (Çetinkaya, 2015, p. 15) and spread to many cities of Turkey and rapidly turned into a mass movement through social networks.

In the light of these developments, the study questions the Yellow Vest Movement as a postmodern movement and tries to explain how the movement has developed today where new communication technologies are gaining importance day by day. Within this context, the study aims to shed light on the following questions: “What are the conditions

that form social movements?, What are the factors that enable individuals to identify themselves as members of a social movement?, Do new technologies transform social movements, and if yes, how do they show their effects? Is the Yellow Vest Movement a postmodern movement, so what makes the movement postmodern?"

Social Movements Expressing Joint Mass Actions

In the 19th century, societies entered a period of radical change. This situation began to change the economic, political, social and ideological structures of societies. Social movements, which were a part of this change and have been manifested since the 18th century, have evolved as interactive campaigns, not as singular initiatives. These movements have begun to show themselves frequently in the social and political spheres as the movements that have the power to realize political change programs (Tilly, 2008, p. 64).

In history, Lorenz Von Stein was the first to use social movement as a concept in terms of political struggle. At first, this concept consciously referred to a process in which the working class would obtain power. This process which showed continuity was also unifying. Marx and Engels also adopted the definition of social movement by Von Stein in the Communist Manifesto in the same period. However, from the end of the 19th century, social movements were transformed into movements that included not only organized workers but also farmers, women, and other segments who claimed rights (Yaylaci, 2014, p. 36). Thus, social movements have become tools operating in many areas of life. Social movements were no longer just movements that have political or economic demands, but they started to manifest themselves as interactive movements expressing identity-based social issues such as women's rights, gay rights or environmental issues.

The social movements arising from collective unity have a structure that tries to present new suggestions and offer solutions to the structural problems that were not previously considered a solution. American President Jameson described social movements not as a particular form of politics but as large-scale social transformations (Tilly, 2008, p. 58). This point of view developed by the American President for the social movements emphasizes the power of the movements that are created by the masses coming together and changing the social structure in the social sphere in line with their demands.

Politicization of daily life began in the 1960s, compared with postwar reconciliation. The modern age was shaped by the oscillation between politicization and the depoliticization of everyday life. At the beginning of the 19th century, social movements brought a new phenomenon to social events and politicized aspects of everyday life which had not previously been considered as political (Calhoun, 1993, p. 399). According to Kitschelt, who defines social movements as structures trying to balance the elements of democracy by allowing direct participation, social movements address political issues as well as separate or interrelated problems (Kitschelt, 1993, p. 24). Stating that social movements stem from the lack of democracy, Tilly creates a paradox by arguing that there is no need for democratization for the movements to become logical. According to him, social movements in principle have a structure that works for the benefit of inequality and exclusion rather than equality and participation (Tilly, 2008, p. 95). In this sense, Tilly presents a different point of view by defining social movements, which was defined by Kitschelt as structures maintaining a balance between the elements of democracy, as structures emerging in the absence of democracy.

The social movements that unite around a complaint of the groups are conceptually defined in different ways by different thinkers. Alain Touraine, defines social movements as follows: "Social movement is the confrontational movement of the social class which was defined by its dominance or dependence on forms of historicity, cultural investment, knowledge and morality models, directed at cultural models" (Touraine, 1988, p. 51). These views of Touraine who states that sociology is the subject of social behavior and relations are the evidence of how important the masses and their behaviors are in today's society. What should be the subject of research of social sciences is the relationships and behavior models they developed.

In the 21st century, George A. Lundberg, (as cited in Sanlı, 2005, p. 13), defined social movements as "voluntary units consisting of individuals engaged in harmonious activities to change attitudes, behaviors and social relations within a large society". Alberto Melluci defines social movements as a form of collective movement which carries conflict based on solidarity and pushes the boundaries of the system it belongs to. Melluci (1985, p. 85) states that the social movement is shaped by the possibilities and boundaries provided by social relations. Melluci's notion of social movement emphasizing collective movement points to the necessity

of a common culture and interests within the mass. Attitudes that affect the thinking and behavior of the mass must be based on collective elements in order for the social movement to occur.

Social movements that raise their voices for certain demands can be defined as the form of confrontational collective action of social groups united around a particular purpose, belief and idea, who have an impact on culture, social norms and values and who are in an effort to change the attitudes and social relations of certain issues in society. Social movements are aimed at producing solutions to the problems that political and social institutions cannot solve and to bring forward the problems of certain groups which are in the "other" position in the society.

