

RECONSTITUTING THE YOUTH AS A POLITICAL CATEGORY AND THE  
NEO-LIBERAL REASON: THE CASE OF COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS  
FOUNDATION

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## Thesis Abstract

Gölgün Kkren, “Reconstituting the Youth as a Political Category and the Neo-liberal Reason: The Case of Community Volunteers Foundation”

In an effort to make sense of the new currents in civil society activities in Turkey, this study strove to put a magnifier on one of the biggest youth organizations, which works with a mission of youth empowerment, Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG). Within the general framework of neo-liberal transformation that Turkey has been undergoing since 1980s, the new citizenship models offered by civil society organizations were scrutinized. Neo-liberalism was treated as a “governmental regime” instead of an ideology. The alleged distinction between the state, the private sector and the civil society was interrogated. It was claimed that reconstitution of the youth as a political category with shared characteristics, problems and aspirations, make the government of the youth at a distance possible. Autonomization and responsabilization were regarded as the basic technologies of citizenship which are used simultaneously. Emergence of the new myth of ‘young active citizen’ was pointed out within the political and social spheres whose boundaries are being constantly discursively redrawn. A special emphasis was put on the tension between the super-imposed synthetic morality and subsequent norms and principles by the foundation on the one hand, and existing norms and values entrenched in the local on the other hand.

## Tez Özeti

Gölgün Küköken, “Reconstituting the Youth as a Political Category and the Neo-liberal Reason: The Case of Community Volunteers Foundation”

Bu çalıřma, Türkiye’deki sivil toplum çalıřmalarındaki güncel durumu anlamlandırmak amacıyla, Türkiye’de gençliğin güçlendirilmesi misyonuyla çalışan en büyük kuruluşlardan biri olan Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı (TOG) üzerine bir büyüteç tutmaya çalıştı. Türkiye’nin 1980’lerden itibaren içinden geçmekte olduđu neo-liberal dönüşüm çerçevesinde, sivil toplum kuruluşları tarafından önerilen yeni vatandaşlık modelleri incelendi. Neo-liberalizm bir ideoloji olarak değil bir yönetim rejimi olarak ele alındı. Devlet, özel sektör ve sivil toplum arasında olduđu iddia edilen ayrım sorgulandı. Gençlerin ortak özelliklere, sorunlara ve arzulara sahip politik bir grup olarak yeniden kurulmasının onların uzaktan yönetimini mümkün kıldığı iddia edildi. Otonomizasyon ve sorumlu kılma eş zamanlı olarak kullanılan temel vatandaşlık teknolojileri olarak ele alındı. Söylemsel olarak sürekli yeniden kurulan politik ve sosyal alanlar içinde yeni bir genç aktif vatandaş mitinin ortaya çıkışına dikkat çekildi. Vakıf tarafından empoze edilen sentetik ahlak anlayışı ve buna bağlı normlar ve prensipler ile yerelde yerleşik olarak varolan normlar ve değerler arasındaki gerilime ayrıca bir vurgu yapıldı.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

‘Civil society’ is still a ‘shining emblem’ in the world as Gellner put it in 1994. Nowadays in Turkey, it seems to be living its golden age. Almost everybody agrees that ‘civil society’ is a good thing. It is overloaded with claims of modernity and development. There is a strong belief in the alleged correlation between the degree of democratization and the maturity of the civil society. Not only several thinkers, academicians or journalists assert this linkage, but it has become an inextricable part of many political parties’ discourses. Particularly after Turkey’s official candidacy was declared by the EU in 2005, discussions around the concept of ‘civil society’ have been fueled. A strong civil society has been bestowed as the main key to European integration.

On the other hand, non-governmental and non-profit organizations are increasing in number as the locus of civil society activities. Concomitantly, they have diversified their areas of interest and types of activities. Particularly some civil society organizations received extensive media attention which in turn enhanced their public visibility. Some success stories have been filmed and broadcast to arouse more interest in the capabilities of the civil society sector. The audience has been invited to volunteer for civil society organizations (CSOs).<sup>1</sup> Some CSOs have

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<sup>1</sup> Here I refer to popular TV shows that hosted representatives of civil society organizations and some specific TV programs which are dedicated to raising funds for specific foundations. For instance some TV channels have organized special sessions on TV to support TEGV (The Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey).

institutionalized rapidly acquiring complex structures which are composed of boards, professional workers and volunteers. In an effort to ‘empowerment’ different segments of the society, they have become active in the social and political fields.

But what does exactly civil society mean? How can we categorize civil society organizations, if ever we can? How do they function and affect social and political life accordingly? If they are really effective, the question remains as to what extent? Which different roles do they take up under different circumstances? Where does the claim of a strong correlation between improvement of civil society and democratic transformation stem from? How do they influence perceptions about citizenship and the state? And finally how do they ‘empower’ the people?

These questions were already on my mind when I first started to work as the coordinator of “Microcredit Project” in Community Volunteers Foundation-or just TOG which is the abbreviation of the original name of the foundation, *Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı*. In the beginning, my purpose was to enhance my theoretical knowledge about microfinance by taking active role in its practices. I was aiming to take a critical stand against the project’s claim of empowering the woman. However my whole knowledge was made up of the experiences and observations of the others’, which seemed not only contradictory and misleading but also insufficient to write a comprehensive thesis about microcredit practices in Turkey. Working as the coordinator of a microcredit project seemed contradictory yet very promising in terms of conducting fieldwork. While I was quite anxious about my position both as a coordinator and a young student of sociology who tries to collect data from the field, I couldn’t foresee the other possibilities of the same field, which brought me to write a completely different thesis in the end. Immediately after starting to work for TOG, I found myself in a very complex web of relationships, a special language

which was totally alien to me and new sets of events, meetings and organizations. These were all functioning in the confines of these relationships and depending upon some certain rules and principles. While I was trying to interpret what was going on, the problematic of microcredit practices lost its priority and became just another interesting part of this complex assemblage of people, events, norms and principles. In a very short period of time, I realized that I have already immersed myself in these relationships; I was rushing from one city to another across the country, meeting numerous volunteers from different universities and replicating the very same statements of truths uttered in these circles. I have been absorbed by the warmth and friendship of the ‘community’ idea. I had already become a ‘youth worker’ in civil society circles, representing an institution with a claim of ‘empowerment of the youth’. My contradictory position in the foundation has taken up more awkward forms whenever I stopped and contemplated on my own. This contemplation engendered a new set of questions about political power, civil society and citizenship, which constituted the basic problems of my thesis.

Starting with a basic question of “How can we understand the efforts of ‘youth empowerment’ in civil society organizations today?” this thesis aims to scrutinize the specific historical conditions under which it has become possible to talk about civil society and youth empowerment in the way we do today. Focusing on social and political transformation that Turkey has undergone after 1980, my objective is to analyze how the efforts of ‘empowerment’ reconstitutes ‘the youth’ as a political category with shared problems and aspirations in the confines of neoliberal rationality. In an effort to understand how the youth is governed through ‘community’, I will mainly focus on the tension between the established norms and values of different localities and a specific type of morality which is imposed by the

foundation. How the limits of the social are drawn by the foundation's discourse and how some types of action/participation are encouraged are also some questions that deserve to be discussed. Instead of approaching neoliberalism as an ideology, I will treat it as a 'governmental regime' in a Foucauldian sense.<sup>2</sup> I think this will facilitate my understanding of the complex strategies and multilayered relationships that have appeared as an answer to my numerous questions.

TOG's mission of 'empowerment of the youth' has triggered my curiosity about the ways in which youth has been imagined in Turkey as a political category and as a group to be acted upon. Formation of this specific group is usually loaded with various stereotypical characteristics through which the young people have become the bearers of modernization and development. During the establishment of Turkish republic and later in the '60s and the '70s, they have been imagined as a dynamic group which would be the locomotive force in the embracement of Western ideas in the former epoch, and as a group that would save the country from incapable hands in the latter. After the '80s, a disappointment has arisen due to the youth's reluctance to participate in political activities. The youth has been blamed for being selfish and insensitive who is unaware of what is going on in the world.<sup>3</sup> I will argue how these arguments have provided a fertile ground for the efforts of activating the youth and simultaneously reconstituted the youth as a group to be acted upon.

On another front, the nature of political power has been reconsidered through the neoliberal restructuring that occurred during the late '70s and early '80s. The

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<sup>2</sup> In Chapter 2 it will be discussed in detail what 'governmentality' means and how it can be used to understand political power today.

<sup>3</sup> Demet Lüküslü makes a comprehensive discussion about changing perceptions of the youth and instead of blaming the youth of being apolitical, invites us to interrogate the specific conditions under which the youth has been constituted as a political category and the 'youth myth' in Turkey has been constructed. Throughout this thesis I heavily relied on her arguments in her book of *The Youth Myth in Turkey: Turkish Youth after 1980s* in rethinking the ways through which the youth is reconstructed as a political category.

downsizing of the state, the globalizing economy, and the growing connectedness of international organizations has forced the scholars to reconsider the old dualities, such as between 'the state' and 'the society', between 'freedom and constraint' and between 'the public and the private'. The problematic of government has emerged once more as a topic of scrutiny. In their preliminary discussion, Rose and Miller have suggested that 'political power is exercised today through a profusion of shifting alliances between diverse authorities in projects to govern a multitude of facets of economic activity, social life and individual conduct.'<sup>4</sup> While neoliberal economic rationality has become a dominant parameter for shaping individual conduct civil society, on the other hand, arose as a third sector between the state and the free citizens. However the distinctions that are made between the state, civil society and free market have lost their clarity, when one regards the alliances that are forged to exercise political power in rather complex ways. Civil society organizations have become the sites of the production of knowledge and expertise, and new subject positions are created within this power/knowledge nexus. Instead of investigating the coercive mechanisms of political power, it has been suggested to have a closer look to the productive capacity of the power in order to see the new possibilities and new constraints that are created within these alliances. Furthermore, in the specific case of TOG, the alternative morality also needs to be examined, which posits the youth as an active group in the middle of the complex relationships between the state, the free market and the civil society. The young people are

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<sup>4</sup> Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, have questioned the ability of old dualities like the state and the society, government and market, coercion and consent for interpreting the nature of political power today. With a clearly Foucauldian approach, they have suggested that "power is not so much a matter of imposing constraints upon citizens as of 'making up' citizens capable of bearing a kind of regulated freedom. Personal autonomy is not the antithesis of political power, but a key term in its exercise, the more so because most individuals are not merely the subjects of power but play a part in its operations." Rose and Miller, "Political Power Beyond the State: The Problematics of Government", (The British Journal of Sociology, Vol.43, No.2,1992)

encouraged to be ‘active citizens’ within ‘the social’ which is imagined and formed within neo-liberal rationality.

In the following chapters, drawing on the fieldwork that I have conducted in TOG and departing from a specific understanding of political power today, it will be argued that a new myth of ‘young active citizen’ is constructed within which mutual bonds between the individual’s self-improvement and social benefit are established. Youth is constituted as a knowable group with specific characteristics; but now they are not accused of being selfish or insensitive as was the case in the dominant public discourse after the ‘80s. On the contrary, they are invited to act upon themselves in order to contribute to the social transformation. This invitation is accompanied by a strong emphasis on *trust* in youth’s individualities. This process entails not only an employment of some new strategies and ‘citizenship technologies’<sup>5</sup>, but also a proposition for a novel way of ‘political participation’ for the youth. Besides, by locating these youth activities in state-private sector-civil society power nexus, this new ‘young active citizen’ myth undermines and delegitimizes other possible ways of participation, and reproduces these power relationships on different grounds. I will further argue that the formation of ‘volunteer communities’ lead to the replacement of old bonds by new loyalties. With a special emphasis on *intimacy*, *altruism* and *friendship* it facilitates the conditions of ‘government at a distance’. Community Volunteers Foundation proposes a new type of morality for their volunteer which causes fierce discussions between the foundation and the volunteers from time to time. The tension between the existing communal bonds and values in the local, and the super-imposed synthetic values and principles by the foundation, deserves further

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Technologies of citizenship’ has been used by a reference to the comprehensive work of Barbara Curikshank, *The Will to Empower*. In second and third chapters this concept will be discussed at length.

scrutiny. It will be suggested that the complex relationships, which are established between the state, civil society and private sector, have to be reconsidered in order to show how these allegedly distinct spheres are intertwined. In addition to this, the nature of civil society organizations and their inner dynamics cannot be understood by relying on the assumed correlation between the maturity of civil society and level of democracy. Thus, I will try to elaborate on how subject positions are created within these power relationships, to point out the unforeseen possibilities that emerge in different contexts. During my six months of work experience, I realized how I was full of prejudices about voluntary organizations, I was evaluating them under one single category disregarding their dynamic structures and changing roles in Turkey. It is very important to note that, voluntary organizations and CSOs in general are viewed as fixed entities. They are easily categorized and labeled by their dominant discourses and public representations. This leads to evasive judgements and obscures different possibilities that coexist within these organizations. I think a more comprehensive analysis is required in order to grasp the complex webs of relationships that are produced in these circles.

## Methodology

TOG is one of the biggest voluntary organizations in Turkey which is active in more than 80 cities with its 18.000 volunteers.<sup>6</sup> During its operations it collaborates with many different forms of institutions varying from municipalities, universities and some state owned social service provision entities, to other civil society organizations like Positive Living Association<sup>7</sup>, Youth Studies Unit at Bilgi

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<sup>6</sup> It is difficult to reach exact number of youth communities at the universities and the exact number of volunteers due to the flexibility of the organization.

<sup>7</sup> Positive Living Association (*Pozitif Yaşam Derneği*) is an organization based in Istanbul which is mainly active in defending HIV+ individuals' rights.

University<sup>8</sup>, Anadolu Culture<sup>9</sup> and even GREENPEACE<sup>10</sup>. It is funded mainly by private sector and individual donations, but from time to time it makes project based agreements with international organizations like World Bank and European Commission. It assumes a leader role in ‘youth empowerment’ and it also has connections with several other youth organizations like AEGEE<sup>11</sup> and Youth for Habitat Association<sup>12</sup>. When I first started to work for TOG, I was totally unaware of the new language of youth politics which has arisen in civil society circles. Although my mind was full of questions about the nature of civil society activities, I hadn’t thought about the consequences of targeting of the youth as a site of ‘empowerment’ before. Taking active role in TOG has not only played a significant role in forming new questions in my mind, but the opportunity of a close contact with several different CSOs which in turn reshaped my previous questions about civil society activities in Turkey. This has provided me with a broader perspective to analyze the current data at hand with reference to several other forms of civil activities.

During my work experience I visited the volunteer communities in 7 different cities out of İstanbul and talked to hundreds of volunteers approximately from 50 different cities. The depth of my relationships with different volunteers varied; while I have been able to learn just the names of some volunteers, I also had the opportunity to talk with others for long hours about what they understand from civil society, volunteerism, the role of the state and TOG in general. I tried to eliminate

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<sup>8</sup> Youth Studies Unit (Gençlik Çalışmaları Birimi) has been formed in cooperation of Bilgi University and Community Volunteers Foundation. It actively engages in youth research and modeling activities.

<sup>9</sup> Anadolu Culture (Anadolu Kültür) is a non-profit company which was established to support ‘arts and culture’ in different cities of Anatolia with a claim of creating cohesion between artistic and cultural production in local, national and international levels.

<sup>10</sup> Greenpeace is a global environmental organization, one of its branches is based in İstanbul.

<sup>11</sup> AEGEE is a Europe-based youth organization which is organized mainly in universities. It invites its members to be more active and to take initiatives in the social field.

<sup>12</sup> Youth for Habitat Association is a part of international network which works in close cooperation with United Nations. By declaring “We are not only leaders of tomorrow but partners of today”, they also put stress on youth awareness and importance of youth initiative.

the drawbacks of my contradictory position by initially revealing my sociological concerns to all the volunteers with whom I had in depth interviews. They showed no hesitation for giving responses, and revealed their most sincere thoughts and beliefs. I also sent them some question sheets to be filled; 12 of them were willing to fill these questionnaires.

Since my questions have evolved by time, I had to rethink TOG's discourse which manifests some of its features in its mission statement and principles. Although I have used these statements due to their over circulation and acknowledgement by all the parties involved, I tried to reconsider how the same discourse is reproduced in different ways in some special contexts. I have been able to participate a 4 days event of 'Project Days' in Malatya, the youth council which was held in İstanbul in 2008 in İstanbul, a training of trainers which took 5 days and several other large and small meetings, gatherings and organizations. I have also attended a focus group discussion which was moderated by professional researcher who was appointed by TOG, which was also a source of illumination.

Being involved in all these experiences I ended up with loads of images, testimonies regarding various practices and statements, and several different observations from the field. I had to spend a long time for thinking and re-thinking about all these before coming up with concrete arguments about civil society activities and youth empowerment. I was still engaged with TOG activities and kept my contact with the volunteers and the professional workers during this process. We continued to talk about TOG and its current situation as a civil society organization in Turkey. It was very important to keep up with the recent developments due to the organization's dynamic structure. Hence, I tried to follow closely the new tendencies in the organization. Although the research was exhausting at several moments, I

think the richness of the data at hand provides me with an opportunity to make more comprehensive discussions, instead of the reductionist and commonsensical views held about civil society in Turkey.

Due to privacy concerns, I had to filter the data in my hand. Unfortunately the particular details of some very striking incidences cannot be shown in this work. I have changed all the names of the volunteers not to reveal their identities. But I had to declare the names of the volunteer communities they belong to, in order to point out the different attitudes that emerge within the same organization.

This thesis was born out of my growing suspicion about the alleged relationship between youth empowerment, civil society activities and democratization process. However my main objective is not to measure the effects of empowerment based civil society activities on democratization. Hence, it is vital to indicate that I haven't chosen TOG as a good example of participant democracy, or a place where the individual freedoms are curbed due to emerging communal relationships and norms. Rather, it is quite important to note that we need to have a closer look at how civil society organizations work for a better understanding of the perception of democracy after the 2000s. It is important because Turkey is undergoing a significant transformation in that respect, and I want to put a special emphasis on the role of civil society organizations, the role of which has been overlooked so far. Civil society organizations' internal dynamics, their relationships with each other, their specific discourses and more importantly their extensive role in shaping the political and social spheres by these discourses have to be analyzed in a rigorous fashion. TOG, with its immense network of volunteers, its own definitions of the political, own language and norms, could be a good case study to raise all these different questions.

## Sequential Order

In the second chapter, I will present the theoretical framework that I have used for interpreting the data that I have collected from the field. Since my main purpose is to locate the current situation in Turkey in a historical context, the neo-liberal restructuring at the world level will be discussed together with the social transformation in Turkey after '80s. At the end of the second chapter, changing attitudes towards civil society organizations and civil participation will be considered.

Main features of TOG's institutional discourse will be presented mainly in the third chapter. Starting with an argument about how 'the youth' is perceived in Turkey, I will try to show the emergence of 'the youth' as group to be acted upon. TOG's position in this power/knowledge nexus will be discussed, referring to its own conceptualization of the youth. Together with its mission statement and basic principles, the novel governmental techniques that are utilized by TOG will be examined. Community government and participation as a discursive practice will be elaborated in detail, drawing on my observations in the field. It will be argued that all these novel citizenship technologies lead to a constitution of a new myth, that of 'young active citizen'.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to discussions of several possibilities that emerge in the field. With their own appropriations, volunteers contribute to the transformation of the same discourse and its articulations in various ways. This part is significant to show that the volunteers are not just passive receivers, and they are formed by several different discourses which get intertwined in their practices. The heterogeneity of the practices and subjectivities in the field will raise new questions

and invite us to reconsider the civil society activities in Turkey. Moreover, I will try to show how TOG assumes an intermediary role between the state institutions and the young volunteers. While it encourages the volunteers to claim their rights from the state, it not only draws the borders of a legitimate space of activity, but also preserves and strengthens the state's spatiality as being on the top of all decision-making processes. Furthermore by creating convenient grounds for close interaction between state institutions and the volunteers, it also shapes the volunteers' self-expressions. This chapter will also shed light on the inner relationships that take place in the central office in order to discuss the limits of government of communities and its reflections on management strategies.

## CHAPTER 2 REVISITING NEO-LIBERAL POLITICAL REASON

In the first chapter my objective is to contextualize some significant aspects of neo-liberal governmental reason and to discuss the concept of “civil society” in this power/knowledge nexus. Presenting a general framework for understanding the relatively new currents in social, economic and political changes in the world is very important for two reasons: First we can’t think of Turkey’s social and economic transformation after 1980s and the new roles that are taken up by civil society organizations in Turkey independent of the ongoing parallel processes in the world. Secondly, in order to grasp the emergence of this new political rationality, we have to consider the changing conditions, which have made certain ways of conduct according to this new political rationality possible. Thus, the sharp political and economic policy changes, the new techniques of neo-liberal governmentality and the rise of civil society organizations, as the important bearers of these techniques will be discussed respectively.

