# Chapter 11
# New Social Movements and Digital Activism

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## ABSTRACT

*The use of digital has shifted to a different format, especially with the prominence of interaction with Web 2.0-based social networking sites that developed after internet technology. These environments, which provide users with a platform independent of time and space, have transformed daily and professional life practices, and public spaces have been replaced by virtual communities. Historically, social movements based on class struggle have also been affected by this change. Although the use of media tools in social movements dates back to the 18th century, individuals can easily reach people who think like themselves and organize quickly through social media. Although digital activism, which is one of the trends of digital technology prevailing in the 21st century, has been exposed to criticism such as clicktivism, it has also become an effective force in the political arenas. In this study, changing social movements on the axis of digital technologies will be discussed in general terms to digital activism.*

## INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of history, the type of communication has been shaped by the technology available in the era we live in. Just as smoke was a means of communication in the stone age, fire, which was instrumental in the formation of smoke, also functioned as a mechanism of rebellion. In this context, the

communication tools that dominate the age have determined the course of a movement that was initiated with the intention of creating the demanded change or resisting the change. Moreover, Innis (1950), who states that the development of civilizations is also related to the communication tools they have, emphasized the importance of communication in the collapse and rise of empires in his book called Empire and Communication. According to Innis, who deals with the effect link between communication technologies and social structure in a supra-individual context, the existing communication tools strongly affect the social organization and dominance occurs with the control of communication tools (Erdoğan & Alemdar, 2005: 139-140). On the axis of these thoughts, it is possible to associate the term social movements, which has been used since the 18th century, with the existing means of communication.

Human beings, who have been able to come together collectively since the invention of the printing press, have begun to theorize social movements against class differences with the effect of the concentration of capital in the hands of a certain group with industrialization. Social movements, in a sense, are the expression of the discontent experienced in the society and the needs to be met (Şentürk, 2006: 33). As a result of the use of new media and the development of its effects, a new generation of social movements has started to be mentioned as a result of the attention of social movements, which is a collective behavior.

## SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND ACTIVISM

Saint-Simon first used the term social movements in France in the early eighteenth century, as a feature of new political forces opposed to the status quo to describe the social protest movements that emerged in his country and later elsewhere. Nowadays, it is a term that most commonly refers to groups and organizations that are outside the main body of the political system (Marshall, 1999: 746; Tilly 2008: 29-32) states that the social movements that emerged with the eighteenth century were carried out as interactive campaigns by overcoming individual initiatives, and discussed social movements as a process that unites three different areas in the context of identity and stance, which includes the necessity of the movement on the one hand, and the necessity of the movement on the other. In general, social movements can spread through modeling, cooperation and communication channels. John Markoff (1996: 45) explains this situation in its most general form as follows:

*"The social movements we know today began to sprout in England in the late 18th century and took root in Europe, North America and elsewhere in the 19th century. To understand why, we must consider many interrelated changes: strong government but weak king, people organized to claim government rights, political elites claiming to rule in the name of the people, developments in trade and transportation that connect people from far away, people living in the same places. new mass media and widespread literacy that combine it with a shared sense of action." (As cited in Tilly, 2008: 25)*

Social movements are a form of collective behavior in which action is taken to create a new lifestyle and a new model in society. In this respect, social movements, on the one hand, express social disturbances that are not satisfied with the flow of life, on the other hand, offer new solutions to solve them (Türkdoğan, 1997: 10). As the name suggests, social movements are wide-ranging organizations made up of various interest groups. Social movements include important social strata such as workers, women's groups, students, youth and intellectuals. These different interest groups of the society come together

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