Formation of Social Movements

After the emergence of social movements on the national plane in the 18th century, early theorists focused on the three dimensions of the movements: extremism, deprivation and violence. The sociologists of the 19th century, pioneered by Emile Durkheim, considered social movements as structures that emerged as a result of the anomie and social disintegration (Yaylaci, 2014, p. 47). According to Marx, the basis of the emergence of social movements lies in the competition between the bourgeoisie and the working class in the industrial society. The conflict created by this situation explains what kind of a ground the social movements take place on. It should be noted, however, that the class is not the locomotive of social movements as defined in Marx, but represents the economic possibilities of individuals in the social structure (Hira, 2016, p. 144). In this case, it is possible to say that the formation of social movements depends on many different variables.

The social movements that began to flourish in England at the end of the 18th century began to take root in North America and Europe in the 19th century. Many changes need be considered in order to understand the reason for these movements to be formed and spread. The most important change in terms of social movements in this period is that the people started to demand rights from the government. Political elites who take place in the administration on behalf of people, global trade relations and developments in transportation are the other developments affecting social movements. Another important development in this period is the new mass media that unites people and widespread literacy (Markoff

as cited in Tilly, 2008, p. 25). With the development of mass media, networks have become important tools that have an impact on people. Through social networks, individuals have found the opportunity to take action by communication and learning about social and political issues.

The first examples of social movement have emerged in the form of slavery, labour and women's movements. Labour movement aroused by the problems started with industrialization in the 17th century in Britain and 19th in United States. In this period of time, the issue of workers was brought up by trade union movements. For example, in the state of Maine as early as 1636, a group of fishermen started a protest against the low wage policy (Makhlouf, 2016, p. 22). Women's movements, which emerged from the demand of social and political freedom, began to make demands against the precariousness of women in the patriarchal society of the 1800s. In 1840, at World Anti-Slavery Convention which was held in London, American women were left out of the Convention by British male leaders. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the founders of the women's suffrage movement in the United States, pointed out that this led to the women's political equality by directing many women in England and America to new ideas and actions (Midgley, 1993, p. 344). Among the first examples of social movements, it is possible to show the movements that emerged in England and America against slavery.

During the years when social change was felt rapidly, the source mobilization paradigm emerged which was in an effort to reveal the shortcomings of collective action approaches that dominated social movement studies in the USA (Buechler, 1995, p. 441; Özen, 2013). With the characteristic predecessor structure of rational actors that took instrumental action through official institutions to secure the resources and to promote mobilization, this paradigm showed significant theoretical and empirical success to understand social movements (Buechler, 1995, p. 441). The resource mobilization approach argued that the balance of resources among the group was important for the continuity of the group in the movements united with rituals and routines in daily life for participation. Maintaining this balance depends on the limits of social control power, the leadership and organizational structures of organizations, and the competition of movements on scarce resources within the framework of subjects and groups (Sanlı, 2005, pp. 54-55).

In response to the resource mobilization paradigm, new approaches have been

developed with various differences over time based on similar ontological and epistemological assumptions (Özen, 2013). Emergence of significant criticisms against resource mobilization approach “created an intellectual space for complementary or alternative perspectives to analyze social movements”. One of these different perspectives was the social constructionism that brought a symbolic interactionist approach to collective behavior study, emphasizing the role of framing activities and cultural processes of social activism (Buechler, 1995, p. 441).

Resource mobilization and political process theorists, who researched why movements emerged in the 1970s, questioned when and how they secured resources to fight against individuals’ exclusion from channels. They came to the conclusion that this was a case of accessing collective interests through political bargaining. The theorists assumed that a present collective actor could recognize the beginning of political opportunities and mobilize local resources for political purposes. However, the new social movement theorists opposed it. Because they defined movements as structures that demanded identity and new lifestyles rather than reducing them to social class, political and economic interests (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 286).

The new social movement paradigm, which emphasizes issues such as identity and lifestyle, is based on the traditions of social theory and political philosophy. This approach has largely emerged as a “response to the inadequacies of classical Marxism to analyze collective action” (Buechler, 1995, p. 442). The new social movement paradigm is the addition of both historical and micro-historical elements of social movements to social theory. At the macro level, the new social movement paradigm focuses “on the relationship between the rise of social movements and the larger economic structure and the role of culture in such movements”. At the micro level, the paradigm looks at the relationship between identity and personal behavior in social movements (Pichardo, 1997, p. 411).