### Neo-liberal Era

Social sciences literature bears many discussions regarding some epochal turns in relation to the birth of new ideological regimes, new state formations and ways of social organization. While different conceptual definitions and social diagnoses

would lead to diverse evaluations about the present, there is a general consensus that there has been a radical change in economy and society in the late 1970s. This particular complex of changes that influenced the whole world is called Neo-liberalism.

The birth of Neo-liberalism is characterized by a series of different historical events, economic restructuring, and also by some popular political figures. Ronald Reagan in the USA and Margaret Thatcher in the UK are generally acknowledged as the symbolic pioneers of this new world order, both due to the political regimes they introduced, often called as the “New Right”, and their famous and widely quoted remarks about this regime. For example, Thatcher's statement that “there is no such thing as society, there are only individuals and families” embodies the spirit of this era. We also see that the idea of welfare state is criticized in this period, referring to its lack of efficiency and harms on market competition by the right wing. However, the welfare state was also criticized by the left wing, because implementation of some welfare policies was leading to an extra burden on the poor while transferring the wealth to middle and upper middle classes. Consequently, in the name of strengthening the free market, the Keynesian demand side economic policies have been abandoned, and state expenditure on social services has been cut. Less state intervention, high interest rates and fostering individual entrepreneurship have become the determining features of the neo-liberal era. But we have to make it clear, as Stuart Hall puts it in his analysis of how ideological New Right regime gained a hegemonic position in the late ‘70s, that the New Right regime has a rather contradicting approach to state involvement in social and economic activities. It is “simultaneously dismantling the Welfare State, 'anti-statist' in its ideological

representation, and highly State-centralist and dirigiste in many operations”.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore to present neo-liberalism as the ideological reverse of the welfare state would be very reductive and lead to overlooking how the state, allying itself with a range of other groups and forces. The state has set up chains of enrollment, “responsibilization” and “empowerment” to sectors and agencies distant from the center, yet tied state through a set of complex of alignments, protocols and mutual agreements. Governmental rule is translated through these various mechanisms. So the state did not completely withdraw from the social and economic affairs, but kept most of its regulatory roles yet enacting different ways of involvement.

The very same era was also marked by a serious economic crisis, which affected not only the first world countries but also shook the national developmentalist regimes of developing countries.<sup>14</sup> The old chains of Fordist production, import substitution type of industrial production and international division of labor lost their efficiency and profitability. Third world countries applied to IMF and World Bank for financial support, which was very costly in terms of new deregulatory measures. For instance state control on export and import activities has been weakened and minimum wage agreements have been loosened not to hurt functioning of labor market. In line with the neo-liberal agenda, which is also fostered by these international institutions, agriculture subsidies have been decreased and quota and tariff practices have been loosened. Additionally, most of the national economies have adopted the notion of perfect capital mobility, which allowed the circulation of foreign currencies all over the world. Capital owners started to search for cheap labor and input overseas, which also changed the configuration of

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13 Stuart Hall, *The Hard Road To Renewal*. (London: Verso, 1988) p.152

14 Caglar Keyder, *Ulusal Kalkınmacılığın İflası* (Metis, 1993) for more detailed analysis. In his series of articles he argues the relationship between sharp economic change and its social and political consequences.

production all over the world.<sup>15</sup> East Asian countries showed high growth rates based on export, while old industrial capitals of the West like, London, New York, Frankfurt transformed into de-industrialized centers of finance capital. This new distribution of industrial and financial sectors across the world changed the appearance of urban areas, but more significantly did lead to emergence of new types and faces of poverty due to the growing rates of unemployment, problem of housing and nutrition generally. In addition, Buğra and Keyder underline the loosening of traditional family bonds, which used to provide a safety net for the poor in the case of Turkey.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, the world was facing an unprecedented improvement in transformation and telecommunication technologies that altered the established notions of temporality and spatiality. Flows of money, products, images, ideas and people have prepared the ground for discussions of globalization which has dislocated all the reference points. Some analysts named this stage of economic organization “global capitalism”.<sup>17</sup> Last but not least, all these changes regarding the international economic organization were accompanied by the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, which turned Neo-liberalism into a *norm* especially when we consider the emergence of ex-Soviet states and China as the new competitors in international economics.

These dazzling changes in the world economic system produced many consequences for the world population. The ongoing debates about Neo-liberalism and globalization introduce the weakening of the nation state and its institutions as a central question. The existence of several bilateral and multi-lateral regional

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15 See David Held, A. McGrew, D. Goldblatt, J. Perraton, *Global Transformations* (Stanford, 1999) Chapters 3, 4 and 5 for detailed explanation of social and economic transformation beginning from late 70s.

16 Ayşe Bugra and Caglar Keyder, *New Poverty and The Changing Welfare Regime in Turkey*, Ankara: UNDP

17 B. S. Chimney, “International Institutions Today: An Imperial Global State in the Making”, in *European Journal of International Law*, 15, 1, 2004

agreements among different states, the strengthening of the European Union, which has emerged as the second political and economic power after the USA, and the power of international organizations such as the UN and the WTO, support the claim that there has been a decrease in the political power of nation states. On the other hand, the same era witnesses an increase in state violence, increasing ethnic conflicts and ongoing wars in different territories. Nationalist and racist tendencies have resurfaced in the world in different forms both in urban and rural areas. The universality claim of democracy, equality and human rights has made several rights-based controversies to be brought to international courts. Concomitantly, civil society organizations have shown a dramatic increase in number and types in local, national and international levels while their area of interests diversified rapidly. Issues such as health, education, environment, human rights, and gender equality have become areas where civil society organizations intervene. As Suzan Ilcan and Tanya Başok have pointed out, “while attempting to disinvest themselves of the responsibility to meet their citizens’ social and economic requirements, states have engaged individuals, private enterprises, and communities to recreate the institutions of social support”.<sup>18</sup> Therefore it is compulsory to reconsider the governing role of the state, through these newly built complex structures.

Have nation states been able to keep their political power and authority vis-à-vis international law, universal human rights and values, and also the strengthening of global capital, which benefits from the conditions of free market economy? How would it be possible to govern the individuals while preserving the norms of liberal

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<sup>18</sup> Suzan Ilcan and Tanya Basok, “Community Government: Voluntary Agencies, Social Justice, and them Responsibilization of Citizens”, *Citizenship Studies*, Vol.8, No:2, June 2004 : 129-144.

democracy?<sup>19</sup> In order to grasp how the individuals are governed in such a context, first we need to understand how the society is perceived differently. Privatization of social security and health systems, deterioration in unemployment benefits and decrease in state expenditure in education and other social sectors signal not only a new kind of state but also a new imagination of *society*. With the decline of the welfare state, we have witnessed a transformation in the way citizens are thought. As I have mentioned above, society is perceived no longer as a solid object of national welfare systems, but rather as a more fragmented and diversified collectivity which is forged by individuals, families and groups with different needs, desires and objectives. The notion of citizenship is also challenged by these new conceptions of the society. As I will show in the last part of this chapter, claiming rights through active participation in civil society organizations has become one of the determining features of a new type of citizenship. The main objective of neo-liberalism has been to support individual freedoms by creating participant democratic citizens on the one hand, and to secure the order in order to keep the free market functioning on the other; which would mean that the concepts of liberty and authority, and their interrelation take up a peculiar character in this context. In the next part it will be discussed, how the new modes of government have been applied regarding the prevalence of liberal democratic models.

Before elaborating my theoretical framework, I would first like to position Turkey within the context that I have discussed above. I argue in this thesis that the rise of civil society organizations as intensive fields of neo-liberal governmentality shows different characteristics after the 2000s. However, it is crucial to keep in mind that the '80s are still acknowledged as the main turning point for the history of

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<sup>19</sup> I use the term "liberal democracy" for a system of government which relies on representative democracy and free market economy which operate in a constitutional framework.

modern Turkey, at least for two reasons: First, the military coup of 12 September 1980 was an important rupture in political and social life, and second, the intensive deregulation of economic institutions and neoliberal restructuring in general started after the '80s.

Neo-liberal policy agenda in Turkey overlaps with the ongoing processes in the world dating from the late '70s and the beginning of the '80s. Turkey also had a symbolic political figure that characterizes the era: Turgut Özal, whose political party received nearly 45% of the votes, became the prime minister in 1983. Turgut Özal was a passionate supporter of the free market just like his contemporaries, Reagan and Thatcher. Instead of the '70s import-substitution economic model, export-led growth has been proposed as a strong alternative which brought many structural reformations favoring export activities. Deregulation of economic institutions, downsizing or privatization of the old state institutions considered as gross and inefficient were the first steps to be taken, in order to open more space for private capital. To ensure the compatibility of national products, Turkish currency had to be devalued constantly, increasing the inflation rates and decreasing the purchasing power of the population. Furthermore, to enhance free-market conditions, agriculture subsidies have been cut which, in turn, increased prices. Özal's government consisted of engineers, including him, which endorsed a technocratic perspective in governmental activities. The state should be governed according to the norms of profitability and efficiency. The neoliberal restructuring of the state had started just before Özal came to the power. He was working as a technocrat as the Acting Head of SPO (State Planning Organization) and the Deputy Under-Secretary of the Prime Minister, when the famous economic reform program was instigated on January 24, 1980; when Turkey was one of the first countries to encounter the new

liberalization message from Washington, namely Washington Consensus.<sup>20</sup> This program designed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund “aimed at stabilizing and liberalizing the closed, inward-oriented economic structure in Turkey and at shifting it to an outward-oriented path of development. The WB and IMF were committed to present the Turkish experience as a model of success to the rest of the less-developed countries”.<sup>21</sup> When he came to power, he continued the reformation process by introducing several privatization packages to downsize the state institutions.

On the other hand, in order to by-pass democratic processes such as the constraints imposed by bureaucratic and parliamentary norms, Özal preferred a decision making style based on Cabinet Decrees as opposed to Acts of Parliament.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, to enhance the flexibility in government spending decisions he proliferated extra-budgetary funds (EBFs) which became an important medium of government spending. However as Öniş points out: “The proliferation of the EBFs during the Özal era helped to introduce a number of important distortions in the system resulting in arbitrary spending decisions based on political patronage.”<sup>23</sup> Economic growth has been tried to be maintained by paying more incentives to export-led industries which replaced import substitution model of ‘70s. New labor laws have been enacted “mainly seeking to create a ‘flexible’ labor market where labor’s right to organize in labor unions and to engage in collective bargaining are

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<sup>20</sup> Ziya Öniş, “Turgut Özal and His Economic Legacy: Turkish Neoliberalism in Critical Perspective”, Middle Eastern Studies, 2004.

<sup>21</sup> Fratt Demir, “A Failure Story: Politics and Financial Liberalization in Turkey, Revisiting the Revolving Door Hypothesis”, (World Development, Issue 5, May 2004, 851-869)

<sup>22</sup> Ziya Öniş, “Turgut Özal and His Economic Legacy: Turkish Neoliberalism in Critical Perspective”, Middle Eastern Studies, 2004.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 14.

effectively curtailed.”<sup>24</sup> Consequently, “all these shifts created a major repercussions in the commodity and labor markets, leading to significant sources of new surplus transfer mechanisms with the state playing an active role.”<sup>25</sup>

These changes actually happened in a coercive environment after the military coup of 1980. After the turbulent years of the ‘70s, the Turkish army seized the government with very strict measures putting forward the increasing tension between left and right wings and several cases of political murders. All political parties and civil society organizations -including labor unions- were closed; most of the politicians were arrested and prohibited from engaging in politics. Thousands of people were imprisoned or sent to exile due to their involvement in oppositional movements.<sup>26</sup> The September 12 coup, with its strict measures and violent character damaged Turkish democracy severely and left deep traumas, most of which have not healed yet. A new constitution was prepared during the military regime, which notably limited civil liberties, enabled the violation of human rights and the freedom of speech, and strengthening the hand of the nation state and its institutions.

Ironically, the reign of Turgul Özal’s party, the Motherland Party was regarded as a democratic response of the population to the army, whose institutions have been accepted as the pioneers of advancement by the Turkish elite for years.<sup>27</sup> These arguments stem from his contradictory approach to classical bureaucracy and military powers. He was opposing the established norms of classical bureaucracy due

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<sup>24</sup> Erineç Yeldan, “Assessing The Privatization Experience in Turkey: Implementation, Politics and Performance Results”, (Report Submitted to Economic Policy Institute, Washington D.C, June, 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>26</sup> Under the military regime, many people have been exposed to violent tortures in military prisons. Incidents of Diyarbakır Military Prison have been started to be discussed very recently. Ertuğrul Mavioğlu has explained how the military regime has operated in prisons, relying on memories of several prisoners at that time, *Asılmayıp Beslenenler/Bir 12 Eylül Hesaplaşması*, (İthaki,2006).

<sup>27</sup> Henri J. Barkey, “The Struggles of a ‘Strong’ State”, *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 54 (1), 2000,87-105.

to its cumbersome structure which hinders the smooth functioning of free market economy, but he also implemented the reform process in a top-down fashion. Moreover, he never attempted to interrogate the unlimited power of the military which was preserved by the constitution of 1982. Thus, the Özal period can be identified by juxtaposition of neoliberal reformation with ongoing military dominance, instead of enhancement of individual liberties.

On another front, it is important to mention the introduction of new set of values and tendencies which have become dominant during the same period. Following the new developmentalist discourse and economic regulations doors of the country had to be opened to foreign investment, together with the incoming Western ideas, cultural practices and consumer goods. It was another step in the Turkish modernization project, which was designed during the foundation of Turkish Republic.<sup>28</sup> Individual entrepreneurship, showing off prosperity, and obtaining high life standards dominated the society. Old virtues of ‘honesty’ and ‘modesty’ have become inferior values and started to be associated with naivety. Easy ways of becoming rich have been glorified, and status symbols have changed to a great degree.<sup>29</sup> The very same period has witnessed new waves of migration from Northern, Eastern and South Eastern Anatolia to more *developed* cities of the West. Rapid but uncontrolled urbanization has led to opening of new sights of visibilities and encounters on the one hand<sup>30</sup>, and the sharp neo-liberal measures have contributed to the creation of new types of poverties in the peripheries.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye’de Toplum ve Siyaset*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 1994).

<sup>29</sup> See, Rıfat N. Bali, *Tarz-ı Hayat’tan Life Style’a* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2002) on the impact of the Özal era in terms of transforming cultural values and elite behavior and life-styles.

<sup>30</sup> For a detailed analyses, see Tahire Erman, “Gecekondu Çalışmalarında ‘Öteki’ Olarak Gecekondu Kurguları”, *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, 2004.

<sup>31</sup> Bugra and Keyder, *New Poverty and The Changing Welfare Regime in Turkey*, Ankara: UNDP

The most important feature of the political climate of late the '80s and beginning of the '90s was rise of identity politics. Especially Islamic, Kurdish and gender politics achieved more public visibility. Regarding the discussions in this thesis, it would be meaningful to put a greater emphasis on the rise of Islam, politically, culturally and economically; dramatic rise in votes for the Welfare Party which has adopted an Islamist discourse brought considerable power to the Islamic movement both in national and local levels. The rise of the Islamic movement and the changing socio-cultural environment especially in urban areas, were signaling an emergence of a very powerful “political will” despite constitutional suppression and republican opposition. When in 2002 Justice and Development Party have acquired the majority of the votes under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, it was perceived as the continuation of Islamic political power. However, this new political government showed a controversial discourse which is not possible to be reduced to Islamic politics. For some scholars, AKP has tried to fill the void of the center-right by claiming the legacy of the Democratic Party’s conservative modernization and its influential political strategy of conservative populism.<sup>32</sup>

It has to be accepted in advance that, here it is not possible to make a detailed analysis of AKP’s political discourse. It is obviously beyond the limits of this thesis. However, it is vital to underline a couple of very crucial points to present a general sense of Turkish politics in the new millennia, thus placing it in a global context. The rule of the AKP deserves further scrutiny because AKP has not only accelerated the process of downsizing of the state and liberalization of the market but also due to AKP’s unprecedented commitment to European integration especially between

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<sup>32</sup> For a detailed analysis of the legacy of Democrat Part and political discourse of AKP, please see Yüksel Taşkın, “AKP’s Move to “Conquer” the Center-Right: Its Prospects and Possible Impactson the Democratization Process”, *Turkish Studies*, 9:1, 53-72.

2002 and 2005. Next, I would like to elaborate on these interrelated dynamics in order to show their contribution to the creation of a new governmental discourse.

When AKP came to power by receiving 34.28% of the votes in general elections of 2002, it was a big shock to some parts of the society –especially for the Kemalist elite<sup>33</sup> which hold serious fears and tears for a sneaky Islamism- while it was symbolizing hope and change for the others. But probably a very small percentage of the population was expecting a revival of Neoliberal economic policies under the rule of the AKP. Although Turkey had already embraced a totally free market economy and left Keynesian policies after ‘80s, AKP has accelerated the liberalization of the market by immense privatizations, cuts in agricultural subsidies and further deregulation of tax system to attract foreign direct investment.<sup>34</sup> Privatization has become one of the main sources of revenue and actually it became the main drive behind the dramatic increase of FDI.<sup>35</sup> It has to be emphasized that it would be wrong to suggest that all these policies belong to AKP’s economic and political strategy. After the 2001 economic crisis Turkey was following a new economic program which was prepared by the previous government due to its deal

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33 I use the term ‘Kemalist elite’ to refer a certain segment of the society who define themselves as the bearers of secular Turkish national identity and pioneers of modernity. Keyman explains how the secularism and modernity have become connected set the any religious any traditional claims inconsiderable for Kemalist elite: “In fact, in the minds of the Kemalist elite, objective secularization and subjective secularization were directly linked to political (societal) modernity and cultural modernity. Thus secularism was considered one of the ‘defining elements of political modernity’ in the process of modern nation-state building, whose mode of governing was impersonal, rational and removed from religious and traditional ties. At the same time, secularism was ‘a vital project’ for the Kemalist elite, in order to create a modern and laicist national identity as a rationally thinking and acting self, whose relations to itself and its milieu were not dictated by religious beliefs and symbols.” Fuat Keyman, “Modernity, Secularism and Islam : The case of Turkey”, (Theory, Culture, Society, 2007,24,215)

<sup>34</sup> Especially privatizations in highly strategic sectors of communication and energy have been hotly criticized by oppositional parties. Tupras , Petkim and Turk Telekom cases have been brought to Council of State

<sup>35</sup> See Erinc Yeldan’s report about recent privatization efforts in Turkey. Erinc Yeldan, “Assessing The Privatization Experience in Turkey: Implementation, Politics and Performance Results”, (Report Submitted to Economic Policy Institute, Washington D.C, June, 2005).

with the IMF.<sup>36</sup> But instead of aiming to increase interest rates to constraint domestic demand, the government maintained high interest rates to attract speculative foreign capital. According to Eriç Yeldan, the result was “shrinkage of the public sector, deteriorating education and health infrastructure, and failure to provide basic infrastructure to the middle class and the poor. Furthermore, as the domestic industry intensified its import dependence, it was forced to adapt to increasingly capital-intensive foreign technologies with adverse consequences on domestic employment.”<sup>37</sup>

The second basic motive of the new economic policies was AKP’s eagerness for Turkey’s EU membership. Economic policies and political reformation packages went hand-in-hand, and some of these new economic policies have been put in the agenda to satisfy the Copenhagen Criterion to become an official candidate to the EU. It has to be accepted that AKP’s desire for EU membership meant more than just economic liberalization. During the time period between 2002 and 2005, Turkey went a rapid reformation period in different political and social areas. Even though EU membership has been an integral part of official state strategy since 1959, by its radical reforms AKP has become the main pioneer of this process. The political reformation process has been assessed positively, for instance Keyman and Öniş has asserted that: “Purely political reforms designed to meet the EU’s Copenhagen criteria helped to improve investor confidence and contributed to the economic recovery process. Economic recovery, in turn, enabled the government to press ahead with difficult reforms on the democratization agenda and, hence, help to create a

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<sup>36</sup> This new economic program was identified with Kemal Derviş, who was brought in charge as a technocrat by Bulent Ecevit after 2001 crisis.