Regarding how different paradigms evaluate social movements, they consider conflicting and collective movement normal but base the formation conditions of the movements on different reasons. The paradigm of resource mobilization places economic policy on the base of the movements whereas the new social movements paradigms places cultural elements on the base.

Investigation of Social Movements in Terms of Collective Identity

Social movements that have gained importance as a result of constructive and destructive changes in society are the means of collective action that arise in order for individuals to come together and announce their demands. These movements are in an effort to gain rights and power in the society as the area in which politics takes place. The social movements, which are in an effort to establish themselves on the basis of conflict and solidarity in the modernizing society, fictionalize us and the others by forming a collective identity. The movements which can establish this opposition increase their participants and attain a strong position in the social life and transform the society in line with their demands.

It is important how the identities are generated, where they originated from, by whom and for what reason they are produced. Identity construction has a structure that uses “materials from history, geography, biology, productive and reproductive institutions, collective memory, personal fantasies, power devices and religious revelations” (Castells, 2008, p. 14). In its simplest form, identity, which is formed by various elements coming together, can be defined as “human’s source of meaning and experience” (Castells, 2008, p. 12) or human capacity based on knowing who we are and therefore what is what. Identity includes multi-dimensional elements such as knowing who we are, knowing who the others are, how we see them, and how they see us (Jenkins, 2008, p. 5). Calhoun (as cited in Castells, 2008, p. 12) states that there is no language and culture in which there is no discrimination between us and them. These distinctions are important elements that lie behind the collective identity among individuals.

New social movement theorists have claimed that attempts to identify, regulate and rectify identities were more important than the movements in the past. Sociologists who sympathized with political process approaches have begun to use collective identity to explain “how structural inequality has changed into subjective discontent” (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 287). The subjective discontent experienced by individuals transforms into collective problems and enables the social movement to spread to large sections.

Social structures and tactical repertoires, which can be called mobility structures, point to mechanisms that organize collective actions and enable

individuals to participate in them. Social structures include social movement organizations, formal and informal networks. Tactical repertoires describe protest and collective forms of action that activists are familiar with and can use. Thus, if there is an existing organizational infrastructure and familiar networks, supporters are more likely to take action on a subject (Garrett, 2006, p. 204). Some researchers, who explain that identities are mobilisers, have turned to network analysis. They have emphasized that such identities consist of elements such as patronage networks, city dwelling or political awareness, not from categories such as class and sex (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 288).

The focus on identity, which is the most distinctive feature of the new social movements, is considered unique in modern movements, since identity politics also expresses the belief that the elaboration, expression or affirmation of identity should be the main focus of political work (Pichardo, 1997, p. 414). According to Johnston et al. (1994, p. 139), social movements have risen with the defense of identity. The movements are developing within the framework of relationships that empower their members in defining themselves. What individuals collectively claim is their right to exercise their identity. Individuals look for the opportunity to realize their emotional worlds and biological existence.

According to Melluci (1985, p. 85), the integrity and continuity of social movements cannot be achieved without the integration of individuals and groups. In addition, the continuation of social movements also requires the interdependence of groups and individuals. Commitment to movement is an important force affecting the members of the group to stay together. This commitment enables to take action with the sense of us on the one hand, while on the other, it makes it difficult for individuals to leave the group.

In order to ensure the continuity of social movements, the movement actors must have a common understanding and belief, and participants must indirectly have an intergenerational network of relations in their minds. The continuity in the achievement of culture, ideology, and organizational form is possible by the influence of this structure, which is defined as a collective identity and connected to the relationship between generations. From this point of view, it is possible to say that all movements are based on cultural foundations based on collective identity and bear representative and symbolic functions.

New Communication Technologies and Social Movements

The global transformations in the historical process have also changed the institutions and structures in the social structure to a large extent. Especially with the realization of the technological revolution, new communication technologies such as mobile phones, social media networks have transformed the communication, collaboration and demonstration forms of social movement participants. This situation has led to serious changes in the organization of social movements and caused a problem emerging in any country to become a problem concerning the world. Thus, social movements have begun to show themselves on a global scale as formations that are independent from time and space.

New social movements that have emerged in order to overcome the crises caused by the modern society have started to develop with very different qualities in this age of transformation compared to the past. This process, defined as the transition from industrial society to post-industrial society, from modern society to postmodern society, has also been a period in which new conceptualizations and definitions have been made in terms of social movements (Yaylacı, 2014, p. 61). The social movements, which set new areas for themselves together with the change, have made attempts to either provide or prevent change. The movements take on the role of restoring the confusions and tensions that the modern age brings. Developing communication technologies have changed the structure and formation of these movements to a great extent and the movements have attained a postmodern character.

It can be said that technology is a part of society and that society creates, produces and reproduces technology (Fuchs, 2014, p. 106), that is, there is a mutual interaction between society and technological innovations (Castells, 2013, p. 6), and that technology influences participation in social movements and organization in the postmodern period. Fuchs (2014, p. 106) stated that interactions in all networks are the common aspects of technological networks thanks to the technology that people see as one of the many outcomes of their productive social interactions. The three mechanisms potentially related to technology and participation that allow interaction are defined as the "reduction of participation costs, promotion of collective identity", and the formation of the community (Garrett, 2006, p. 204). The possibility of participation offered to individuals by the technology has enabled the social movements to be organized through technology, to strengthen their identity and to mobilize.

Social movements at the beginning of the 21st century have started to use new technologies in their organization and in their activities where they announce their demands. These new technologies have been influential in the organization of many recent social movements and in going out to the streets. In his book "Rebellion and Hope Networks", Castells (as cited in Fuchs, 2014, p. 119). stated that the Arab Spring emerged through calls made from the Internet and wireless networks, which were self-mobilization processes. The rapid spread of the Internet, which is an important component of the new political communication system, enabled activists in Egypt to use new media tools during the Arab Spring and create a public space despite the government's pressure. For many people, the online space has been the only area where they encounter opposing content (Tüfekçi & Wilson, 2012, p. 4). Howard Rheingold said that the movement of the masses, who wanted the resignation of the President of the Philippines, Joseph Estrada and got organized via sms, was a harbinger of 'smart communities', which he defined as people who can move in harmony even though they do not know each other (as cited in Tilly, 2015, p. 25). From these examples, it is possible to say that the 21st century movements that we can define as the postmodern social movements with the spread of technology in a wide area have begun to replace the traditional movements of the 19th century.

Promoting collective identity in postmodern social movements, which unites technology and participation, the common complaints shared by individuals creates the perception that they are members of a wider community. 'Information and communication technologies enable the individuals who feel as they belong to the movement to mobilize in order to support the collective action later by promoting the collective identity throughout a dispersed population' (Garrett, 2006, p. 205). The fact that social networks that contribute to the formation of collective identity, create opportunities to obtain practical information about ongoing activities, existing organizations, contact persons and participation becomes a source of social pressure among potential participants, and allows for ideas such as "If you go, I will go too" to spread among the participants (Diana, 2015, p. 2).

Although technology was influential in the formation of social movements in the 21st century, the innovations in the movements were also caused by changes in social and political contexts. Despite the technological developments, inequality of communication has increased in this century (Tilly, 2008, p. 157). This situation will undoubtedly have a negative impact on the organization of social movements.

However, it should also be noted that despite the inequality of communication, social movements have become a structure that can be organized through technological tools in the 21st century and mobilized by technological tools when necessary.

The Position of the Leader in Social Movements

Since the emergence of social movements as class movements, they have been in an attempt to influence social and political initiatives. For this reason, it is possible to say that the social movements endeavor to have a voice in the political and social spheres. During this endeavor, the movements are sometimes mobilized under the guidance of a leader, sometimes accompanied by a few leaders. While the old-movements were organized around a single leader, in the new movements, although the leader is not always in the forefront, there are one or several actors organizing the movement. In other words, the new social movements are flexible and decentralized, despite the central organization of the old movements accompanied by great leaders (Çayır, 1999, p. 19).

The new social movements have a structure in which the public and private roles, community and organization are integrated, and especially the temporary and weak boundaries between the roles of members and official leaders are determined (Offe, 1985, p. 64). There may be a horizontal communication between the participants in the movements. Although there are certain members influencing the participants, it is possible to say that these personalities are people with leadership qualities who are smart and have strong communication skills rather than being authoritarian.

In their article called "Announcement", Hardt and Negri (as cited in Uzunoğlu, 2015, p. 90) emphasized that the new social movements were powerful because they were leaderless and underlined the radical democratic methods in the new social movements. Social movements organize themselves in a non-fluid manner that prevents the dangers of oligarchy. They tend to transform leadership, make joint voting on all issues, and have organizations planned. At the same time, the new social movements defending an anti-bureaucratic structure oppose the bureaucratization of the economy and politics in which individual citizens are drowned. Instead, "they call for a culturally libertarian transformation of social institutions" that benefit individual choice and collective self-organization more (Pichardo, 1997, p. 416).