<sup>37</sup> Eriç Yeldan, “Patterns of Adjustment in the Age of Finance: The Case of Turkey as a Peripheral Agent of Neoliberal Globalization”, (The Ideas Working Paper Series, Paper no:1 /2009)

virtuous cycle.”<sup>38</sup> Ümit Cizre has put forward the slowing-down of the reformation process: “the good reform record of the ruling party did not follow a consistent discourse and course... since 2005, the government’s ‘regressive’ record can be best seen in its loss of ability to provide a democratic reform purpose and direction...”<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, the very same policies have been approached with suspicion regarding the facilitative role of moderate Islam in neoliberal restructuring. In her inspiring essay, Gambetti attracts our attention to the role of AKP as the catalyst of the establishment of neoliberal governmental strategies which constantly create its ‘threats’ and mobilize some segments of the society against these ‘threats’ to be sustainable.<sup>40</sup>

The tension between the AKP government and the Turkish military forces has also shaped this process, which revealed itself most clearly in the so-called post-modern military coup of 27 April 2007. However, after its second clear victory in the general elections of July 2007, AKP put more and more stress on the virtues of democracy. The “Ergenekon Case” has been another threshold of Turkey’s most recent history, which had controversial effects on public discussions due to the arrest of many high-ranking members of the army, rectors of several universities and some other prominent figures who clearly have Kemalist tendencies. For some reason or the other-because AKP has been heavily criticized due to its highly undemocratic implementations in different areas- , here what I try to underline is the change in the dominant political discourse in the public discussions. Tayyip Erdogan and AKP

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38 Fuat Keyman and Ziya Öniş, Globalization and Social Democracy in the European Periphery: Paradoxes of the Turkish Experience, in *Globalizations*, Vol.4, Issue 2, June 2007

39 Ümit Cizre, “Introduction”, *Secular and Islamic politics in Turkey: the making of the Justice and Development Party*, (ed) Ümit Cizre, (Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Studies, 2008)2

40 Zeynep Gambetti, “İktidarın Dönüşen Çehresi: Neoliberalizm, Şiddet ve Kurumsal Siyasetin Tasfiyesi” İ.Ü. Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi No:40 (Mart 2009)

under his leadership, made a dramatic change in the general public perception about democracy and the political power in Turkey. The nature of civil society activities has been considered predominantly as religious by some scholars. For instance, Sarkissian and Ozler have argued that, "...by channeling religious interests through non-state actors, the AKP is able to remain an officially secular party. At the same time, the party can meet the interests of Turkish citizens who would like to see a larger role for religion in public life."<sup>41</sup> Here it is important to note that, the general polarization between the government and its allies on the one hand and the republican-nationalist block on the other, triggered mobilization of a huge group of people in different cities. Republican block organized very crowded meetings against AKP government; in big cities thousands of people attended to these meetings. So there was a general wave of "civic participation" not only from the government side, but also from the oppositional block. This phenomenon has its reflections also in civil society organization which show a deep polarization, which I will explain later on.

In this general framework of neo-liberal economic policies, the rising stress on democratic participation and civilian rule – just not their own rise– and on-going reformation periods, the imagination about citizenship and political activity have also shifted severely. "Being an active citizen" has been glorified more than ever, but in a quite different way. The significance of civil society organizations in general has been uttered more and more, and they have been pointed out as the main domains of activity for "active citizens". Since I will focus on the rise of civil society organizations and the creation of these "active citizens" in the following parts, now I

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<sup>41</sup> Ani Sarkissian and Ilgu Özler, "Negotiating Islam, Civil Society, and Secularism: The Justice and Development Party in Turkey", APSA 2009 Toronto Meeting Paper.

will try to elaborate on the theoretical tools I employ to conceptualize neo-liberal political reason.

## Conceptualizing Neo-Liberal Political Reason

### Governmentality

How should we understand political power today? Beyond the discussions of strong or weak nation states, we should ask the question of how the modern individuals are governed considering all these changing circumstances. Since my goal is to present how new ways of political participation are supported according to a new imagination of the social and the political while legitimizing neo-liberal rule, the discussion of “political power” is of key importance both theoretically and methodologically. I need to use a historical and contextual way of analysis to show how it became possible to talk about politics and civil society as we do today.

Because of the economic and social transformations that I have mentioned in the first part, understanding political power within the confines of the rule of nation state and its institutions has become more difficult than ever. Contemporary theories of political power argue that forms of political power are not only structured in terms of the hegemonic role of the state, recognizing that modern systems of rule depend upon a complex set of relationships between the state and non-state authorities, upon infrastructural powers and upon networks of power. Nikolas Rose exemplifies this approach with studies of “governance” which are unavoidably normative and descriptive. Good governance means less government; politicians exercise power by setting policies rather than delivering services. Good governance has been highly

supported by different authorities and organizations like World Bank in the Neo-liberal era.<sup>42</sup> However ‘governance’ studies still comfort itself with the possibilities of old dualities such as state and civil society, public and private. They do not take up a new perspective like “governmentality”, which starts with asking totally different questions to interrogate the nature of political power.

Governmentality is a concept which was first used by Michel Foucault in one of his lectures, and which concerns “how we govern and how we are governed, and the relation between the government of ourselves, the government of others, and the government of the state.”<sup>43</sup> Departing from these questions, study of “governmentality” takes a totally different position in its approach to notion of “governing” itself. Instead of defining the act of ‘government’ as the imposition of certain rules and regulations, “governing should be understood nominalistically: it is neither a concept nor a theory, but a perspective” as Rose puts it.<sup>44</sup> So the studies of governmentality do not aim to describe a field of institutions, structures or functional patterns, rather “they try to diagnose an array of lines of thought, of will, of invention, of programmes and failures, of acts and counter-acts”<sup>45</sup> inspired by Foucault’s definition of government “as an art through which individual and collective conduct is conducted”<sup>46</sup> If ruling is a reflexive activity, the activity of government is inextricably bound up with the activity of thought. To analyze the history of government then, requires attention to the conditions under which it

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<sup>42</sup> Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 15-16.

<sup>43</sup> Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, (London: SAGE Publications, 1999), 2.

<sup>44</sup> Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 21.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid: 21

<sup>46</sup> Michel Foucault “Governmentality”, in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Hemel Hemstead, England: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991, pp.87-104

becomes possible to consider certain things to be true- and hence to say and do certain things- about human beings and their interrelations as they produce, consume, reproduce, act, infract, live, sicken and die.<sup>47</sup> As Rose puts it “Studies of governmentality are not sociologies of rule. They are studies of a particular ‘stratum’ of knowing and acting. Of the emergence of particular ‘regimes of truth’ concerning the conduct of conduct, ways of speaking truth, persons authorized to speak truths, ways of enacting truths and the costs of so doing”<sup>48</sup>

If we want to analyze how modern power operates in this way, our approach would be beyond the theories of state domination. In this particular way of approach “Liberalism is not a theory, an ideology or a juridical philosophy of individual freedom or any particular set of policies adopted by a government”<sup>49</sup>, it is way of problematizing things, especially unlimited state power and its reason of existence. Liberalism for Foucault is rather, “a rationally reflected way of doing things that functions as the principle and method for the rationalization of governmental practices”.<sup>50</sup> Foucault has introduced the concept of ‘discipline’ in his quest to understand how the modern individual is governed, relying on the data about the measures to be taken when the plague appeared in a town. He attract our attention to disciplinary mechanisms which have been de-institutionalized, he pointed out that “discipline maybe identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus: it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a ‘physics’ or an ‘anatomy

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<sup>47</sup> Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 8.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid: 19

<sup>49</sup> Graham Burchell, “Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self” in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, (University of Chicago Press, 1996), 21.

<sup>50</sup> Michel Foucault, *Resume des cours 1970-1982*. (Paris: Juillard, 1989)

of power, a technology.”<sup>51</sup> So to understand how the modern subjects are governed, it would be misleading to think that with liberalism, discipline has replaced the dominance of a sovereign form of government. Because, for Foucault “political rationalities are more than just ideologies, they constitute a part of the fabric of our ways of thinking about and acting upon one another and ourselves”.<sup>52</sup>

When the neo-liberal political economy has been introduced in ‘80s, liberal forms of governmentality have become inadequate to understand how the individuals are governed today. The ‘society’ has lost its privileged status and individuals have been called to conduct upon themselves in a very different way. How should we analyze neo-liberal political rationality then? In the next part, I will have a closer look at some theories of neo-liberal political rationality, in order to understand how the governmental power operated after the economic and social transformation the world has witnessed.

### From Liberalism to Neo-Liberalism or “Advanced Liberalism”

If we accept that politics cannot just be identified with an answer to the question of who possesses the power in the state, and if we rather identify politics with the dynamics of power relations within the encounters that make up the everyday experience of individuals, we need a way of analysis that would challenge the established dichotomies like state/civil society, public/private and domination/emancipation. The language that has been constituted by these dichotomies, at the same time constitutes the way we think, talk about and imagine

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<sup>51</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of The Prison*, Part 3, Chapter 3: Panopticism, 11

<sup>52</sup> Michel Foucault, *Truth and Power*, in *Power/knowledge*, C. Gordon (ed.) 1980, Brighton: Harvester, pp. 109-33.

the political power. It is the very same way we perceive and act accordingly to the authoritative apparatuses of the state and our individual and collective conducts. So the term 'politics' can no longer be used with a self-evident meaning, if we want to analyze the rationality of government. "Politics" is taken to refer to power-structured relationships maintained by techniques of control; politics is not confined to institutions but pervades every aspect of life.<sup>53</sup> Nikolas Rose clarifies this point of analysis as the following: "One needs to ask how, and in what ways, and to what extent the rationales, devices and authorities for the government of conduct in the multitude of bedrooms, factories, shopping malls, children's homes, kitchens, cinemas, operating theatres, classrooms and so forth have become linked up to a 'political apparatus'?"<sup>54</sup> In his Foucauldian way of analysis, Rose underlines the fact that thinking about a society that is programmed by a cold monster of state would limit our understanding of how we are governed today. On the other hand, in this linkage to 'political apparatus', we have to consider the coexistence of techniques of domination and techniques of the self. As Foucault put it "I think that if one wants to analyze the genealogy of the subject in Western societies one has to take into account not only techniques of domination, but also techniques of the self. Let's say one has to take into account the interaction of these two types of techniques".<sup>55</sup>

Foucault traces the birth of modern power to 19th cc. when the idea of population emerged. With the concept of population, power started to be exercised over life in a different manner which is called as "bio-politics" by Foucault. It is not

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<sup>53</sup> Michel Foucault "Governmentality", in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Hemel Hemstead, England: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991, pp.87-104

<sup>54</sup> Nikolas Rose, Governing "Advanced" Liberal Democracies, in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, University of Chicago Press, 1996

<sup>55</sup> Michel Foucault, Truth and Power, in Power/knowledge, C. Gordon (ed.) (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), 109-33.

only centered on the human body but also engaged in management and regulation of population in terms of health, life expectancy, mortality and fertility rates. Unlike ‘discipline’, bio-politics is not a technology that functions at the individual level; bio-politics is ‘massifying’. The object of biopolitics is the population, conceived as a scientific and political problem; biopolitics, therefore, focuses on collective phenomena that have long-term political effects and strives to regulate them. The concept of bio-politics makes it possible for us to understand how the domain of the social is regulated by the development of non-political institutions such as schools, hospitals, prisons, and workshops. Modern liberal power made the individuals not only subject to certain laws, rights and obligations but also by the help of these institutions, modern individuals have become to subject to certain constantly naturalized norms. Nevertheless, here we come across the most important dilemma of liberalism. While it aims to limit government activity for the sake of individual liberty, on the other hand to protect and promote this freedom it has to act continuously. This is the tension between liberty and security. Continuous redefinition of borders of state and society, public and private, made it possible to produce order, “it is the tactics of government which make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not, the public vs. the private, and so on; thus the state can only be understood in its survival and its on the basis of the general tactics of governmentality”<sup>56</sup>.

Graham Burchell analyzes the differences between liberal and neo-liberal political reasons.<sup>57</sup> Neo-liberal political reason still identifies the individual as the

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<sup>56</sup> Michel Foucault “Governmentality”, in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, (Hemel Hemstead, England: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), 103

<sup>57</sup> Graham Burchell, “Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self” in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, p.23

object and the target of government and also necessary (voluntary) partner or accomplice of government just like liberalism. For early forms of liberalism, “the rational conduct of government must be intrinsically linked to the *natural*, private-interest-motivated conduct of free market *exchanging* individuals because the rationality of these individuals' conduct is, precisely, what enables the market to function optimally in accordance with its nature. Government cannot override the rational free conduct of governed individuals without destroying the basis of the effects it is seeking to produce.”<sup>58</sup> However for neo-liberalism, “the rational principle for regulating and limiting governmental activity must be determined by reference to *artificially* arranged or contrived forms of the free, *entrepreneurial* and *competitive* conduct of economic-rational individuals.”<sup>59</sup> For liberal political rationality then, there is a clear and natural problem space, the “society”. The government has to act upon this natural body to keep free market functioning efficiently. On the other hand, for neo-liberalism, society is a product of governmental intervention and shaped by state education, welfare benefits, social insurance, and social work. It is acknowledged to be a discursively built entity which in fact does not exist. Furthermore as Colin Gordon puts it, “the market was not a quasi-natural reality to be freed; rather it was incumbent on government to conduct a policy towards society such that it is possible for a market to exist and function”<sup>60</sup> For neo-liberalism then, a framework of institutional and legal forms had to be assembled to free the market from public and private distortions. However, this was not enough. Again as Gordon

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<sup>58</sup> Graham Burchell, “Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self” in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, p.23, for a detailed argument referring to Ordoliberalism and Chicago school of economics, emphasis belong to Burchell

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Colin Gordon, ‘Governmental Rationality: an introduction’, in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, (Hemel Hemstead, England: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991) ,41. In his detailed discussion of Foucault’s 1979 lecture on liberalism and *Ordoliberalen* Gordon explains the transformation of political rationalities into neo-liberal forms.

explains, “the whole ensemble of individual life is to be structured as the pursuit of a range of different enterprises, a person’s relation to all his or her activities, and indeed to his or herself, is to be given the ethos and structure of the enterprise form”<sup>61</sup> Through this transformation, the social state turned into an enabling state which sets the legal infrastructure and promotes individual well-being through their responsibility and enterprise. So neo-liberalism presents itself not only as anti-government but also as anti-society. Here we come across the central paradox of the neo-liberal political reason which needs to be further interrogated. First, while underlying the artificiality of society, “it also promotes what might be called an autonomization of society through the invention and proliferation of new quasi-economic models of action for the independent conduct of its activities” as Donzelot puts it.<sup>62</sup> I will elaborate these new techniques of autonomization and responsabilization in the next part. Second, on the one hand it stands for less government intervention and the free conduct of individual, yet it also involves both an acknowledgement and entailment of a need of finding a way to govern the individual in such a way that this would simultaneously legitimize the presence of government but would not harm the rationality of liberal democracy. As Rose puts it, “neo-liberalism does not abandon the ‘will to govern’: it maintains the view that failure of government to achieve its objectives is to be overcome by inventing new strategies of government that will succeed.”<sup>63</sup> What are these new technologies of government? How should we analyze the strategies and techniques of government if the political reason stands against excessive government? The peculiarity of the neo-

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid: 42

<sup>62</sup> Jacques Donzelot, *L’invention du social*, 1984, Paris:Vrin, quoted in Graham Burchell, “Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self”

<sup>63</sup> Nikolas Rose, Governing “Advanced” Liberal Democracies, in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, (University of Chicago Press, 1996), 53.

liberal era is characterized by new techniques and strategies, which will also shed light on the question of the operation of political power today.

### The Translation of Political Rule: Autonomization and Responsibilization

As I have mentioned in the previous section, for Neo-liberalism, society is something that has to be produced by a series of techniques and strategies. Latour argues that the social is an effect rather than a cause; it can only exist only insofar as it is continually brought into being.<sup>64</sup> This radical point of view gives us very important clues about technologies of government. To govern an individual, a group or a whole society, first it has to be built as an entity that knows and acts upon itself. Rose suggests that: “This is not a matter of the implementation of idealized schema in the real by an act of a will, but of the complex assemblage of diverse forces, techniques, devices that promise to regulate decisions and actions of individuals, groups, organizations in relation to authoritative criteria.”<sup>65</sup> Moreover for Rose: “the ‘power of state’ is a resultant not a cause, an outcome of the composition and assembling of actors, flows, buildings, relations of authority into relatively durable associations mobilized, to a greater or lesser extent towards the achievement of particular objectives by common means”.<sup>66</sup> Rose informs us that we should understand this intersection not as domination but rather as a matter of “translation”.<sup>67</sup> In ‘advance liberal democracies’ –as he labels new forms of liberalism, which I have called neo-

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<sup>64</sup> Bruno Latour, “The powers of association” in John Law (ed.) *Power, Action and Belief: a New Sociology of Knowledge?*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.1986) **32**: 264-280

<sup>65</sup> Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, “The Political Power Beyond the State: Problematics of Government”, (British Journal of Sociology,43,2,1992),183.

<sup>66</sup> Nikolas Rose, “Governing “Advanced” Liberal Democracies”, in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, University of Chicago Press, 1996The Political reason, p.43

<sup>67</sup> Ibid: 43

liberalism until now, there are still central political programmes, but the way of articulation of these programmes has changed. Today, these programmes are articulated in general terms such as democracy, equality, enterprise and efficiency. This articulation enables them to practice the objectives and means of government in spatially and temporally dispersed territories. “Translation” makes it possible forging different groups into networks which are subject to the same ‘center of calculation’, although separated from each other. Latour calls it ‘action at a distance’: it is only to the extent that such alignments of diverse forces can be established that calculated action upon conduct across space and time can occur at all.<sup>68</sup> When it becomes a matter of government, this “action at a distance” can be conceptualized as “government at a distance” when we conceptualize ‘governing’ as action upon conducts.

In this translation of governmental reason Rose points to three new features which accompany neo-liberal political rationality: 1) a new relation between expertise and politics, 2) a new pluralization of ‘social’ technologies, and 3) a new specification of the subject of government.<sup>69</sup> These are novel features, but their ‘newness’ should not be interpreted as a total break from the old technologies. When we describe these new technologies, we have to keep in mind that there are no sharp ruptures between techniques, procedures and strategies. In fact they mostly interweave and link up with each other by mutual reinforcement.

Neo-liberalism brings the autonomization of society by governing through ‘conduct of its conduct’. What does ‘autonomization’ mean in this special context?

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<sup>68</sup> Bruno Latour, *The Powers of Association*. In J. Law (Ed.) *Power, Action and Belief: a New Sociology of Knowledge?*. (London, Boston and Henley, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986) 32: 264-280.

<sup>69</sup> Nikolas Rose, “Governing “Advanced” Liberal Democracies”, in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*, University of Chicago Press, 1996, pp. 54-57

Neo-liberalism, as the other rationalities of governmentality do, constantly problematizes certain acts, certain kinds of behaviors and defines them as abnormal or marginal. In order to do this, it draws the borders of “normality” which is open to redefinitions and renegotiations. Neo-liberalism’s stress on individual conduct to enhance self-capabilities makes it more interesting. Abnormalities are usually defined by a “lack” of something, such as lack of education, lack of cleanliness, lack of self-esteem. Furthermore, neo-liberal political reason constantly invites individuals to take action upon themselves, participate in decision-making processes, or take care of others who are in disadvantaged positions. The stress on the self-conduct of a “democratic individual” on the other hand is presented as a solution to many problems which are defined at the level of social. Barbara Cruikshank in her brilliant work, *The Will to Empower*, underlines the fact that “rather than negating the autonomy and action of citizens, social government is a means of promoting and instrumentalizing citizenship and autonomy”<sup>70</sup> When a group is defined by its lack of something, and invited to take action upon itself by defining itself with this lack, this process contributes to its very constitution. In addition to this, Donzelot reminds us this series of definitions and actions bring not only autonomization but also a type of responsabilization what he calls “contractual implication”. “It involves offering individuals and collectivities active involvement in action to resolve the kind of issues hitherto held to be the responsibility of authorized governmental agencies”<sup>71</sup> When individuals and groups take action upon themselves or the others, in areas which were previously under the responsibility of government agencies, then they assume to have accepted all the possible outcomes and possible costs. According to

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<sup>70</sup> Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects*, (Cornell University Press, 1999), 53-54.

<sup>71</sup> Jacques Donzelot, *L’invention du social*, 1984, Paris: Vrin, quoted in Graham Burchell, “Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self” 1991

the terms of responsabilization then, most of the *social* problems such as unemployment, problems in the education system, the question of housing are explained by apathy or the wrong conducts of individuals and groups. Taking responsibility of oneself stands as the best way to become a good citizen who contributes to the solutions of serious social problems. In her study about Self-esteem movement in America, Cruikshank shows how personal fulfillment turns from a personal or private goal into a social obligation.<sup>72</sup> Guided by the social sciences and social service professionals, citizens are assumed to have the capacity to act upon themselves, and “taking up the goal of self-esteem is something we owe to society, something that will defray the costs of social problems, and something that will create a ‘true’ democracy”<sup>73</sup>. All in all, “persuading citizens to tie their self-interest and their fate voluntarily to society is the key to stability without the use of force”<sup>74</sup> It is how modern subjects are governed according to neo-liberal rationality. This voluntary obligation to certain truth claims, appropriate ways of self-conduct brings a positive evaluation of individual freedoms. Now freedom is not defined as something to be achieved by demolishing the boundaries set by coercion, but rather as something already achieved; yet it must be managed and used in *appropriate* ways. Freedom of the governed individuals is the very condition of neoliberalism to survive. It has to be promoted and protected yet still has to be acted upon to ensure appropriateness. The tension between security and liberty is intrinsic to the existence of neoliberalism, and manifests itself in different forms of governmental technologies.

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<sup>72</sup> Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects*, (Cornell University Press, 1999)

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. 87-101

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. 3.

Although the state and its institutions are withdrawing from the provision of some social services, and consequently losing their determining role in the production of society, the state still has important involvements with certain associations, groups and organizations. In the next part I want to look at the rise of civil society organizations as the important bearers of new techniques of governmentality.

### Civil Society Organizations and Neo-liberal Governmentality

One of the prominent features of the neo-liberal era is a dramatic increase in the number of non-governmental organizations all around the world. They are organized in local, national and international levels under different names, motivated by diverse fields of interests and with intensified connections with each other. These organizations have engaged in poverty reduction programs and development projects to provide social services which are no longer obtained from the state. They have also engaged in campaigns against environmental deterioration, in promotion of gender equality, in supporting human rights, and other activities in order to attract attention to certain issues which are ignored or misrepresented by the state, and to influence public opinion. They have been highly praised as the key to more democracy and participation on the one hand, and regarded as new problem-solvers fighting against social ills on the other.

Classification of non-governmental organizations is very difficult due to their varying sizes, fields of engagement or legal statuses. However as Fisher notes, “the optimism of the proponents of NGOs derives from a general sense of NGOs as

‘doing good’, unencumbered and untainted by the politics of the government of the greed of the market. This is reflected in the designations that describe these associations in terms of what they are not: nongovernmental and nonprofit”<sup>75</sup>. This observation raises two very significant points about NGOs. First, their existence and their activities are strongly supported by different authorities, simply because they are “doing good”. Improvement of civil society activities have been encouraged by both the left and the right wing for the sake of a ‘democratization” process, especially in the third world countries. Second, by definition they have been separated from governmental and economic activities, so they constitute the *third sector*. However I think both of these statements are problematic for related reasons.

Discussing the rise of civil society organizations in relation to democratization processes obscures the new power relationships constituted by these organizations themselves. CSOs are constructing their own hierarchies and categories in the light of new kinds of expertise and organizational structures. As we will see in the TOG case, even while they are directly supporting democracy and democratic participation they can’t avoid creating their own *others*. Institutional definitions of being a good volunteer/good citizen nevertheless lead to a creation of not so good volunteers and/or not so good citizens. Furthermore, CSOs have been promoted because of their references to empowerment and participation by both the right and the left wings. However, these terms of “empowerment” and “participation” are used with different meanings in each case, so they keep their ambiguity. “How to empower” and “how to participate” are questions which have different answers according to who answers these questions. Disregarding these unsettled meanings of CSOs’ terms of references would also mean to disregard their

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<sup>75</sup> William Fisher, “Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices”, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 26 (1997), p.442.

wide range of structures, activities and political stands. Instead of thinking of CSOs as fixed and generalizable entities, we have to see that they are highly heterogeneous without essential characteristics. On the other hand, defining CSOs as the third sector separate from governmental and economic activities prevents us from seeing the complicated relationships between these three fields of activity. Arato and Cohen draw the limits of the three sectors, and isolate civil society organizations as if there are no linkages between the three, drawing on Habermasian concept of life-world.<sup>76</sup> The relationships among the state, the private sector and the CSOs are shaped by various types of collaborations, flows of funding and exchange of roles. Most of the CSOs which are providing social services are directly supported by the state and are legally connected to government agencies under official protocols. Some CSOs even set their goals in collaboration with state institutions and all of them are audited by the state regularly. On another front, most of the private firms adopted the notion of “corporate citizenship” which means sharing a small budget to cooperate with CSOs. ‘Corporate citizenship’ is a decent way of strengthening the image of a firm, showing how a corporation is considerate and generous about issues such as the environment, art, education and children in need. It is especially useful for improving the public image of the firm, if it is investing in a foreign country. But these flows of funding also pave the way for report cycles, numbers, calculations and promises about target groups, goals and activities. These are important examples to see how CSOs work in close relationship with the private sector and governmental agencies. However, this would still not be enough to see how the neo-liberal political reason is translated and materialized in this triple relationship. From a governmental point of view, these three sectors are in fact different constituents of the same discourse. Especially when

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<sup>76</sup> Cohen and Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, p.x For Habermas, system and life-world are two separate domains, ‘civil society’ is conceived as an autonomous realm and thought of a central site of freedom and democracy. See “Further Reflections on the Public Sphere” by Jurgen Habermas.

the state has withdrawn from the provision of some social services, CSOs filled the gap both functionally and discursively, and became important bearers of neo-liberal rationality. So the expansion of civil society activities has to be analyzed in the light of the Foucauldian concept of governmentality in order to understand how some new technologies affect both the personal and the political, and to examine the changing relationships among citizenship, associations and the state. Although this increase in the number of CSOs and the diversification of their activities have attracted attention from political scientists and economists, Fisher points out that there are relatively few detailed studies of what is happening in particular places or within specific organizations, few analyses of the impact of NGO practices on relations of power among individuals, communities, and the state, and little attention to the discourse within which NGOs are presented as the solution to problems of welfare service delivery, development and democratization.<sup>77</sup> Most of the NGOs especially which are delivering welfare services by the help of volunteers present themselves as non-political and non-ideological entities which are doing just *good*. However I would claim that precisely when they claim to be non-political they are actually associated with governmentality by creating new spaces of rule, legitimizing some types of subjectivities and practices while excluding others.

One of the analytical tools in the evaluation of “third sector” politics is “community”. When neo-liberal policies have become the target of sharp criticisms due to the downsizing of the state, which is no longer capable of solving social problems, and all greedy market forces which could not meet their premises; “community” emerged as a governable space for the policy makers. Rifkin argues that, “The commercial and public sectors are no longer capable of securing some of

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<sup>77</sup> William Fisher, “Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices”, (Annual Review of Anthropology, 1997) :26

the fundamental needs of the people; the public has little choice but to begin looking out for itself, once again, by re-establishing viable communities as a buffer against both the impersonal forces of the global market and increasingly weak and incompetent central governing authorities.<sup>78</sup> However, it is crucial to see that it is “a fertile ground for experimentation in the development of political technologies of government,” and it was a space in which “it is possible to see the hybridization of political power and other non-political forms of authority in a variety of attempts to enframe and instrumentalize the forces of individuals and groups in the name of the public good.”<sup>79</sup> Community can be thought as any unit in which individuals organize themselves autonomously apart from state and market relationships. Family, neighborhood, ethnic or religious organizations and also civil society organizations can be considered different forms of community. Proliferation of the idea of “community” is in fact the identification of a third way of government “between the authority of the state, the free and amoral exchange of the market and the liberty of the autonomous, ‘rights-bearing’ individual subject”<sup>80</sup> What is interesting about the definition of this zone is, although it is defined as separated from authority of the state and market relationships, is that it is still constructed as a *governable space* tied to individual action and autonomy. Discursive production of this third space has nevertheless been paradoxical, which is, in fact, very crucial to answer the questions that I had in my mind when I started writing this thesis. Rose explains this paradox as “on the one hand, the third space they identify appears as a kind of natural, extra-political zone of human relations...on the other, this zone is identified as a crucial

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<sup>78</sup> J.Rifkin, *The End of Work: The Decline of Global Labor Force and the Dawn of Post-Market Era*, New York: Tarcher/Putnam, 1995 p.238

<sup>79</sup> Graham Burchell, “Peculiar interests”: governing the systems of natural liberty’, in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller 1991, pp. 119-150

<sup>80</sup> Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 167.

element in particular styles of political government, for it is on its properties and on activities within it that the success of such political aspirations and programmes depend. This third space must, thus, become the object and target for the exercise of political power whilst remaining, somehow, external to politics and a counter-weight to it”<sup>81</sup>

In spite of the fact that ‘community’ is an old term that started to be used in the ‘60s, it became governmentalized when it was made technical. When community became the reference point for responsibilities and target of actions; its political status turned to be peculiar. In most of the practices there is a certain claim of objectiveness, and the zones of these practices are regarded as non-political. As Nikolas Rose puts it “part of the political attraction of these zones lies in their apparent naturalness: their non-political or pre-political status”<sup>82</sup> However these spaces of action are continuously objectified and made visible inside certain borders. These borders are defined by a set of specific knowledges. For instance, in order to fight against certain social ills such as poverty, lack of education and malfunctioning health systems, various programs and projects have been developed by civil society organizations. These projects and programs have involved certain forms of expertise varying from medicine to educational sciences, from demography to psychology. Furthermore, these spaces have taken the shape of enterprises which are subject to series of calculations, reporting and auditing. These forms of knowledge make the projects applicable according to their own terms. But as Rose points out that we shouldn’t understand it as the colonization of the previous space of freedom by control practices, rather community is instituted in its contemporary form as a sector

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid:168

<sup>82</sup> Ibid:88

for government.<sup>83</sup> Rose defines this phenomena as “government through community” for which community is “a sector brought into existence whose vectors and forces can be mobilized, enrolled, deployed in novel programmes and techniques which encourage and harness active practices of self-management and identity construction, of personal ethics and collective allegiances”<sup>84</sup> Following Rose’s analysis of ‘government through community’, Li points out that this form of government is not a unilateral affair, the communities cannot be molded without any struggle. In any attempt to enroll communities for the purposes of the government, there is always an excess of histories, geographies, memories, and commitments which exceed the confines of government projects and ‘become sites of struggle in which something new is generated.’<sup>85</sup> Through this thesis, one of my main objectives is to reveal these sites of struggle, which I think are crucial to analyze how CSOs govern through the community.

Today, there is a constant call to join and take responsibility in civil society organizations. Individuals are invited to take action both in relation to themselves and to help others who are suffering from hunger, poverty, or lack of education. This invitation may come from state, private companies or even from popular celebrities via the media. Joining collective actions against some specific social ills have become a determinant of being a good citizen. The mottos used in the collective actions have a general and popular address that ‘everyone can do something’. These actions are highly charged with a claim of morality which stands for a *decent* way of being in the world. In most of the cases these invitations are also mixed with

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid:176

<sup>84</sup> Ibid:176

<sup>85</sup> Tania Li, “Government through community in the age of neo-liberalism” (paper presented at Agrarian Studies, Yale University, 11 October 2002)

emotional motives, in some cases they turn into agitation. Benefiting from an inclusive language of social sciences and expertise, these discourses are constantly defining and redefining the borders of collective actions. Furthermore, it is crucial to see how these discourses that are created in relation to different kinds of organizations not only overlook the other ways possible of political participation but also conceal the structural reasons of some specific problems. I think pluralization of civil society organizations and increases in their fields of activities have to be analyzed in the light of these changing spaces of new governmental technologies. Referring to Ilcan and Basok's article, "In fact, it can be said that the task of government today is no longer engaged in traditional planning but is more involved in enabling, inspiring, and assisting citizens to take responsibility for social problems in their communities, and formulating appropriate orientations and rationalities for their actions".<sup>86</sup> CSOs provide a suitable ground for these new techniques. Especially the organizations which function through their voluntary workforce deserve to be analyzed in this respect. As Ilcan and Basok put it, "the voluntary sector is an ideal site where techniques of governance, such as *responsibilization*, have been used to mould *responsible citizens*."<sup>87</sup> CSOs work through concrete and highly specialized programs that have been built according to bio-political concerns. As I have stated above, we have to analyze the points at which they claim to be non-political to see how their own activities aim to reproduce neo-liberal governmental reason at the level of the social with reference to universal ethics and objectivity. In the following chapters, I will try first to present how civil society organizations- especially voluntary organizations- filled the gap left by the state in terms of delivery of welfare services; then, analyze one of the prominent CSOs in Turkey- Community

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<sup>86</sup> Ilcan S. and Basok T., Community Government: Voluntary Agencies, Social Justice, and the Responsibilization of Citizens". Citizenship Studies, Vol. 8, No:2, June 2004, 129-144.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. P. 135.

Volunteers Foundation- which is both engaged in providing social services and encouraging the youth for “appropriate” ways of political participation.

### Civil Society in Turkey after 1999 Earthquake: The context

The concepts of civil society and civil society organizations have increasingly become a catchword in the last decade. However, there are not many comprehensive analyses of civil society activities in Turkey in general. Literature on civil society in Turkey usually focuses on specific areas and does not attempt to draw a general framework. In portraying the functioning of civil society in Turkey, I will mostly rely on speeches of Fuat Keyman and Ahmet Insel, which have been delivered in a series of “Civil Society and Democracy” seminars at Bilgi University. In addition, Şeyhmus Diken’s book, ‘Civil Life and Democracy in Turkey: Civil Society Discusses its Problems’<sup>88</sup> will be referred to, in order to have a better understanding of the current situation of civil society organizations in Turkey.

In the previous parts I have tried to draw attention to the rise of civil society organizations in the neo-liberal era after highlighting some distinctive features of this era, namely its particular approach to the relationship between the state and the citizenship. With the new mechanisms of *autonomization* and *responsibilization*, citizenship is being defined in a different manner than that based on welfare state’s rights-based definitions. With these updated definitions and new governmental techniques, civil society organizations have emerged as fertile grounds for putting into practice these new techniques. After reviewing the recent transformations that

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<sup>88</sup> With an original name of “Türkiye’de Sivil Hayat ve Demokrasi: Sivil Toplum Sorunlarını Tartışıyor” this book was printed in 2006 by Dipnot Publications. It contains interviews with representatives of 50 different CSOs in Turkey, from various fields of activity.

Turkey has undergone first after the '80s, then after the 2000s, it is not surprising to see that the civil society sector in Turkey was also simultaneously transformed.

Parallel to the shift from the welfare-state model to a reduced state model in which state gradually withdraws from the social sphere, we can say that civil society sector has also followed its American and European counterparts in a similar manner.

Although there are some basic distinctions between the growth of civil society sectors in Turkey and in the West, particularly in terms of timing, we can easily argue that the civil society sector in Turkey has passed through similar phases.

Fuat Keyman identifies three main phases in the development of the concept of civil society, which I find useful for practical reasons. First, “civil society” has been constructed as a “modern” concept in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, along with the dramatic increase in urbanization and emergence of market economy as we know it today. Historically its emergence can be conceived as a struggle between the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy- that should be why civil society as a concept has been approached with suspicion by Marxist lines of thinking. Keyman argues that there was no particular emphasis on democracy in this first conception of “civil society”, however it has functioned as a mark of modernity, and differentiated individuals’ modern practices from the traditional ones.<sup>89</sup> In a very different way, the second phase of “civil society” has been marked by the democratic claims of populations living under authoritarian regimes of especially Latin American and East European states. Only after late 1970s, civil society has become a “useful” concept employed to defend individual rights and liberties against the nation state and its institutions. So it is important to note how the civil society, in this context, has been defined as disengaged from the state and the military based

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<sup>89</sup> Fuat Keyman , “Civil Society, Civil Society Organizations and Turkey” (*Sivil Toplum, Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları ve Türkiye*), in Civil Society and Democracy Conference Notes, no:4, 2004.

activities, but the connections between market relations and civil society haven't been considered. In the last phase, in which we are still undergoing, civil society is defined one more time as a site of democratic consolidation. But as Keyman notes, when we come to the twenty-first century, instead of discussing simply the opposition between civil society and nation state, we have to consider the complex relationship between the state, civil society and also what is called the private sector. The terms civil society and civil society organizations are not only used as the main institutions of maintaining participative democracy but they also function as guarantees of maintaining mutual trust between the state and the citizens, and stability in the society. Keyman claims that the neo-liberal system favors civil society and CSOs due to their latter functions. I totally agree with these insights about the role of CSOs: they do not only function as the bearers of governmental mentalities but they also guarantee the stability and trust in the society which is a must for the smooth functioning of the free market economy. As I have discussed earlier, Turkey has undergone a significant transformation during the AKP rule in 2000s, and concomitantly its civil society sector has come to be defined in a similar way that Keyman discusses to define civil society in its last phase.

Of course we cannot claim that the AKP government is the sole actor in this transformation, but there were many constitutive factors of this new shape of civil society sector in Turkey. The most noticeable threshold in the evolution of civil society in Turkey is the 1999 Marmara earthquake, for at least two reasons. First, after the disaster of 1999, the insufficiency of the state institutions in the search and rescue activities, and the state's inefficiency in the recuperation period were revealed. The image of an "incapable" state was highlighted by wide media

coverage.<sup>90</sup> Thousands of volunteers, in an organized or unorganized manner, rushed into the field to help the search and rescue activities, provide food and tents for the survivors. The message was clear: civil society organizations and volunteers can do better than the state institutions which are “clumsy” and “corrupted”. The image of civil society organizations has been improved, and more importantly they have been recognized as effective public actors. Ahmet İnel explains this phenomenon as follows: “I think the significance of CSOs lies in their ability to show there can be collective actors in the public sphere. In Turkey the power of the state stems from the fact that it finds just individuals instead of collective actors. CSOs can function as collective actors which have meanings beyond individual existences. The 1999 earthquake is the most striking example through which the people have realized this fact. But the 1999 earthquake was a real CSO initiative. At the same time it was an initiative through which, field of state activities has shrunked, ‘here we do this job, we do this together with you or independently, but we do this job, if it is needed we can collect money, and we won’t give it to you...’.”<sup>91</sup> As İnel puts it, CSOs have been suddenly recognized as legitimate actors in public affairs, and their capabilities have been proved. The second reason for the 1999 earthquake for being a turning point was this wide public recognition. However İnel warns us about the contradicting positions of civil society organizations vis-à-vis the state. Since they have started to advocate the public good, eventually it means now they are active in a

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<sup>90</sup> Jalali, R. (2002) Civil Society and the State: Turkey After the Earthquake. In Disasters, 2002, 26 (2):120-139.

<sup>91</sup> Ahmet İnel, “Civil Society, Civil Society Organizations and Volunteerism” (*Sivil Toplum, STK’lar ve Gönüllülük*). in Civil Society and Democracy Conference Notes, no:5, 2004. (*Bence STK’ların da önemi bu [kamusall] alanın toplu aktörlerinin olabileceğini göstermek. Çünkü Türkiye’de devletin gücü bu aland, karşısında toplu aktörler değil, bireyler bulmasından kaynaklanıyor. STK’ların buradaki önemli fonksiyonu, o alanın aktörlerinin toplu aktörler olarak, varlığı o bireyin ötesinde anlamı olan, gücü olan aktörler olarak bulunabilmeleri. Galiba bunun Türkiye’de en canlı yaşandığı ve bilincine varıldığı yer, 1999 depremi oldu. Ama 1999 depreminde gerçek bir STK girişimi, aynı zamanda kamu alanının, devlet alanının daraltılması girişimiydi, ‘biz burada bu işi yaparız, sizinle beraber yaparız, ayrı yaparız, ama yaparız, gereğinde parayı da toplarız size de vermeyiz.’*)

field which used to belong *naturally* to the state and its institutions. There emerge three different positions which CSOs can adopt with regard to this problem: 1) being in a clearly oppositional stance against the state, 2) existing as a complementary power to the state, or 3) just being a supporter of the state.<sup>92</sup> Although it is possible to blend these three possible positions, I think in most cases CSOs have to decide about the position they would prefer to stand.

After the insufficiency of state institutions as social service providers was proved, and the power of civil society organizations was recognized, we have witnessed a proliferation of especially volunteer organizations all over Turkey. Social service providing civil society organizations have attracted thousands of volunteers, and mobilized them in different areas such as education, public health and care-taking. The Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey was established in 1995 and its public visibility has been strengthened by its Life Communities Project in which they have built “fast-track post-earthquake houses which provides low-cost, but long-term, shelter, as an alternative to temporary solutions”.<sup>93</sup> TEGV is now one of the most famous volunteer organizations which mostly provides alternative educational services to the students in disadvantaged regions of the country.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG) has been established in 2002 as a youth organization aiming to empower the young via volunteer service provision to the disadvantaged groups. But AKUT has been the champion of this process, as the most outstanding search and rescue association,

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid. p.5.