Paolo Gerbaudo also states that modern social movements are leaderless networks, and define leaders who manage protests from social media and choreograph the coming together as “soft leaders”. Few people control most of the communication flow. The choreography of coming together means “the use of social media to direct people to specific protest actions, to send instructions to activists on how to act, and to establish an emotional narrative in order to keep coming together in public space” (as cited in Fuchs, 2014, p. 122). From this point of view, it is possible to say that in postmodern social movements there is a soft leader instead of a single leader and they organize their participants through new communication technologies.

AIM AND METHODOLOGY

Aim

In this study, it is aimed to examine whether the the Yellow Vests Movement has a postmodern nature as a movement that is organized and announces its demands via new communication technologies. By analyzing the formation conditions of the movement, the prominent issues of the movement are tried to be put forward. While doing this, the new social movements paradigm which has postmodern values has been taken into consideration. The data was collected from the newspaper and the Twitter page of the Yellow Vests Movement.

The study examines the structure, purpose, and stance of the Yellow Vests Movement against the government and the way it uses new communication technologies by analyzing the content of the their tweets and their positive and negative status. Thus, the increasing importance of social networks in terms of postmodern social movements and their effects on mobilization are tried to be analyzed. In this context, the study aims to draw attention to how social movements have transformed via social networks and how these networks affect the action and communication of the movements that are opposed to the existing order. The fact that Yellow Vests Movement, which emerged in France and showed a social movement characteristic, has gained a global dimension quickly by getting organizing via new communication technologies since it started became influential in choosing this movement as an example.

Thus, the study aims to answer questions such as;

- What are the reasons that led to the formation of the Yellow Vests Movement?
- What are the outstanding issues in the posts shared by the Yellow Vests Movement?
- What are the feelings found in the posts shared by the Yellow Vests Movement?
- How do Yellow Vests organize the movement with new technologies?

Method

In the study using descriptive analysis method, content analysis was used technically. In the content analysis, the Yellow Vests' Twitter account was examined and the predominant issues and feelings contained were studied with the data mining technique, and the data were analyzed through the Orange3 software. In this context, the tweets from Gilets Jaunes (@_Gilets_Jaunes_) Twitter account have been collected. 95 tweets between the dates of 17 November 2018, as the date on which Yellow Vests Movement started, and 31 December 2018 were included in the analysis. Therefore, the pre-New Year period was discussed. The new year holiday, coming to the table with the Government and aftermath was excluded from the analysis as they were defined as the second period of the Movement. With the data obtained from the period between the dates mentioned above, which we define as the first period, the study tried to explain the stance of the Yellow Vests Movement.

Information on the Orange Software

The data obtained from Twitter were analyzed and interpreted by Orange3 software. Sentiment, words and topics analysis are obtained and visualized from the data processed on this software.

Orange and Knime are the easiest data mining tools. It runs on OS X, Windows and Linux operating systems (Demsar & Zupan, 2013, p. 57). Written in Python, "Orange is an open source machine learning and data mining software. Orange is a component-based visual programming software for data mining, machine learning and data analysis" with a programming of data analysis and visualization. Components are called widgets, which allow simple data visualization, subset selection and pre-processing, experimental evaluation of learning algorithms, and predictive modeling (Demsar et al., 2004, p. 537; Naik & Samant, 2016, p. 664).

The development of Orange was initiated by Demsar and Zupan in 1997 (Demsar & Zupan, 2013, p. 56). Orange continues to be developed by the Bioinformatics Laboratory of the Faculty of Computer and Information Sciences at the University of Ljubljana (Naik & Samant, 2016, p. 664). Orange consists of a canvas placed by the so-called widget. Each widget provides some basic functions, such as reading data, showing a data table, manually selecting data properties. The user links the widgets with the communication channels. The basic strength and flexibility of Orange is in different ways in which tools can be combined in new schemes. The combination of widgets in a schema is highly flexible, so users can create any desired data stream only by linking widgets in the desired order (Demsar & Zupan, 2013, p. 57).

There are analyzes in the literature with Orange software. Naika and Samanth (2016) used WEKA, Rapidminer, Tangra, Orange and Knime software for classification. These classification are medical analyzes that classify patients with and without liver disease in India. Another study using Orange is Real Time Data Analysis in Clowd Flows by Kranj et al. (2013). In this study, multiple software (WEKA, Orange, Knime, Rapidminer) was used together. Orange widgets were applied to Clowdflows. In the study the tweets regarding Edward Snowden were analysed using sentiment analysis.