<sup>93</sup> In the web address of [http://www.archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site\\_id=6458](http://www.archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=6458) detailed information about TEGV’s Life Communities Project can be found.

<sup>94</sup> There is very comprehensive MA thesis submitted by Yasemin İpek to Bogazici University in 2006 :“Volunteers or governors? Rethinking civil society in Turkey beyond the problematic of democratization: the case of TEGV”. In this thesis İpek not only provides a detailed analysis of TEGV but she also claims that this new type of volunteerism signals the rise of a new type of middle class nationalism.

without any dispute. It is possible to multiply the examples. Especially religion oriented solidarity associations have acquired a wider public visibility, sometimes also associated with scandals.<sup>95</sup> The polarization between the voluntary organizations which have religious orientations and the ones which are well-known for their Kemalist tendencies, has also marked that period. While both of these types were increasing in number, they have attracted more and more volunteers and become important actors on the public scene.

The second most important factor in the increase of the number of CSOs in Turkey was the availability of EU funds for the social projects. The above-mentioned efforts of AKP government for EU membership and the reforms it has put on the agenda have been coupled with a flow of EU funding for civil society initiatives. With the declaration of availability of millions of Euros for civil society operations, suddenly thousands of local and national CSOs of all sizes have been established in order to benefit from these grants. However it is not easy for all these organizations to have access to the funds since applying for the EU funds necessitates a specific kind of expertise. Sunay Demircan from Civil Society Development Center (*Sivil Toplum Geliştirme Merkezi, STGM*) exemplifies this fast-paced pluralization of CSOs after 2000s in a highly sarcastic way:

A lady who manages an association which is engaged in philanthropic activities explains: “We gave up organizing charity bazaars. They are very exhausting”... “Really? What do you engage in nowadays?” I asked, “We engage in projects, we receive more money”... “Isn’t it more exhausting than organizing charity events?” I asked, “No, no, there are some firms in the market which prepare project

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<sup>95</sup> The court case of Deniz Feneri Association caused a long public discussion about the corrupt nature of similar organizations.

proposals for the associations to receive EU funds, in return for commission. They prepare the proposals and they even implement the projects in the name of associations, if you like.<sup>96</sup>

Consequently apart from the increase in the number of civil society organizations, their technical know-how has been improved. While they are enlarging in size and improving their capacities, the ways they operate have showed a dramatic change. In this improvement of technicality and diversification of their operations, the available EU funds and other foreign funding opportunities played a significant role. It has become mandatory for CSOs to employ high profile workers for their project management or to purchase consultation services from different companies in the same sector. Now, being employed by CSOs has become a popular job opportunity among university graduates. In the next chapter, I will elaborate this feature in relation to the organizational structure of Community Volunteers Foundation.

So far, I have put more stress on voluntary organizations which deliver social services, because it is not possible to discuss all civil society activities within the confines of this thesis. However, I have to mention the generally acknowledged distinction between the service provision activities and the activities of rights defending/advocacy groups. Apart from the highly institutionalized voluntary organizations, the increasing effectiveness of grassroots movements<sup>97</sup>, rights

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<sup>96</sup> In Seymus Diken's book of "Civil Life and Democracy in Turkey: Civil Society Discusses its Problems", article by Sunay Demircan from STGM, *Bize de Bu (Mu) Yakışır? (Hayır işleriyle uğraşan bir derneğin yöneticisi hanımefendi anlatıyor: "Artık kermes yapmaktan vazgeçtik, çok yorucu oluyor..." "Öyle mi? Ne Yapıyorsunuz Şimdi?" "Proje yapıyoruz, daha çok para geliyor" "İyi de proje işi kermesten daha zor değil mi?" "Yok yok, piyasada şirketler var şimdi, onlar derneğiniz için komisyon karşılığı proje yazıyorlar AB fonları için. Hatta isterseniz projeyi hem yazıyorlar, hem yürütüyorlar sizin adınıza.")*

<sup>97</sup> A typical example is the movement of a group of peasants from Bergama, that received a broad public visibility. They have mobilized against a company which declared its intention to mine gold in Bergama.

defending advocacy groups for LGBTTT individuals<sup>98</sup>, women's associations and bigger networks which are working generally in rights defending areas have gained more visibility during the last decade. Their activities and the their relations with the state have changed after the year 1999. Some massive rights-based associations which have been active since the mid-80s, also acknowledge this dramatic change. Selahattin Demirtaş from Diyarbakır branch of Human Rights Association says:

Between 1990 and 1996, people who were active in human rights and democracy in this region have been targeted...they have been arrested and tortured...The second phase was between 1996 and 1999. In this period not the people's physical integrity, but the legal entities have been exposed to pressure. The associations have been abolished....After 1999 we have neither been exposed to physical violence nor arrested. Of course there were a few exceptions. Our associations haven't been abolished. But there have been incredible court cases and legal inquiries against us. So the pressure has changed its nature...<sup>99</sup>

So, although the governmental pressure continued on rights-based associations, there was a change in its nature. The struggle between oppositional movements and the state has taken up a more legal character due to the reformation of the legislation of freedom of association and freedom of speech. Here it is important to note that, although the government, the private sector and the media encouraged civil society

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<sup>98</sup> Court case which was opened to shut down Lambda Istanbul has been widely protested and discussed in the media.

<sup>99</sup> In Seymus Diken's book of "Civil Life and Democracy in Turkey: Civil Society Discusses its Problems"(2006), interview with Selahattin Demirtaş who was the head of Diyarbakır branch of Human Rights Association (İnsan Hakları Derneği Diyarbakır Şubesi) at that time. (1990 ile 1996 arası bu bölgede insane hakları, demokrasi alanında sivil mücadele veren insanlar hedef alındılar...Tutuklanıp cezaevlerine kondular. İşkenceler gördüler....İkinci dönem ise 1996-1999 dönemi oldu. Bu dönemde ise kişilerin fiziki bütünlüğüne yönelik baskılardan çok tüzel kişiliğe yönelik baskılar gelişmeye başladı. Örneğin dernekler kapatıldı.....1999 sonrasında ise ne fiziki saldırıya maruz kaldık. Ne de tutuklandık, ne de göz altına alındık. Bir iki istisna hariç tabi. Ayrıca derneklerimiz de kapatılmadı. Ama hakkımızda inanılmaz sayıda davalar ve soruşturmalar açıldı. Yani 99 sürecinden sonra baskıda da bir değişim yaşandı.)

and democratic participation generally, the official and unofficial pressures on some forms of associations have prevailed. The movements which violate the borders of official ideology – especially identity based movements which claim rights and recognition- continue to be targeted especially by the judiciary. This information is crucial to understand the roles and peculiar relations of the voluntary organizations which I will try to discuss in the next chapters. Informed by the new ways of coercion of the state, media and the judiciary, they attempt a strategic manoeuvre.

In the next chapter first I will focus on the evolving perceptions about the youth in Turkey, and then the institutional discourse of a voluntary youth organization, the Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG) will be critically assessed within the theoretical framework of “governing through community”.

## CHAPTER 3 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS FOUNDATION AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

### Changing Perceptions about the Youth in Turkey

As a modern concept “youth” has been constructed based on a perception of liminality between childhood and adulthood, a period in which the modern individual (*homo economicus*) acquires the necessary knowledge and capacity to fight back the hardships of life. It has been defined as a time period between different ages in different literatures, but some basic assumptions about the features of this period show some similarities. Beside some positive attributes attached to the young, such as being more energetic and creative, having the ability of easy adaptation and being more open-minded; the youth is usually defined negatively as not being an adult, like inexperienced vs. experienced, ignorant vs. educated and irresponsible vs. responsible. Beyond these general attributes, “the young” has many different connotations when it is thought in the Turkish context. I will try to analyze what the youth means today in Turkey by tracing back to the establishment of Turkish Republic.

In her comprehensive work of “The Youth Myth in Turkey: Turkish Youth after 1980”, Demet Lüküslü maintains a critical attitude to the negative perceptions

about the Turkish youth after '80s.<sup>100</sup> She disagrees about the negative discourse about the youth after '80s, which usually blames the youth for being apolitical, selfish and insensitive. She argues that this negative image is in fact based on a 'youth myth' which has been created in early days of republic and which posits the youth as a natural political category. According to Lüküslü first we have to reconsider this 'myth' that has been an important part of Turkish political culture since the late Ottoman era. Distinctiveness of her stand stems from her initial question about the youth: "Should the youth be really accepted as a political category? Or has it been socially constructed as such?" This question is also one of the fundamental interests of me, when I have started to write this thesis. Can we think of the youth as a political category? How were they perceived through the course of Turkey's history, and how are they perceived today? Since my objective is to analyze voluntary youth participation as a form of government through community, it is crucial to look closer how the youth is discursively constructed in Turkey.

The Turkish Republic has been entrusted to the youth from the day it was established. During the passage from an imperial system to a republican nation state, the Ottoman Empire has been described as an old, clumsy and backward entity, and the youth has been constructed as a strong symbol against this obsolete system, representing virtues of modernity, contemporaneity and enlightenment. As Neyzi pointed out "the notion that educated youth would take the lead in the construction of

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<sup>100</sup> Demet Lüküslü's book of "The Youth Myth in Turkey : Turkish Youth after 1980" (Türkiye'de "Gençlik Miti": 1980 Sonrası Türkiye Gençliği) presents one of the most detailed analysis of the evolution of the concept of "youth" and changing perceptions about the young people in Turkey. She has conducted 80 in dept interviews with young people from different segments of the society. Through this part I will heavily rely on her findings.

modern nation-states emerged out of enlightenment ideas about progress”.<sup>101</sup> So from the very beginning, the subjectivity of youth is tied to the future progress of the young republic. The image of republic has overlapped with the image of the youth, which is in the beginning of its life yet very promising. Kemal Ataturk charged the youth with two basic missions. First the youth has to be the pioneer of the change and development, but they should be also alert to internal and external dangers. This double burden of the youth has been mostly internalized by the first generation of the republic. Lüküslü exemplifies these missionary attitudes of the first generation by quoting from Erdal Atabek who presents himself as a member of the republic’s first generation:

Our generations are republican generations. We have lived the epochs Ataturk has also lived; we have been raised by these principles. I was born in 1930. The most important thing for us was working. Being useful for the society. The most important thing was adopting the shared values of our family and the society. The most important thing was being responsible of the republic. It was very important. We were thinking about ourselves as the main people in charge of ensuring the existence of the republic. We were the first-hand audience of Ataturk’s Address to the Turkish Youth. When the republic is in danger you would ignore the police. You would ignore the judiciary, you would intervene. We were feeling this enthusiasm.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Leyla Neyzi, “Object or Subject? The Paradox of ‘Youth’ in Turkey”, (International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 33, 2001),413.

<sup>102</sup> Atabek, E. (2003) “Shifting Values in the Modern World and the Youth”(Modern Dünyada Değer Kayması ve Gençlik), İstanbul, Alkım Yayınevi, p. 28. (Bizim kuşaklarımız, ki Cumhuriyet kuşaklarıdır. Biz Atatürk’ün yaşadığı dönemleri de kısmen yaşamış ve o prensiplerle yetiştirilmiş kuşaklarız. Ben 1930 doğumluyum. Bizim için en önemli şey, çalışkanlıktı. Toplumu için yararlı olmaktı. En önemli şey, ailesinin ve toplumunun ortak değerlerine sahip çıkmaktı. En önemli şey Cumhuriyet’e sorumluluk duymaktı. Bu çok önemliydi. Biz kendimizi Cumhuriyet’in varlığından sorumlu tutuyorduk. Atatürk’ün Gençliğe Hitabesinin doğrudan muhataplarıydık. Cumhuriyet bir tehlikeyle karşılaştığı zaman bu ülkenin polisi var demeyeceksin. Yargıcı var demeyeceksin, müdahale edeceksin. O heyecanı yaşıyorduk.)

These words present how the first generation of the republic internalized the mission of defending the republic against all threats, positing themselves above politics disregarding the state institutions like police and judiciary. It has to be mentioned that, we cannot assume a homogenous group of young people at that time if we consider the low rates of access to education and huge rural population. We can claim that this “defending and rescuing mission” has been formulated for the educated youth fed by a top-down elitist westernization. For example, the young elites of the republic have been very active in popular campaigns like “Citizen! Speak Turkish” (*Vatandaş! Türkçe Konuş!*) that aimed to educate the citizens according to the norms of young republic.<sup>103</sup> In addition to these, we have to keep in mind that, there were not many alternatives to CHP (Republican People’s Party) to engage in active politics.

According to a generational approach, second phase of youth in Turkey has started in 50s and came to an end in ‘80s. In this period, Şerif Mardin points out the gradual popularization of university education and rapid *de-elitization*.<sup>104</sup> By *de-elitization*, Mardin refers to social and political changes after transition to multi-party system and growing rates of migration from rural areas to urbanized city centers. Politics was no longer in the hands of Kemalist elite, due to formation of alternative politic movements. Particularly the Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti – DP) gained significant power with its popular manifestations which also contains religious elements in it. In this relatively new political environment, Turkish youth has been accumulated with new missions; however their agenda was still state-centered. Popularization of higher education brought about the heterogeneity of youth’s voice.

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<sup>103</sup> Demet Lüküslü, *The Youth Myth in Turkey : Turkish Youth after 1980* (Türkiye’de “Gençlik Miti”: 1980 Sonrası Türkiye Gençliği) İletişim, İstanbul, 2009) pp.41-42.

<sup>104</sup> Şerif Mardin, “Youth and Violence in Turkey” (*Türkiye’de Gençlik ve Şiddet*), in “Turkish Modernization” (*Türk Modernleşmesi*), (İstanbul, İletişim, 2000) p.273.

It was no longer possible to see unified youth movements in the public sphere. They have been affected by the 1968 youth movement which occurred especially in Europe, and which brought demands of more freedom and equality. The sharp polarization between leftist and rightist groups, especially in late '70s has to be mentioned, which caused enormous violence and death of thousands of young people in the same period. These incidents would be used to justify the military intervention in 12 September in 1980, disregarding the disproportional violence against leftist groups conducted by the state's security forces. Unfortunately I have to stick to superficial statements about this period due to practical reasons. What I have to underline about this period is, although different groups of young people mobilized with different ideologies, they all wanted to rescue the country from incapable hands. Rather than claiming individual rights and more freedom, they put more stress on the ideas of "independence" and "justice". Both in the periods between 1923-50 and 1950-80, "despite a change in the discourse on youth, educated youth largely identified with mission assigned them of transforming society from above-although most young people, like rural masses as a whole, remained silent in public discourse."<sup>105</sup> Lüküslü summarizes this period as follows:

The youth movement in Turkey has been highly affected by the evolution of Turkish society and Turkish political culture, as well. In this period – especially in '70s- even the young has been polarized between left and right, 'rescuing the country' was the main ambition of the both groups, and their thought have been focused on the state. For this reason, youth in '60s and '70s can be thought as a continuation of the 'youth myth'.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Leyla Neyzi, "Object or Subject? The Paradox of 'Youth' in Turkey", (International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 33, 2001),412.

<sup>106</sup> Lüküslü, D. (2009) "The Youth Myth in Turkey : Turkish Youth after 1980" (Türkiye'de "Gençlik Miti": 1980 Sonrası Türkiye Gençliği) İletişim, İstanbul.p. 114. (...Türkiye'deki gençlik hareketi, aynı zamanda Türkiye toplumundaki gelişmelerden ve Türk siyasal kültüründen hayli etkilenmiştir. Bu dönemde – özellikle 70'li yıllarda – gençler sağ ve sol arasında kutuplaşmış olsalar da her iki grubun

The main break with the “youth myth” came after the 1980s, when the young began to be defined ‘apolitical’, ‘selfish’ and ‘insensitive’ – especially about social and political issues. As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, the 1980s symbolize a turning point not only for Turkey’s political history due to harsh military intervention and the new constitution which was ratified in 1982, but the implementation of neo-liberal economic policies and the rising culture of consumerism also marked that period. Strong voices of the young at universities have been replaced with silent groups of students who run after their self-interest; at least it was the way they have started to be portrayed. They have been targeted by the previous generations and by the media, for being not active enough in politics. Concomitantly, the political sphere was being defined as an area of fraud and clientelism. Trust in political parties and politicians decreased dramatically, and the political arena lost its credibility as a sphere of problem solving. Several investigations that have been conducted show the low participation rates of the youth after the ‘80s; only 3,7% of the young people are member to a political party<sup>107</sup> and only %3 of the young people has a membership to political, social or cultural associations other than political parties.<sup>108</sup> However, we have to be very careful while analyzing these data. Regarding the high rates of migration to urban areas, rise in number and capacity of universities and repressive political environment right after ‘80s, these numbers are not enough to evaluate the general approach of the young. Moreover, the absence of similar investigations in the ‘60s and the ‘70s, makes it impossible to make a comparative analysis.

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*asıl hedefi “memleketi kurtarmaktır” ve düşünceleri devlet üzerine odaklanmıştır. Bu yüzden ‘60 ve ‘70’li yıllar, gençlik mitinin devamı niteliğindedir.)*

<sup>107</sup> Turkey’s Youth, 98: The Silent Mass is Under Loupe, (*Türkiye Gençliği 98: Suskun Kitle Büyüteç Altında*), table 28, p.16

<sup>108</sup> Turkish University Youth Research, (*Türk Üniversite Gençliği Araştırması*), Graph 2.24, p.85.

The “youth myth” which has been created in early years of the republic, has been disrupted in the beginning of ‘80s and the youth in Turkey started to be characterized by its apathy and individualism. They have been labeled mostly as the “Özal Youth”, referring to Turgut Özal who is acknowledged as the pioneer of neo-liberal economic policies. Their career ambitions, individual goals and disinterest in the political realm have been highly problematized. However in these criticisms, different ways of participations and sub-cultures that have been formed by the youth have been mostly ignored. On the other hand, while growing youth population began to be associated with an opportunity in terms of a huge labor force, high unemployment rates and the absence of well-defined youth policies were defined as risky for the future. After ‘80s youth has been associated not only with apathy but also with criminal activities. Particularly in the areas where unemployment rates are high and enrollment in higher education is low-like Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia- young people are defined as the most risky group for the future of the country. This criminalization brought about harsh measures of control and coercion.<sup>109</sup> Ironically, the only article in the Constitution of 1982 is about protecting youth from bad habits and raising them according to Kemal Atatürk’s principles.<sup>110</sup> The youth is constructed both as a promising source of energy which will create an opportunity as a potential labor force, and at the same time as the most risky group which is ready to explode. Taking everything in to consideration, “the issue for youth today is how to achieve (or maintain) the promises of modernity, including an inclusive social democracy, within the conditions of neo-liberal globalization.”<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Hundreds of children and young people below 18 are still in prisons due to their involvement in so-called terrorist activities. They are not judged by special courts for children which is in fact obligatory for Republic of Turkey due to its ratification of UN’s “Convention on the Right of the Child” in 1995.

<sup>110</sup> 1982 Constitution of Republic of Turkey, article 58.

<sup>111</sup> Leyla Neyzi, “Object or Subject? The Paradox of ‘Youth’ in Turkey”, (International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 33, 2001), 424.

Although ‘80s is widely considered as the main turning point regarding the political participation of the youth in Turkey, the developments in ‘90s have some specific outcomes for the civic engagement of the youth. First of all, during 1990s civil society organizations in Turkey started to receive EU funds.<sup>112</sup> It is not a coincidence that civil society activities targeting the youth have spread during the same period. Gülesin Nemutlu attracts our attention to the concept of “youth work” which should be best understood as “the work that is done to create a learning environment in order to reinforce the young people’s self-realizations”.<sup>113</sup> In her article, Nemutlu takes four different events into consideration as the main turning points for the embracement of “youth work” as a method by the CSOs in Turkey: 1) Habitat II Summit which took place in İstanbul in 1996; 2) Beginning of EuroMed Youth Action Plan in 1999 with Turkey’s participation to the program; 3) Establishment of Center for European Union Education and Youth Programmes under State Planning Organization in 2002; 4) Several projects and programs that started by different CSOs from 2005 onwards.<sup>114</sup> These major events have contributed to a general transformation of the perception of CSOs in terms of “youth” and “youth work”. CSOs started to approach the youth from another perspective formulated new training programmes in accordance with the EU and the Council of Europe. The Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG) is one of the CSOs which became well aligned with European youth programmes.