FINDINGS

Analysis of the Yellow Vests Movement as a Postmodern Movement

A General Evaluation on Yellow Vests

The revolts of 1789, which changed the history of the world in the political history of France, were realized against oppression, and the Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights was adopted. In addition to these revolts, French history witnessed many popular public movements. One of these popular movements, the Yellow Vests Movement which started on 17 November 2018 in France with gathering of a group of people who lost confidence on the establish order has spread to many European and Middle Eastern countries in a short period of time, just as the impact created by the 1789 Rebellion worldwide.

Yellow Vests began their demonstrations in the regions of France known as the province. The Yellow Vests organized big demonstrations by shouting (Telek, 2018) their demands in the masses they organized in Paris on Saturday November 24th and Saturday December 1st.

Considering the reasons for the start of the Yellow Vests Movement, it is understood that the taxes that President Emmanuel Macron decided to implement under the name of "Environmental Tax" since January 1 were what started the demonstrations. The demonstrations initiated with the additional tax imposed on the fuel continue as a spontaneous rebellion of the workers who are forced to pay against the austerity policies and whose demands are not taken into account (Evrensel, 2018). Protesters, who claimed that a disproportionate burden of the government's tax reforms were placed on the working class and the middle classes, called for the end of these changes and the resignation of French President Emmanuel Macron ("Yellow vests movement," n.d.).

It should be noted, however, that these actions do not only mean a government problem. On the basis of these social movements also lies the destructiveness of the political environment created by the neoliberal and capitalist system. Telek (2018) explains this situation with the globalization of the world as never before in the last forty years. With globalization, the problems experienced by people, frustration, stress, struggle to earn a living, and search for a responsible in the face of these and feelings like anger have become common. The situation of a family in France who cannot make ends meet has resembled the situation of a family in Turkey and India. In short; stress, anger, insecurity, indebtedness, unemployment, the cost of living have reached a global dimension by transcending national borders (Telek, 2018).

According to the sociologist Benoit Coquard, who has spent time with the activists since the demonstrations began, there are people from very different backgrounds behind the barricades. Yellow Vests do not only consist of white French men. According to him, especially women who are in a precarious condition and have financial difficulties take place behind the barricades (Telek, 2018). Liberation from the French press stated that there had been the most violent rallies since the 1968 Movement and emphasized the heterogeneity of activists from different groups, from nationalists, extremists, student groups to militants and anarchists ("Yellow vests...", 2018).

According to Coquard, people do not want to explain their political views in the barricades because the participants are aware that they have different political views. The main agenda of activists, who do not talk about politics and which party they vote for, consists of taxes, the cost of living and what they can do in the face of

these. Another important information given by Coquard about the Yellow Vests is that the movement is anti-rich and anti-wealth. The movement particularly rose against Macron's elimination of wealth tax for the rich people, implementation of heavy taxes on the middle class while making a tax deduction for the rich, stopping the housing allowance for the students and against precarization. In this sense, another issue that is on the agenda of the activists is the inequalities in France (Telek, 2018).

Activists are wearing a yellow vest which is the symbol of French drivers ("Hundreds arrested...", 2018). In France, the necessity for the yellow vest to be present in every vehicle has transformed its use into the symbol of the movement. This is because the yellow vest works as a reflector in cases of accident or failure. It is both a symbolic and easily accessible item since it is related with emergency. In this context, the Yellow Vests movement, in a way, means "caution, revolt" (Taştekin, 2018). The fact that the yellow vest is cheap, easily accessible, easily definable and above all that it is a necessity implemented by the government has proved the symbol selection to be inspirational and played a great role in the rapid spread of the movement (Henley, 2018). In this sense, the Yellow Vests have actually won the cultural representation war, and the working class and lower middle class people have become visible again (Henley, 2018).

The Yellow Vests Movement, which encompassed large sections and emerged as a popular uprising, began on November 17 and spread rapidly through social media ("Almost 100 injured...", 2018). The participants of the movement were organized by coming together via social media. Several weeks before the movement, different groups started to be formed and a few preparatory meetings were held before going out on the streets. Those who did this were named on Facebook as eight "national communicators" responsible for dialogue with the government (Dianara, 2018). After a participant from Brittany named Jacline Mouraud called out to Macron on October 18 saying "Tell us where we are heading? What are you doing with the money you take from us?" and criticized the rises, she published a video message ending with "It is enough". The video, which was viewed by 6.1 million people in a very short period of time, has been influential in organizing the French people in social media and exacerbating the events (Taştekin, 2018). One participant summarized the importance of social media for the Yellow Vests Movement by saying "Thanks to Internet, we no longer