When we come to the end of the 2000s, the ways of political participation for the young show an enormous variety due to penetration of communication tools and

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<sup>112</sup> Fuat Keyman, *Türkiye’de Sivil Toplumun Serüveni: İmkansızlıklar İçinde Bir Vaha*, (Sivil Toplum Geliştirme Merkezi, Ankara, 2006)

<sup>113</sup> Gülesin Nemutlu, “Türkiye Sivil Alanında Gençlik Çalışmasının Tarihsel Gelişimi”, *Türkiye’de Gençlik Çalışması ve Politikaları*, ed. Nurhan Yentürk, Yörük Kurtaran and Gülesin Nemutlu, 167-197. (İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2008), p. 168.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid. P.169.

formation of alternative grounds to raise their voices. Emre Erdoğan defines three different modes of participation. First is conventional, in which you become a member of a political party and work for it. The second one is unconventional way, in which you write petitions, or join street marches and try to convey your demands through unconventional ways. The third one is post-modern participation, which means becoming either a member of a civil society organization or protesting the things you disagree on the internet.<sup>115</sup> This third way of participation is growing rapidly, and more and more young people are becoming active in civil society organizations and through the internet. The democracy and participation discourse of the AKP government and the EU integration process have fostered these tendencies. I believe that, the nature of this third type of youth participation and subsequent responsabilization demands to be scrutinized very carefully. However this field has been mostly neglected. Civil society organizations have become important terrains where new knowledges about the youth is created, and new techniques are employed to constitute the youth as a governable object.

In the next part, I will introduce The Community Volunteers Foundation or TOG which exemplifies well how the young people are defined and created as a governable group in Turkey today. It offers a new code of conduct which eventually leads to de-politicization of youth participation through government through community

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<sup>115</sup> Emre Erdoğan, Turkish Youth and The Dimensions of Political Participation, An Experimental Participation Index (*Türk Gençliği ve Siyasal Katılımın Boyutları, Bir Katılım Endeksi Denemesi*) in Turkish Youth and Participation, pp.13-18.

## The Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG): Organizational Structure

We are doing hardcore business here! Do you understand me? We have a budget which amounts to 10 billion Turkish Liras. People here... They don't understand anything. You have to be careful!

*(It was my second interview for the job I have applied to fill the position of two previous coordinators of the “Microcredit Project” of the Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG). After seeing one board member and the head of training department, I was invited by Executive Director of TOG, Yusuf Güvenç, who seemed quite intimidating and discouraging at first sight. In the following days, I was doubtful about the nature of work in this civil society organization, but when I learnt that I had been recruited I felt no hesitation. The curiosity was tempting. What else would I see there?)*

The Community Volunteers Foundation (Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı- TOG) is a non-profit and non-governmental organization that was founded in December 2002 by several business people under leadership of an old banker İbrahim Betil. He is well-experienced about civil society practices in Turkey, since he has been the chairman of the executive board in another NGO called the Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey (Türk Eğitim Gönüllüleri Vakfı- TEGV). TEGV is one of the biggest NGOs in Turkey that operates in the field of educational development in several localities throughout Turkey. After leaving TEGV he decided to establish a similar organization with a wider scope of operation. Unlike TEGV, which primarily gives educational support to schoolchildren with the help of young volunteers, TOG was established with a basic aim of “empowering the young”.

TOG operates in a vast territory relying on webs of relationships in different levels.<sup>116</sup> Some of the organs in this scheme are not that active, like ‘local advisory boards’ and ‘boards of youth service centers’. ‘Youth service centers’ have been turned into just ‘Youth Centers’ very recently. In general we can divide the organization into three layers which are the most influential parts: the field (all the volunteer communities and the volunteers involved), the office (all the professional youth workers) and the board of directors.

Volunteers of TOG are mostly university students who get together at a student club or a collectivity in universities. In different sizes and under different names, now there are more than 80 university clubs under name “Toplum Gönüllüleri” implementing their projects with an involvement in the central foundation. The number of volunteers is around 18,000 including the old volunteers who graduated from the university. Currently there are thirty-four professionals who are working under different departments of the organization, which are training, projects, fieldwork, international relations, finance and youth research and social relations.<sup>117</sup> The central office of the foundation is in Istanbul and twenty seven of the employees are working from this office. There are three “youth centers”; one of them is located in Istanbul and two are in Samsun. These centers are designated as places where volunteers attend trainings, implement some of their projects and organize various social and cultural activities. Each is managed by one of the fieldworkers. Apart from the main office and the youth centers, there are 3 more coordination offices in Ankara, İzmir and Diyarbakır. These coordination offices are also headed by one fieldworker, who is usually mobile in the same region where the office is located.

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<sup>116</sup> See Table 1.

<sup>117</sup> See Table 2.

Office workers have a very critical role in the construction of TOG's discourse and its governmental practices. But since TOG has quite a complicated system, I will confine myself to giving short job descriptions of each group of workers for now. In the next parts I will go into details. Fieldworkers are the ones who are in closest contact with volunteers. Each of them is responsible of certain university organizations and visits these organizations regularly. They basically motivate the volunteers and set up the connection between the central office and the volunteer communities. Very recently a new system has been introduced by TOG, in which some experienced volunteers are appointed as "volunteer fieldworkers", visiting the other communities in their own region, voluntarily of course. There are several different systems of training in TOG and training coordinators are in charge of both organizing and implementing these trainings in some occasions – such as training of trainers. Apart from basic "5 key" training of TOG which give basic know-how about civil society, project cycle management and teamwork in volunteer organizations, there are some thematic trainings in some specific areas of democracy, social rights, reproductive health and health literacy. Project department mainly develop social responsibility projects which will be implemented by more than one youth community. They seek funds and partners together with the fund raising and communications department, to acquire a financial source for the foundation. Youth Research and Social Relations Department conduct researches about youth problems, TOG's effect on youth and is responsible for policy making based on these researches. All administrative and financial operations are managed by Istanbul office. Administrative and Financial Affairs Department is also responsible of scholarship delivery to selected volunteers and provision of internship opportunities in private companies.

As a foundation, TOG has a huge board of trustees and a board of directors which meet once in a month. Apart from voting for the issues which are brought to the board, most board members take active roles particularly in fund raising activities. They organize special nights for which high-price tickets are sold or they simply use their connections. TOG's board of directors is distinguished from its counterparts by its young volunteer members who are elected by the volunteers in Youth Councils. They are elected once a year and they form half of the whole board. TOG Youth Council is convened twice a year and is acknowledged as the main ground where the representatives of youth communities, professional youth workers and the members of the board come together and discuss the subjects raised by all these parties. In 2008 TOG started to organize its Youth Councils under a specific theme, which is first suggested then elected online by the volunteers. First it was planned to assign one theme for each year, but the theme of "youth participation" has been embraced by a greater number of volunteers and TOG has decided this theme is to be discussed more extensively in 3 youth councils.

Table 1 TOG's Operational Map

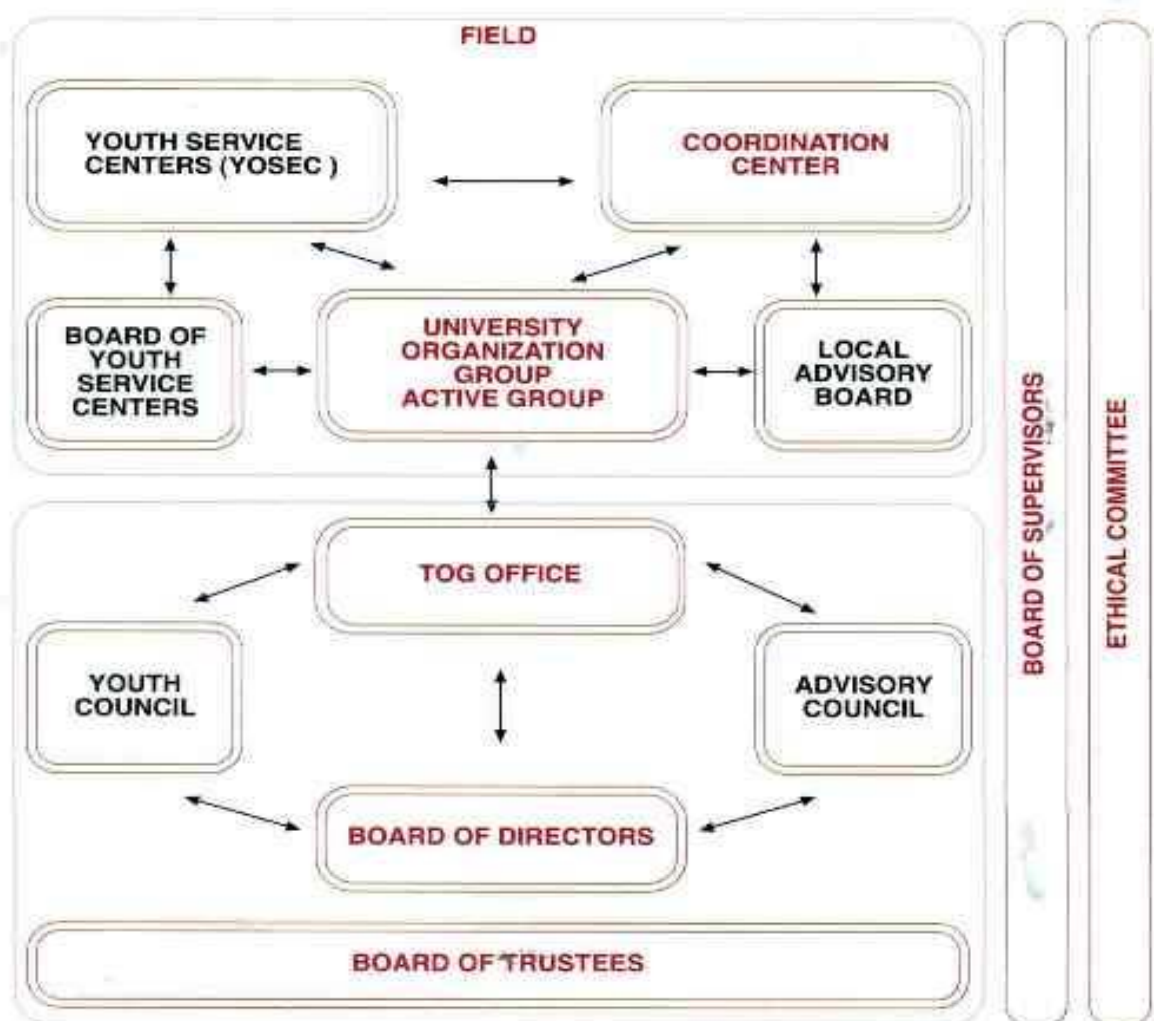
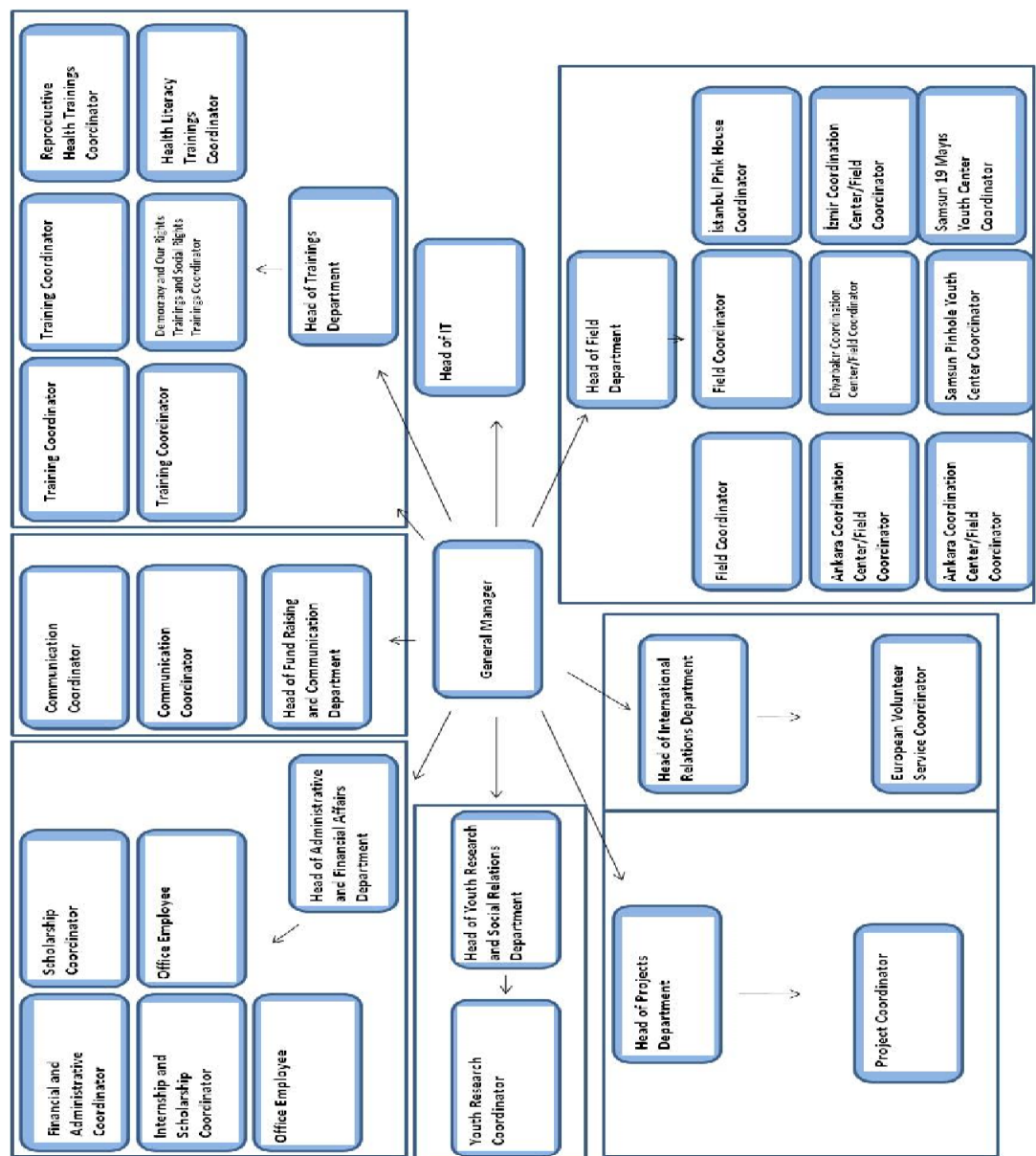


Table 2 TOG's Organizational Structure



## Constructing a New Myth: “Young Active Citizen”

“Social awareness and self-esteem”, “social peace”, “youth participation” and “social responsibility”... When you step into the TOG office or attend one of its events, you will hear at least one of these words. They are constantly circulated, used and appropriated extensively in different contexts. Like many other civil society organizations the Community Volunteers Foundation has a clearly defined mission statement which is well-embraced by both volunteers and professionals. Therefore, this mission statement plays a key role in the construction of TOG’s institutional discourse. It can be thought of as the backbone of all practices and all the other statements about youth derive from this mission. TOG’s mission is:

- To contribute to the formation of a youth with social awareness and self-esteem,
- To encourage young volunteers to develop and realize various projects,
- To transform the energy of youth toward social benefit,
- To provide the participation, guidance and assistance of adult volunteers who believe in the synergy that youth is capable of creating and who can financially or/and socially support them toward social benefit.<sup>118</sup>

TOG’s first and foremost mission is “empowerment of the youth”. It is overtly manifested that “empowerment of the youth” will be possible if they gain social awareness and self-esteem through taking part in social responsibility projects. This is the first part of TOG’s basic argument during its operations. It stresses on the vitality of social integration by including the adults and the term “social benefit”. The theme of “social integration” is the second anchor of TOG’s presence as a civil society organization.

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<sup>118</sup> [http://www.tog.org.tr/abs-ing/templates/bos\\_sayfa.asp?articleid=11&zoneid=1](http://www.tog.org.tr/abs-ing/templates/bos_sayfa.asp?articleid=11&zoneid=1)

These arguments have been put forward against some social ills. In order to understand TOG's discourse properly, we should ask the following questions: "Against which social ills has 'empowerment of the youth' been presented as a solution?" and "By which means will this objective be accomplished?" Answers to these questions are related to how TOG defines youth and brings it into being as a governable group. We should note that governing discourses exercise power, providing the object and the justification for this power exercise: "manifold relations of power which...constitute the social body...cannot themselves be established, consolidated or implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse."<sup>119</sup>

As I have mentioned in the previous part in this chapter, the most recent perception about youth in Turkey is rather negative. As a group, which constitutes a considerable part in the population, the young have been under attack from all segments of society. They have been criticized for being apolitical, selfish and insensitive to social issues. Unlike previous generations of the '60s and the '70s, people who were born after 1980 are considered apathetic and individualist. TOG challenges these negative assessments by presenting a new inclusionary approach based on "trust in youth". As they manifest in their website:

Development of civic initiatives and the improvement of individual's effect on social policies are two of the most significant needs of our society. In this regard, 'refreshment of the trust in youth' and supporting the youth are the main priorities.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Foucault, 1980, 93

<sup>120</sup> [http://www.tog.org.tr/abs/templates/bos\\_sayfa.asp?articleid=11&zoneid=60](http://www.tog.org.tr/abs/templates/bos_sayfa.asp?articleid=11&zoneid=60) "Toplumumuzda sivil inisiyatifin gelişmesi ve bireylerin sosyal politikaya olan etkisinin artırılması önemli ihtiyaçlardan biridir. Bunun için, gençlere duyulan güvenin tazelenmesi ve gençlerin desteklenmesi önceliklidir."

If the young people are trusted and given more responsibility, they will become active and succeed in most aspects of life. However, while challenging the negative image of the young, it also benefits from some stereotypes in its definition of the youth. The youth is portrayed as a group full of energy which is more flexible and open to change. But they need to be empowered by the guidance of adults and most importantly by themselves. They are regarded as the ultimate source of change, and consequently their self-empowerment and high self-esteem would be key to social change.

The young people between the ages of seventeen and twenty five constitute an energetic group capable of transforming the social investments made in them into social benefit in a short period of time. Therefore, the youth is very important for our country and for our future.<sup>121</sup>

These statements are strengthened with a widely uttered motto: “Not to criticize but to change!” This is the way TOG invites the university students to become volunteers in social responsibility projects and to create concrete changes not only in their lives but also in other people’s lives. The idea of “everything can do something for the good of society” lies behind this motto. By this motto, the concepts of participation and active citizenship are glorified, and defined as the legitimate way of being a good citizen. Apathy and cynicism are left out of this circle one more time as problematic types of behavior.

In democratic discourses like this one, “active citizenship” is offered as a solution to poverty, crime, powerlessness and many other social problems. As I have

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<sup>121</sup> [http://www.tog.org.tr/abs/templates/bos\\_sayfa.asp?articleid=11&zoneid=60](http://www.tog.org.tr/abs/templates/bos_sayfa.asp?articleid=11&zoneid=60) “17-25 yaş grubundaki gençler, kendilerine yapılan sosyal içerikli yatırımları, kısa sürede toplumsal yarara dönüştürebilecek enerjik bir kitledir. Dolayısıyla gençler, ülkemiz ve yarınlarımız için büyük öneme sahiptir.”

indicated in the first chapter unlike old authoritative modes of government, in advanced liberalism individuals are governed by their autonomy through their relationships to themselves. On the other hand, they are made governable by some discursive practices which usually define them with what they lack. People are free but they do not rebel against their exploitation, they do not defend their rights and they are usually indifferent to decision making processes. This contradictory way of government is used by TOG in an elaborate way, while TOG puts forward the vitality of improving self-esteem and active participation of the youth; it assumes a non-participant group of young people who needs to be integrated to the society. They are there, as a solid neglected group with shared problems and aspirations; the only thing they need is to be trusted more. If the opportunity is given, they will be the pioneers of the social transformation starting from themselves. In this chain of reasoning volunteerism is asserted as both a means and a solution to all problems. As a result, a young person's responsibility to him/herself is connected to his/her responsibility to the society in a very deliberate way. Moreover, there is a claim embedded in this: in case of apathy, non-participation and less responsibility taken by the youth, it would be risky for the future of the country. Referring to Demet Lüküslü's concept of "Youth Myth in Turkey", I think another myth of "Young Active Citizen" is being created by TOG's discourse. The youth is created as a natural political category once more. But it is not simply reassertion of the same old youth myth which was constructed in the late Ottoman and early republican era, in which youth was portrayed as the symbol of contemporaneity and as the saviors of the country. This time, while all the negative attributes of the youth and the risks they may cause are kept in one pocket, it is being called first into take action upon them, then to the society itself. The young are no longer criticized for being individualistic

and egocentric. The case is just the reverse. They need to act individually, think and decide what to do with their own free will. Becoming a volunteer is assumed to be as everyone's personal choice. Expressing personal views are highly encouraged and all of them are valued as such. But how does their personal aspirations and self-empowerment would lead to social benefit? How this 'social investment in youth' can be transformed into social benefit in a short period of time? The process of reconnecting one's self to the social is not immune from power relationships. Apart from several power relationships which are constituted at different layers of the foundation, I think it starts from this point, the voluntary compliance to the policies of self-empowerment for the social benefit.

The foremost concern of Foucault was to understand how autonomy and personal liberty could co-exist with the state's need to govern. In this general framework he approached liberalism as a productive discourse. First liberalism tried to reconcile the personal liberties and free market economy with political authority. In the period of welfarism, it acted upon the social and governed individuals through the society. In these steps expertise has claimed a non-political status and played a mediator role. When we come to the stage of neo-liberal rule or advanced liberalism as Rose calls it, it seeks:

To de-governmentalize the State and to de-statise practices of government, to detach the substantive authority of expertise from the apparatuses of political rule, relocating experts within a market governed by the rationalities of competition, accountability and consumer demand. It does not seek to govern through 'society' but through the regulated choices of individuals now construed as subjects of choices and aspirations to self-actualization and self-fulfillment.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Nikolas Rose, 'Governing Advanced Liberal Democracies', in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose (eds) *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government*. London: UCL Press.

When we think about TOG in context of civil society and Turkey, we see that in the absence of a concrete youth policy of the State, it seems that TOG operates as an independent institution constructing its own discourse about the youth. On the one hand TOG's claims about youth are based upon statistical indicators, economic variables and merits of non-formal education, on the other hand it still benefits from widespread presuppositions about the youth which construct them as a natural political category. Although there is no concrete policy that concerns the youth, the image of youth as the potential labor force for the future and modernizing segment of the country has never been neglected. These discourses about the youth are produced and reproduced by different parties like the media, civil society organizations and eventually by state authorities. We can say that TOG utilizes all these different sources of knowledges and offers a new image of the youth. Here, we need to remember that for Foucault, government is a discursive activity and operates in and through the individuals who come and fill its subject positions.<sup>123</sup> The activities become governmental when different types of expertise are linked to creation of these subject positions. By encouraging self-fulfillment and active participation in the guidance of adults and its professional youth workers, TOG opens new subject positions for the young people according to this new image. Far from being repressive, it benefits from the productivity of neoliberalism. Power is articulated through the constitution and regulation of their individual liberties. It offers a new conduct for the youth and consequently governs their relationship with themselves. TOG uses several mechanisms which invite the volunteers to start the change from their own individualities. Cruikshank labels these participatory and democratic schemes as "technologies of citizenship." She says:

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<sup>123</sup> Foucault 1982

Technologies of citizenship operate according to a political rationality for governing people in ways that promote their autonomy, self-sufficiency, and political engagement; in classic phrase of early philanthropists, they are intended to ‘help people to help themselves’. This is a manner of governing that relies not on institutions, organized violence or state power but on securing the voluntary compliance of citizens....Technologies of citizenship are voluntary and coercive at the same time; the actions of citizens are regulated, but only after the capacity to act as a certain kind of citizen with certain aims is instilled.<sup>124</sup>

By using similar ‘technologies of citizenship’ TOG proposes a decent way of being in the world – as an active young citizen with high self-esteem.

However here there are two traps that one should avoid. First, it would be misleading to think about TOG’s discourse as if it is detached from the recent dominant political tendencies in Turkey in which the culture of democracy, active citizenship and participation have been glorified. Rather, we need to think of all these elements -including neo-liberal economic policies and dramatic increase in access to different types of communication- come together and form a new kind of “young person” who seeks to fulfill his/her goals in life through active participation and volunteering for social benefit. The second mistake would be thinking of TOG like a ‘volunteer factory’ which creates the same type of young people who take responsibilities, act in the same manner and reproduce TOG’s model for citizenship. Not only the volunteers but also the professional workers appropriate TOG’s mission and its operations in quite different ways. During my work experience in TOG, I have met almost all the old and current employees and hundreds of volunteers from maybe 50 different cities of Turkey. I must say that all these people had different reasons to be involved in TOG and different ideas about what TOG really is. There is

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<sup>124</sup> Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects*, (Cornell University Press, 1999)

a constant process of negotiation both in the management and in the field. In addition to this, it is a flexible rather than a fixed entity; it evolves in time and differently positions itself according to different circumstances.

Since TOG's mission statement is embraced to a very great extent both by the management and by the volunteers, I preferred to put more stress on it in this first part. But TOG uses more complicated strategies to attract and mobilize volunteers, to motivate them through both creation and implementation of social responsibility projects. In the following parts, I will try to elaborate on TOG's basic principles and how it creates "youth communities" around a certain type of morality. These communities are operating in a double burdening array: autonomization and responsabilization. TOG's principles play a significant role in construction of the new myth of "young active citizen" by defining what these youth activities should cover and how they should be implemented-like rules of the game. In the last part in this chapter, I will focus a bit more on "youth participation" as an ordering concept used to facilitate the belonging to the communities and image of a 'decent life'.

#### New Loyalties: Which Community Are You From? Or We All Belong to the Same Community

'Community' conveys the image of a warm and comfortable place, like a fireplace at which we warm our hands on a frosty day. Out there, in the street, all sorts of dangers lie in ambush; in here, in the community, we can relax and feel safe...If someone wandered off the right track, we would explain his unwholesome conduct by saying that 'he has fallen into bad *company*'. If someone is miserable, suffers a lot and is consistently denied a dignified life, we promptly accuse *society*- the way it is organized, the way it works. Company or society can be bad; but not the *community*. Community, we feel, is always a good thing. (Bauman, 2001)

TOG is the abbreviation for the foundation's name in Turkish, *Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı*. However in its name in English, the literal translation of the word 'toplum' which means 'society' in Turkish hasn't been used. Rather, it has been preferred to use the word 'community' instead of society, so the foundation's name in English has become Community Volunteers Foundation.

When I have first started to work for TOG, its name in English sounded a little confusing to me. There were volunteers in almost all the universities in Turkey and they were working both for their localities and for the country in general. In some projects they were focusing on some specific groups like Romani people in Edirne, poor women in Samsun or people with disabilities in İzmir. But none of these examples could answer the question in my mind: Where is this community and who belongs to this community? Or is it possible to say, all the localities were labeled as separate communities? The answer was apparent, indeed. Yes all the localities could be thought as communities, but more importantly the volunteers themselves were forming their own communities: volunteer communities. So the foundation's name in Turkish and in English stands for different meanings, while the Turkish name underlines the service provision function of TOG, its name in English stands for different function of *volunteering for the youth communities themselves*.

In his quest for understanding the nature of political power today, Nikolas Rose defines a new strategy of 'governing through community' or simply 'community government', which has become more and more dominant in all sorts of empowerment strategies. Following Foucault's expanded conceptualization of government which "designates the way in which the conduct of individuals or states might be directed: the government of children, of souls, of communities, of families,

of the sick”<sup>125</sup>, ‘community government’ can be thought of as a growing project in which political reformers target a group and identify them as potential sites of democracy and efficiency (Etzioni, 1996, 2004; Hearn, 1997). Ilcan and Başok specify it as a concept, “community government refers to the ways in which the contemporary politics of government has come to define, shape and orient communities (for example volunteer communities) such that they engage in activities that attempt to responsabilize certain groups of citizens for particular purposes and ends”.<sup>126</sup> What makes ‘communities’ attractive for a governmental strategy is their assumed neutrality and pre-political status. Li suggests that, “it is assumed to be naturally present, needing to be tweaked and adjusted to bring about improvement, or to deploy existing community formations to new ends.”<sup>127</sup> How the strategies that target communities become governmental at the point where it is assumed that they are formed naturally. While the communities are targeted for a sort of power exercise, they remain ostensibly outside of politics. In contrast, Bauman claims that ‘all unity needs to be made’. (Bauman, 2001) Etzioni describes the community in the third sector – referring to the civil society- as “not primarily a geographical space, a social space, a sociological space or a space of services, although it may attach itself to any or all such spatializations. It is a moral field binding persons into durable relations. It is a space of emotional relationships through which individual identities are constructed through their bonds to micro-cultures of values and meanings.”<sup>128</sup>

Hence, development of new strategies of community empowerment entails the

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<sup>125</sup> Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power” in H. Dreyfus and Paul Robinow (eds) Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 221

<sup>126</sup> Suzan Ilcan and Tanya Basok, “Community Government: Voluntary Agencies, Social Justice, and the Responsibilization of Citizens”, *Citizenship Studies*, Vol.8, No:2, June 2004 : 130.

<sup>127</sup> Tania Li, “Government through community in the age of neo-liberalism” (paper presented at Agrarian Studies, Yale University, 11 October 2002)

<sup>128</sup> Amitai Etzioni, *The New Golden Rule: Community and Morality in a Democratic Society*, (London, 1997), 127.

constitution of the communities which is only sustainable if they are held together by shared values, loyalties, principles and also a shared morality. Bauman suggest that;

Building the modern state consisted in replacing the old loyalties to the parish, to the neighborhood community or to the artisan guild by new citizen-style loyalties to the abstract and distant totality of the nation and the laws of the land.<sup>129</sup>

Following these arguments, here I suggest that, now these ‘abstract’ loyalties to the nation state and its laws are replaced with new type of loyalties one can feel towards a smaller group of people, a new type of community. Volunteer communities establish new bonds not only between the volunteers in the same community; but also between, the volunteer and his/her locality, the volunteer and the association –or the foundation in TOG case-, and finally the volunteer and the state. However this relationship between the state and the volunteer is not abstract anymore; for instance in this case, TOG functions as a catalyst in this relationship, and brings the distant image of the state closer, making it more accessible. For example, one can easily collaborate with the state institutions during social responsibility projects; the state can be a “social partner”. In the third chapter I will try to elaborate in detail how “the state” is perceived by the volunteers.

In TOG, this new myth of “young active citizen” is not being constructed as a free agent without any connections, but rather it has been placed in webs of relationships including the relationship with his/her local youth community, training communities (like 5 keys trainers, democracy and our rights trainers, etc.) and also the relationship with the biggest community of TOG (all the volunteers, professional

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<sup>129</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*, (USA: Blackwell, 2001), 127.

workers and the board of directors). Although these communities are not assumed to be naturally existent – field coordinators and volunteers show great effort to get them together- they are assumed to have similar problems and similar characteristics that stem from being ‘young’- besides being energetic, flexible and open-minded, there exist the problems of being a university student, fear of unemployment. However, they are constituted as a group that needs to be acted upon, which TOG legitimizes with the absence of concrete policies of government. “You have to be careful Gülgün, they are disadvantaged young people, it is not easy to communicate with them, in most cases, they do not know how to express themselves properly and sometimes they do not understand what you say” said General Manager Yusuf Güvenç during my job interview. These attitudes towards the youth are not expressed very openly most of the time; you find these negative specifications neither in the mission statement nor in training programmes. However I do not mean that there is a hidden agenda or everyone in the management thinks about the volunteers in the same manner. In fact, the lack of capacity, the need to be empowered is already inherent in the formation of volunteer youth communities to act upon themselves. Instead of expressing the common deficiencies of the young people, TOG rather recommends some cures against these deficiencies like low self-esteem, apathy and anti-social behavior. Designation of the trainings and other activities are informed by the acknowledgement of these deficiencies.

TOG’s 6 basic principles are the strongest instruments designed to hold these communities together. They can be listed as:

- Respect to diversity (Respect for differences during all activities-cultural diversity-, no segregation based on religious, ideological, political views or ethnicity.)
- Transparency and Accountability
- Local Participation

- Teamwork
- Entrepreneurship
- Training (Aiming to increase both the level and quality of education, promotion of life-long learning, creation of public consciousness in the field of training)

These principles need to be maintained not only by the volunteers during the planning and implementation of the projects and all TOG events including the trainings, but also by the professional workers and the management. There is a symbolic agreement which is signed by volunteers when they first join TOG. In this “volunteer’s agreement”, the above principles are mentioned one by one, and when a young person signs this agreement he or she shows a symbolic compliance to all these principles then joins to the club. Loyalty to these principles is very significant. They play a major role in construction of a sense of shared morality. On the other hand, even if these principles are not fully embraced by the volunteers, the circulation of these words constitutes an important part of the special language of TOG. There are several words, abbreviations and expressions which are created and circulated by TOG. This special language creates a sense of belonging and differentiates the volunteers from the other people around. Your capability of speaking this language and the richness of your vocabulary are also signs of your experience and degree of commitment.

Among these principles I want to put more stress on two of them: transparency and accountability, and respect to diversity. I want to elaborate on these more, because although they are the mostly coined ones, there are always heated debates around these principles. By elaborating them, I will also try to show that there is always an excess to the communities which are assumed to be naturally there, but in fact formed by a particular governmental rationality.

## Respect to Diversity

“Diversity” is a concept that is used more frequently than ever nowadays, in the beginning of twenty-first century. It is used in many different fields, ranging from management to biology, from education to social sciences. This wide range of coverage brings many different definitions and usages of the term diversity. If we set the boundaries to define just ‘human diversity’ it is still very difficult to describe. Maybe the broadest definition should be used, like ‘diversity is all the ways in which we differ’, not to prioritize any of difference over the others. In what ways do we usually differ as human-beings? Diversity can be defined in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, values, personality characteristics, education, language, physical appearance, marital status, lifestyles, economic status, geographic origin etc. Although ‘diversity’ is used along with the concept of multiculturalism- and used in very similar contexts like the cases of discrimination and segregation for instance – ‘diversity’ is a more acknowledged term which sounds less political. However we need to keep in mind that all usages of the concept of ‘diversity’ contain a presumption that there is one ‘normal’, ‘not prejudiced’, mainstream individual and the ‘other’ who is desired to be incorporated into the society. Furthermore, the widespread definitions of diversity construct some categories such as race, sex, religion, disability. But when it is defined as “all the ways we differ”, no matter how many categories we create, we are nowhere near to covering everybody. So ‘diversity’ should be thought beyond all these categories. The construction of the categories by helping to label the discriminated groups eases the way of discrimination. One should never forget that all these different categories are not only products of efforts to interpret the ‘diversity’ of human-beings, but they also consist of superiority claims. Although the debate about deconstruction of all

these categories is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is significant to keep this in mind to understand the inner conflicts of the concept of ‘diversity’.

Although diversity occupies a vast literature ranging from educational to managerial sciences, here I would like to address its meaning for voluntary associations, where it is accommodated almost without any dispute. Unlike other institutions, there is a general belief that voluntary associations have important roles in the provision of societal integration and peace. Robert Putnam is one of the main supporters of this belief, as a prominent civil society theoretician.<sup>130</sup> According to this view, by creating an environment in which many people with different cultural backgrounds come together and work for some specific reason voluntary organizations enhance toleration and diversify one’s social networks. Jennifer Glanville warns us about this presumption that voluntary association can improve societal integration but may also inhibit it depending on their types and locations. Glanville questions if voluntary organizations lead to societal integration or similar people come together in same organization with a consideration of these two parameters. She defines two types of associations as instrumental and expressive according to their functions. This analytical differentiation may not cover the whole civil society organizations that work with volunteers or one organization can show both features. But her findings and categorizations are quite significant in relation to TOG case. She claims that in instrumental organizations, a more diverse body of volunteers come together and work for the same goal. However in these types of organizations, despite the variety among the volunteers, the differences are usually not uttered and left unrevealed. The relationships between the volunteers tend to be

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<sup>130</sup> Putnam, Robert, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000

less dense and more superficial as her research shows.<sup>131</sup> Unlike instrumental organizations, expressive associations tend to contain more similar people in terms of age, class, ethnicity, race, gender or sexual orientation. Expressive associations can be exemplified by women's initiatives, minority organizations or workers' unions. These associations usually implement projects and carry out campaigns for claiming rights of their own and to influence the public opinion. So the differences are not concealed, rather they are underlined more and more frequently in these associations. There is still a common goal to be achieved, but the goal is strictly related to the volunteers' individual differences. Glanville claims that, in expressive association the relationships between the volunteers are denser. However it does not mean that volunteer associations enhance societal integration, because already similar people are working together. Even if they have individual differences, if we refer to Benhabib, while they are working together they put the same feature of their identity, so the other issues are left still untouched.<sup>132</sup> (Seyla Benhabib claims that the conflation of the individual's search for the expression of his/her unique identity with politics of identity/difference is theoretically wrong and politically dangerous. Because, as she puts it: "there's the possibility that collective movements for the assertion of group rights may conflict with individual claims to autonomy, necessitating a certain ordering of one's principles") Similarly if we differentiate voluntary associations according to their locations, while local organizations gather people with similar people and provide dense relationships, national or global organizations may increase the diversity of one's social network but leave the relationships loose in any way. I found Glanville's doubts about the societal effects

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<sup>131</sup> Glanville Jennifer, *Voluntary Associations and Social Network Structure : Why Organizational Location and Type Are Important?* , Sociological Forum, Vol. 19, No: 3 (Sep. 2004), pp. 465-491

<sup>132</sup> Seyla Benhabib, *Claims of Culture*, p 57

of voluntary associations quite considerable and her findings are convincing. Now in the light of the discussions above, I will try to analyze how ‘diversity’ concept is used, understood and functioned in TOG.

During their acquaintance with TOG, each volunteer is supposed to start with attending an orientation called ‘yellow key’ and presented by field coordinators or volunteers who are responsible for the fieldwork in their region. In this orientation the volunteers are informed about the six basic principles, the mission of the organization and the projects of the organization. Together with ‘transparency and accountability’, ‘respect to diversity’ is highlighted to express that TOG is open to anyone who is eager to work for the social responsibility projects. Parallel to its vision of a peaceful society, university students from different ethnic backgrounds, gender and religion are encouraged to join and to take responsibility in TOG. In theory, all the volunteers would work together, know each other better and this environment would decrease their entrenched prejudices against each other. At this point it is helpful to call upon the distinction between the types of organizations which is constructed by Glanville. TOG has first been established as a voluntary organization that implements social responsibility projects in volunteers own localities. The projects like revitalization of public libraries, fixing and painting of primary public schools or regularly visiting the rest homes make TOG an instrumental organization in which a diverse body of volunteers can take place easily. These problems are defined in the social, and all the volunteers are eager to do ‘good’ if the state is not able to provide enough support. However the problems emerge when the same organization attempts to show ‘expressive’ features. Although the principle of ‘respect to diversity’ seems to be internalized by the most of the volunteers, it does not prevent many volunteers to oppose ‘Hrant Dink Scholarship

Fund' or alcohol consumption during TOG meetings.<sup>133</sup> The disputes originate from many different reasons. First of all, the fluidity of the 'diversity' concept is interpreted in many different ways by the board of directors, office workers and the volunteers. It is repeated again and again but there is no consensus about its meaning even among the volunteers. Everyone draws the boundaries of the toleration zone according to her/his point of view, which makes the principle nonfunctional. For one of the volunteers consumption of alcohol cannot be tolerated in TOG meetings, for some the other Armenians are carrying out a campaign against the Turkish Republic. TOG as an institution cannot show tolerance towards them. There are several similar disputes which are legitimized in different ways. I think the confusion about the diversity concept not only originates from different attitudes of the volunteers or the management, but it is about the concept's conflicting usage by the organization itself. Ibrahim Betil is the leading figure of the organization both as the founder and the chairman of the board of directors. I want to exemplify his conflicting attitude to the concept in two different concepts. In an interview with Şeyhmus Diken he says:

Respect to diversity is the basic element. In our organization all the volunteers come together without concealing their difference, rather they underline them. They have to tolerate each others' differences. We don't want to eradicate the differences among them which are originated from their different ethnic origins, beliefs and thought; but we want them to come together and to implement different social responsibility projects.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> In 2008, TOG has declared that it will create a scholarship fund under the name of "Hrant Dink", and this has lead to an antagonism between volunteers, the professional workers and the board. In the third chapter I will exemplify the arguments that have been used to object the delivery of a scholarship in the name of Hrant Dink, who was a journalist who has been murdered due to his ethnic origin. Similarly, alcohol consumption of some volunteers and professional workers during TOG events has been a contested pattern and lead to heated disputes.

<sup>134</sup> Şeyhmus Diken, *Civil Life and Democracy in Turkey: Civil Society Discusses its Problems*, (Türkiye'de Sivil Hayat ve Demokrasi), (Ankara, Dipnot, 2006), 330.