need the representatives. We can directly vote every subject on our own" ("Fransa'da sarı yelekliler...", 2018). Social media has influenced the organization of the Yellow Vests Movement not only in France but also in many countries, from Belgium to Bulgaria, from Serbia to Sweden, and from Israel to Iraq (Henley, 2018). The anti-tax demonstrations in Paris was also adopted by the demonstrators in Iraq. Approximately one hundred activists wore yellow vests and marched to the office of the Governor of Basra, Asaad al-Eidani, to demand basic services such as water and electricity (Givetash, 2018). In Egypt, high-level authorities restricted the sale of yellow vests in 2011, with concern that activists in the Husni Mubarak uprising could take the example of the Yellow Jacket Movement in France. The yellow vest was being sold with the permission of the police in a limited way ("Egypt bans sale...", 2018).

Bart Cammaerts answered the question "who is leading the movement?" by saying "These movements do not have a strong and certain leadership or an organization that unite people" ("Fransa'da sarı yelekliler...", 2018). The Yellow Vests, who do not have a leader, are not connected with a specific political movement. The movement has no formal organization, a defined leader and no political affiliation. Instead, it is almost completely coordinated in social media (Willsher, 2018a). The movement, which does not have a central organization or leader, has extended its demands, including the resignation of Macron and the annulment of the French parliament. Benjamin Cauchy, one of the spokespersons of the movement, demanded that their demands be met saying that "The French people are not sparrows and they do not want the crumbs that the government gives them. They want the bagette" (Willsher, 2018b).

As a result the Yellow Vests Movement, which emerged in France, has spread to the social and political spheres on a global scale. People support this movement, which seeks solutions to collective inequalities in daily life by getting organized via social media.

Topic Analysis of Twitter Posts

Having analyzed the content of the tweets on Gilets Jaunes (@_Gilets_Jaunes_) account of Yellow Vests, it is possible to say that the predominant words on Word Cloud are as follows: movement, state, blockage, mobilization, continuation, yellow

vests and 17 December 2018. In addition, the tweets contains an emphasis on needs, gathering, participation, continuation, support and the Saturday on which the big movement took place.

Using Topic Modelling, abstract subjects were analyzed based on word clusters in each document and their frequency in latent semantic indexing-LSI. LSI provides both positive and negative weights per subject. While a positive weight means the word highly represents the subject, a negative weight means that the word does not highly represent the subject. Positive weights are represented by green color while the negative weights are represented by red color (Biolab, 2018, p. 30). Looking at the Topic Modelling results of Yellow Vests' Twitter account, it is possible to say that words such as yellow vests, our, movement, 17 December 2018, continuation, blockages, support, French are highly represented in the tweets with a positive weight.

Sentiment Analysis of Twitter Posts

Heat Map and Tweet Profiler were used for the sentiment analysis of tweets shared by the Yellow Vests. Whether the tweets were negative and positive was checked by choosing Vader (Valence Aware Dictionary and sEntiment Reasoner), which is a lexical method, in the analysis conducted via Heat Map. The tweets shown on the Heat Map in blue color indicate a positive effects, while the ones in gray color represent neutral emotions. Looking at the figure, it is possible to say that the majority of tweets carry negative elements. Looking at the sentiments contained in the tweets by Tweet Profiler according to Ekman's list of sentiments, one of the tweets has anger, three have disgust, fourteen have fear, thirty have joy, three have sadness, and forty-four have astonishment feelings.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study where the evolution of social movements was examined through Yellow Vests, the differences of postmodern social movements from traditional social movements were revealed. The structural changes also occurred in the movements along with the technological changes, by replacing the class-based, economic demands of the traditional movements with the issues like desire of a good life and the identity argument. With the rise of the network society, the movement

participants had the opportunity to communicate in digital environments. This makes it necessary to read the social movements which are organized through networks in the context of the information society.

The social movements have been reshaped according to social change and have taken many problems of modernization into their agenda. In addition to the goals and expectations of these movements evolving along with the change, their agenda and form of organization have also been transformed. These new movements, which can be described as postmodern social movements, have begun to be organized through new communication technologies around issues such as identity-oriented gender, environment, belief and freedom that go beyond obtaining economic and political rights, as opposed to class-based movements. Movements have started to be effective on a global scale with the spread of new communication technologies and new issues entering on the agenda of social movements.

The fact that new communication technologies conveyed its effect of bringing continuity on street protests to wider masses and making people interested in politics again in an apolitical era has been influential in rapid communication and organization of social movements such as Occupy Wall Street, Arab Spring, Indignados, Gezi Park (Şener & Öğün-Emre, 2015, p. 217) and has enabled movements to find support on a global scale. The Yellow Jackets Movements is organized by spreading messages on social media channels. It can be said that the movement was organized via social media since its inception was organized through Twitter in accordance with the data obtained from the analyzes and it tried to mobilize the masses with the contents emitted from it. Internet and social media had a great impact on the initiation of the Yellow Vests Movement, just like the above-mentioned social movements. This caused the Movement to gain a global feature, which has postmodernist values.

The Yellow Vests Movement with eight national communicators, who can be called soft leaders as Gerbaudo speaks of, differ from class-based traditional movements as a movement with horizontal communication, which is organized and strengthened by new communication technologies, is on a global scale, and emerges against the unequal applications of the authority. When the Twitter posts of the Yellow Vests, which can be described as a postmodern movement with heterogeneous participants, is examined, it is possible to say that the themes such as encouraging

for movement, support request, organizing and mobilizing are mostly included. It also called out for the organization and continuity of the Movement via Twitter because the movement participants expecting to be recognized and demanding an equal life thought that their demands were not adequately met by the French Government. It can be said that the movement, which uses the yellow vest as a symbol, creates a collective identity through a symbolic element, and fights a war of cultural representation. Based on the assumption that the success of the movement is the organization, mobilizing the participants and creating a collective identity, it is seen that the new communication technologies play a key role in the continuity and organization of the movement.

It can be stated that the sentiments used in the Twitter posts of the Yellow Vests Movement, which is the struggle of the excluded ones to participate in the system and which includes people from different ideologies, are predominantly negative. The movement has been aggressive towards injustices and inequalities in France and advocates those whose rights have been violated. At the same time, the fact that the movement opposing social injustice has found great support, and exists in both traditional and new communication environments have enabled it to spread into many countries in a short time and turn it into a movement at global scale. It can be expressed that the movement demanding social justice, equality and a good life has a transformative quality and that it strives to produce justice policy towards the overall society, not only the privileged segments. In this context, the Yellow Vests Movement is important to analyze the impact of new communication technologies on movements in order to understand the transformation of social movements without ignoring the theoretical framework and to understand how the social movements will change in the future.

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Figure 3: Heat Map Results of @_Gilets_Jaunes Twitter Page

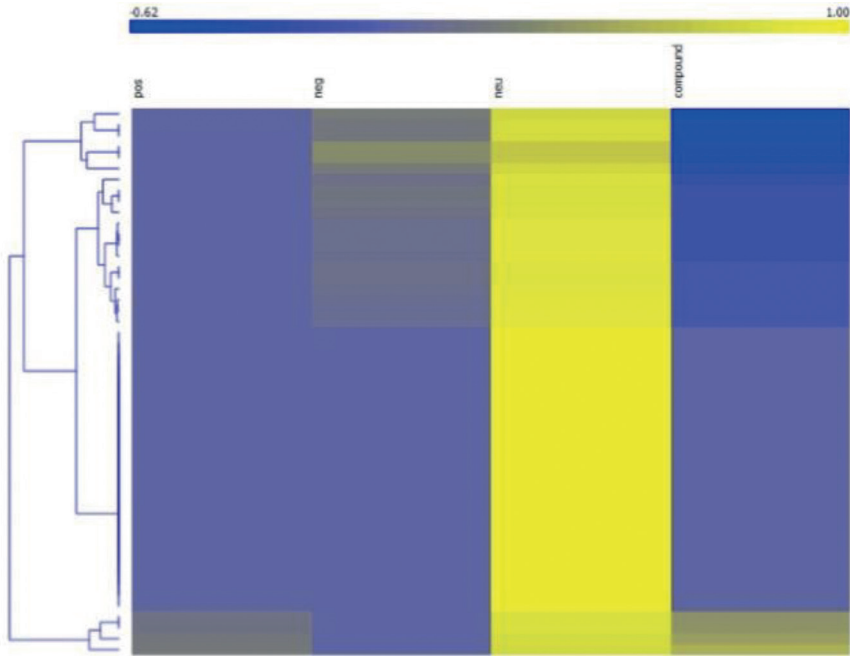


Figure 4: Tweet Profiler Results of @_Gilets_Jaunes Twitter Page