However, when the same principle is uttered during a meeting with government institutions and private firms the same principle is instrumentalized in quite a different way. Both TOG professionals and volunteers prefer to underline the non-political nature of the organization and emphasize how particular differences are put away, and the volunteers work for the same goal during the implementation of the projects. Here I want to attract attention to the dilemma faced in each case. Being together with an expression or concealment of differences? Interestingly diversity claims the former but usually leads to the latter. The expression of one's difference, a demand of recognition is usually not tolerated in TOG. The principle of "respect to diversity" can be thought of a depoliticized celebration of difference. As long as the differences are not politicized, it doesn't disturb anyone. However, I think this contradictory usage of the concept of 'diversity' is not immune from power relationships. It is rather political; since when 'diversity' came to be used with the term 'respect', the diversity itself is rendered into 'uniformity'. No matter how it is pre-defined, the ambiguity of the term and the agency opens new possibilities for re-definition. It is contingently defined and as Foucault suggest 'people are not power's inert or consenting target; they are also an element of its articulation'.<sup>135</sup> I claim that this contingent definition of the same concept makes it a governmental apparatus when we think 'diversity' in complex relations of community government. These youth communities are formed by a particular governmental rationality and there are always excesses on the borders. As Li suggests "this form of government is not a unilateral affair. In any attempt to enroll communities for the purposes of government, there is always an excess of histories, memories, and commitments which exceeds the governmental projects and become sites of struggle in which

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<sup>135</sup> Foucault, 1980, 98

something new is generated.”<sup>136</sup> On the one hand, ‘respect to diversity’ is accepted to be one of the main principles that hold all the volunteers together as a part of TOG’s inclusionary discourse. On the other hand the most bitter disputes are going on about the same principle. In a way “respect to diversity” principle is used to attract more volunteers; but when the differences are expressed loudly it damages the sense of belonging. We should note that, these principles are not simply imposed from the top, and determination is not the case. These principles are appropriated in quite a different manner by each volunteer while the same principles remain to be the main reference points. That’s how the volunteers also become the subjects of the articulation of power. In the third chapter, drawing on my observations in the field and volunteers’ own expressions, I will try to elaborate on how they position themselves vis-à-vis their own youth communities, their localities and the TOG office.

### Transparency and Accountability

Among the other principles of TOG, ‘transparency and accountability’ has a very specific place of its own. Not just because it is one of the principles around which a fierce controversy is going on, but due to the strong intrinsic value attached to it. Without doubt, it has a claim of a certain type of morality. Transparency facilitates the surveillance of all different layers of the organization- the administration of the foundation by the state, private companies and by the volunteers in the field, the professional office workers by both TOG management and volunteers, and lastly volunteers by management and other professionals. “Transparency and accountability” is an important ordering concept, and the systems of knowledge it

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<sup>136</sup> Tania Li , “Government through community in the age of neo-liberalism” (paper presented at Agrarian Studies, Yale University, 11 October 2002), 11

suggests “render reality understandable in such a way that it is governable.”<sup>137</sup> Here, my objective is not making an assessment about TOG’s transparency and accountability. By looking at how it operates through different layers of the same institution in different manners, I would rather stress how this principle is used as a governmental strategy charged of with high morality. It forms a ground which makes the practices of government at a distance possible by translating the neo-liberal rationality and making it functional in a day-to-day basis.<sup>138</sup>

Symmetric information is vital for a liberal democracy to function efficiently. It is a must for a free-market economy to flourish; but now the virtues of transparency are well-acknowledged by both government institutions and civil society organizations in a general sense. For the government institutions, being transparent is an electoral liability, and they put stress on ‘transparency’ more and more with a premise of equal access to all sorts of information. In Turkey also, state institutions claim to be transparent by disclosure of information in websites, 24 hour live broadcasting from the parliament, monthly and yearly release of statistics about government expenditures, unemployment, and import and export rates. By informing the citizens about decision making processes, about the details of budgets and giving extra information about the up-to-date economic conditions, they try to build a sense of trust between the state and the citizens. This new relationship between the state institutions and the citizens is also encouraged by the private sector due to a belief that when the mutual trust between the state institutions and the citizens is maintained, the stability is assured. This stability is vital for smooth economic transactions. On the other hand, non-governmental organizations mostly

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<sup>137</sup> James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*, (University of Minnesota Press, 1990),1.

<sup>138</sup> Bruno Latour’s concept of ‘governing at a distance’ has been used through this thesis to point out the political power which has been disengaged from central state power.

claim that they are transparent, in order to build a similar environment of trust and reputability in which they build complex relationships with state institutions and the private sector. They are audited both by independent audition firms and by relevant state institutions. They release detailed information about their yearly budgets. When they raise funds from a company for a specific project, they need to report back in concrete terms, how much money has been spent for which item in the budget, how many trainings were done and how many people benefited from the project, etc.

In TOG, there are two levels of transparency which operate in different ways. First it is a must for an NGO like TOG, to be transparent publicly to receive more and more donations; second all the volunteers have to be transparent and accountable in their implementations because most of the projects are undergone by the main target group itself. These double sides of the transparency make the word commonly uttered in different meanings. TOG is one of the civil society institutions that define themselves by a differentiation from charitable work. With the famous motto, “they do not give fish but teach how to fish”, they aim to ‘empower’ the targeted groups. No matter how it operates like all the other non-profit organizations they must raise funds to implement their numerous social responsibility projects. Luckily, most of the private firms adopted the notion of “corporate citizenship” which means sharing a small amount of budget to make cooperation with NGOs like TOG. For instance, a condom brand and pharmaceutical company supports “reproductive health” training, multinational banks releasing some money for “microcredit project”, or a telecommunication company funds and entrepreneurship project for the youth, etc. ‘Corporate citizenship’ is a decent way of strengthening the image of a firm, showing how a corporation is considered and generous about the environment, health, education and children in need, etc. It is especially useful to improve the public

image for a firm, if it is investing in a foreign country. Furthermore it is clearly the most charming way of advertising. So TOG is mostly funded by big private firms which aim to find more places for themselves in the mass-media with the projects that they are supporting. This situation demands a direct visibility of all the accounts, especially to the current or possible contributors of the projects. Every single amount of money that is spent has to be reported to the firms, this is the most important rule. What makes this situation rather interesting is, just like the firms, TOG has to strengthen its public image. And the way that goes to reputability is passes from the degree of transparency. When TOG is presenting one of its projects to the firms, it underlines its principle of transparency and accountability. It is the way it displays itself in the public domain and attracts extra donations. Having a big amount of budget and displaying it make an NGO stronger and reputable in the world of “corporate citizenship”. However, the principle of “transparency and accountability” is in a sense reduced to number of projects and amount of money that is spent. The question of “How that money is spent” occupies a secondary place in these reporting cycles. The management of TOG is also very sensitive to other numbers like numbers of volunteers, the number of people who benefited from TOG projects and even the number of hours the volunteers work. These are all calculated and released in the website to enhance the notion of transparency. This positivist approach suits well the business language of firms, who demand periodical reports from TOG. However the management always filters the reports and the released information. The control of information release again changes the distribution of power. While the private sector could be thought of as the governor of the process as the source of money, the notion of transparency strengthens the hand of NGOs. The power is distributed by the notion of transparency due to its double-sided nature -the release of

money and the release of information. It becomes clearer when we consider how the private firms open their sources of funding for specific types of projects. For TOG what kind of projects are fundable is of critical importance. For example the social responsibility projects targeting the children and the ones encouraging women and youth entrepreneurship are the ones which are likely to be funded by private sector. In addition to this, local government institutions are more likely to cooperate with NGOs in these types of initiatives. I remember an instance when a public relations company called TOG office demanding the following social responsibility project:

We are working for a huge technology company. Now I cannot tell its name. But they want to start a project for employment capacities of women. Do you have a project of this kind? We need to find a project like this, please send us the alternatives...<sup>139</sup>

At that time, the Microcredit Project was about to come to an end due to its malfunctioning and bad experiences in the field. However, TOG tried to find an alternative project to be funded by this firm; we sent several project proposals which were waiting in the database to be funded. None of them have been found applicable in the end. However, this exemplifies well how the relationships are established with the sources of funding. To raise funds for its projects TOG need to enhance its discourse about the youth in Turkey. This brings not only the reproduction of the stereotypical discourses that portray youth as a group of people who are full of energy and will construct the future of the country, but also the problematization of youth as a target to take action upon. Youth is full of energy, but this energy needs to be guided by adults. If not, it will be risky for the future of the society.

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<sup>139</sup> This was a telephone call that I have received in October 2008 due to my engagement in “Microcredit Project” which was appealing for his public relations company to satisfy the demands of its client.

Apart from this, it is critical for the private companies to see the impact of the projects in numerical terms. This also brings an eagerness to develop some projects which can be quantified. As a result TOG, like most of other voluntary organizations refrain from advocacy projects and campaigns due to lack of tangible results. Although the terms of “public awareness” and “influencing policies” are coined very frequently, these terms do not have any equivalents in a numerical world. Hence, the principles of transparency and accountability exclude some types of practices if it is not possible to calculate and quantify the solutions.

On the other side of the same coin, the budget is managed and the informative reports are released by TOG. Although the reports are prepared according to the demands of the funding party, it still holds the power with a claim of expertise in the field. There is a particular know-how about the recruitment of the volunteers, implementation of the projects and measurement of the impact. Since the private firms on the other hand do not possess such knowledge, they have to rely on the data that is released by TOG. Furthermore, when a project is funded by a company, the same company has to pay an over-head to TOG to compensate other expenses, such as stationary. This amount of money can be spent for purposes other than the main project. This free resource is usually used for the initiatives which are seemingly impossible to be funded according to the rationality of private firms. For instance, TOG has developed some special training against homophobia as a result of some professional workers’ efforts. One of my colleagues told me once “You know the system very well. We know it, but we learnt how to manipulate it. We thought this training essential, some volunteers and some office workers came together and we

convinced the management. We did the training with a small amount of money.”<sup>140</sup>

This strategic manipulation of professional workers and volunteers is not an exception but the rule. The system’s rigidity is ostensible, and every single opportunity of manipulation is utilized by both professionals and volunteers. Here it is important to note that, although the task of reporting to the funding institutions renders the process open to intervention, sometimes TOG’s claim of expertise in the field enables it to reshape the schemes and set the standards for a ‘good’ and ‘useful’ project. When we come to the second layer of funding-reporting cycle, this expertise strengthens the hand of the professional workers more and they are the ones who usually set the agenda.

The principle of “transparency and accountability” has another dimension which is basically about the relationship between the foundation and the volunteers during the implementation of the projects. Since the donations are accumulated in the center, it has to be delivered to volunteers in order to be spent for the projects. The release of money is not carried out on a regular basis, although each project has its own certain budget. In each youth community there is one person who is responsible for fund-raising. In bigger organizations which are implementing numerous projects, have more than one person for fund-raising who are entitled to deal with one of the projects. The money is supposed to be delivered to other volunteers from them. These volunteers are also responsible to send the reports to the office in order to declare how much money spent for the projects together with the relevant invoices. This constant circulation of money creates an important control mechanism which operates through a chain of reporting. Volunteers report to fund-

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<sup>140</sup> “*Sen sistemi çok iyi biliyorsun, biz de biliyoruz, fakat artık nasıl manipule edeceğimizi öğrendik. Bu eğitimlerin gerekli olduğunu düşündük, birkaç gönüllü ve ofis çalışanı bir araya geldik ve yönetimi ikna ettik. Küçük bir para ile bunları yapabildik.*” İstanbul, December 2008.

raising volunteers, they report to office workers and office workers have to report to management and management reports to board of directors ultimately. This long chain of control fails to function in a supposed 'efficiency' most of the time. But on the other hand, this long chain of reporting facilitates not only the surveillance and regulation of the volunteers but also of the professional workers. The resources have to be spent according to certain norms of efficiency and to certain predetermined ends.

Although the flow of money is controlled by the management, it is always open to all kinds of manipulation. The selective release of information about the projects and cases of misuse of money are seen although not very frequently. But the late reports and absent invoices create tensions in each level of control. The merits of transparency and accountability are always mentioned in the meetings both by the office workers and the board of directors. They speak proudly about the transparent structure of the whole organization. On the other hand, the complicated structure of the organization not only leads to several conflicts about the missing reports from the below, it also opens a space for volunteers to question the amount of money spent in different projects. Some of the volunteers can complain about the small amount of money received for the project that he/she is involved in while another project receives more. Or the general expenses of the foundation can lead to fierce discussions in the youth councils. However, at this point the expertise of the office workers and the management dominates these discussions. In the last instance, they decide which way is the most proper and efficient way of spending the resources. After all the discussions, the standards are set by the management and professional workers. In other words it is not forced from above, but internalized by the

volunteers with reference to the know-how that supposedly belongs to the professionals.

All in all, ‘transparency and accountability’ is an important principle which is used as a governmental strategy as one of the building blocks of both youth communities and TOG as an institution. With its claim of a certain type of morality, it draws a moral framework for being a good active citizen. While rendering each single operation into tangible terms, it presents an image of a world which is measurable, countable and reportable. Consequently the relationships between the public and private sector, civil society organizations and the volunteers are reshaped. In addition, this tangibility enables one party to intervene the other’s operations. On the other hand, for the TOG case, the claim of expertise about implementation of social responsibility projects, measurement of its effects and general standards make professional workers and the management set the agenda. However, the excluding effects of “transparency and accountability” make some types of practices even unthinkable.

To sum up, different principles, norms and values utilized by TOG, make the government through volunteer communities possible. TOG uses these to construct mechanisms of surveillance which shape the conduct of the professional workers and volunteers. In a sense old loyalties have been replaced by these new loyalties to volunteer communities, to the foundation and to the state; and these new loyalties are shaped by these principles, norms and values. TOG plays a significant role as a catalyst between “young active citizens” and the state.

## (Non)Political Participation

Twice a year TOG organizes its youth councils in a different university. The hosting university's youth community is assigned to organize all the events, plus the travels and accommodations of visiting volunteers. Each youth community sends two volunteers to attend the council in order to represent their university organizations. They are supposed to raise the recent issues involving their communities during series of sessions. Not only the volunteers but also all the professional workers and board members participate in these events, more specifically in the sessions which aim to bring 'the board', 'the office' and 'the field' together. Some representatives of other youth organizations and scholars are also invited to contribute to the discussions. It is the biggest event of TOG which is convened under a specific theme of "youth participation" in last three times, starting from October 2008.

When it was decided to convene these youth councils under a particular theme, TOG opened up an online discussion board for the volunteers to come up with different suggestions for the theme, and the suggestions were voted on online again. The number of participants in this suggestion-discussion and voting circle was relatively low – around 100 volunteers voted- regarding 18,000 volunteers in the field. Ironically, "Youth participation" was elected as the first theme to be discussed in two youth councils in October 2008 and March 2009. However, after these two councils, they jointly decided to discuss this one more time in October 2009, to ensure its acquisition by the volunteers.

"Youth participation" as a discursive practice has become an important subject under scrutiny especially in North American, Australian and British social science literature.(Ashcroft, 2008; Marinetto, 2003; Bessant, 2004; Jeffs and Smith,

1998 ) Growing interest of these ‘advanced liberal’ countries in this topic particularly stems from their governments’ parallel policies of encouraging youth participation through voluntary associations. Although these similar policies are operating in different contexts, there is a general acknowledgement that “it has become a policy cliché to say ‘increased youth participation’ will ‘empower’ young people, help build community and remedy a range of social problems.”<sup>141</sup> The empowerment of the youth will be realized by participation as a form of social and political education which is entitled ‘youth work’, and as Jeffs and Smith suggest youth work is proclaimed as a means of developing young people’s critical awareness of the world around them.<sup>142</sup> However, this ‘will to empower’ the youth is fed by portrayal of youth as an anti-social, apathetic and excluded group which has a potentially high criminal rates. This is an alarming situation for the endurance of these advanced liberal countries, because their democratic regimes need participant citizens to ensure the legitimacy of their rule.

Although there is no declaration of a concrete youth policy of Turkish government, there is a general tendency of increase in call for participation in civil initiatives ranging from voluntary activities to taking part in joint decision making processes. All these calls are involved in a general discourse of enhancing the democratic culture; it is widely believed that an established culture of democracy will lead to stability and trust in the society. After the year 2000 youth participation could not be thought detached from this expanding civil society phenomenon. And we have witnessed a growing tendency in ‘youth work’ in Turkey in the last ten

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<sup>141</sup> Judith Bessant, “Mixed Messages: Youth Participation and Democratic Practice”, (Australian Journal of Political Science, Vol.39,No.2, July,2004) p. 387

<sup>142</sup> Tony Jeffs and Mark K. Smith, “The Problem of ‘Youth’ for Youth Work”, (Youth and Policy, 1998), 60

years. Not only the numbers of similar volunteer associations have increased but they also expanded their scope of activities.

As I have mentioned before, the Turkish government does not have a concrete youth policy. Yörük Kurtaran and Gülesin Nemutlu from Youth Studies Unit<sup>143</sup> at Bilgi University claim that Turkey does not have a youth policy, but this absence is its real policy itself.<sup>144</sup> They suggest that, without declaring a well-defined strategy for the youth the government aims to reproduce the old mentalities and old patterns of behaviors and relationships. I partly agree with their statement that “the absence of a concrete policy of Turkish Republic is its policy itself”. As I have mentioned in the first part of this chapter Turkey has very established perceptions about the youth as the savior of the country and the guarantee of the future, which is constantly reconstructed by the media and by the speeches of politicians especially on the Youth and Sports Feast day which is celebrated on May 19 each year. We have seen that there has been a rupture in these representations occurring after ‘80s, when youth has been charged with negative attributes of apathy, selfishness and laziness. However, the recent phenomenon of the “young active citizen” cannot be accepted at face value. I have discussed the new technologies of power around this concept in this thesis. In my opinion, the construction of this new type of participant citizen is not exempt from power relationships and embodies all the contradictory aspects of “the will to empower”.<sup>145</sup> The ‘participation’ they suggest – both TOG and similar voluntary associations- should be examined as a discourse in the Foucauldian sense, “as a ‘discursive fact’ with concrete manifestations in circulations of power

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<sup>143</sup> Youth Studies has been found by TOG and Bilgi University in 2005 to support youth activities and produce academic outputs about youth work and youth policies. They have published the book “Youth Work and Youth Policies in Turkey” in 2008.

<sup>144</sup> Interview with Neşe Düzel, Taraf Newspaper, 20.05.2008

<sup>145</sup> Here I am referring to Barbara Cruikshank’s book once more.

and human action.” As Cooke and Kothari pointed out, participation can encourage the reassertion of power by dominant groups, or aim to correct deviant behavior.<sup>146</sup> In this context the relationship between the youth workers and the targeted groups are of critical importance.

Instead of discussing what “true participation” means, or trying to assess if it is applied in TOG or not, I raise questions, such as: Why participation is verbalized and by whom? How do the discourses of participation diffuse into human action? I think it is possible to examine ‘participation’ as an organizing concept that “presupposes a central unquestionable value”<sup>147</sup>. This examination entails asking the above-mentioned questions in the context in which TOG functions, as well as underlining different implications of the same concept which are specific to TOG. Participation as an “organizing concept” not only diffuses in volunteers’ actions but to redraw the borders of the social and the political spheres.

As Smith suggests, since ‘participation’ has no paramount value in itself, its force is given by the definitions and values attached to it.<sup>148</sup> Furthermore he suggests that “all definitions of participation have one thing in common; they express (or assume) a relationship between those with power to take decisions and those who ought to have a right to influence them”.<sup>149</sup> This claim has important implications for the TOG case. One of the mostly uttered statements in TOG circles are “you are free to do anything in TOG, except politics”<sup>150</sup>. For the banned version of politics, they use the word *siyaset* which is an Arabic word originally but used in Turkish as

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<sup>146</sup> Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari, *Participation: A New Tyranny*, (London: Zed Books, 2001)

<sup>147</sup> James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*, (University of Minnesota Press, 1990), xiii.

<sup>148</sup> Leo Smith, Introduction in *Deprivation, Participation and Community Action* (eds) Leo Smith and David Jones (Routledge, 1981), ix

<sup>149</sup> Leo Smith, “A Model for Development of Public Participation and Community Action (eds) Leo Smith and David Jones (Routledge, 1981), 16.

<sup>150</sup> “TOG’da her şeyi yapmak serbesttir, siyaset hariç”.

synonymous to ‘politics’. In contrast, this statement is followed by another statement “...but you can do politics!”<sup>151</sup> Here the word *politika* is used which is in fact synonymous to the word *siyaset*. It is clear that by using the word *politika* in “doing politics”, it is meant that volunteers should make policy suggestions to influence the ones in power. So TOG makes a superficial differentiation between these two words- which is only possible in Turkish- to encourage volunteers to be active in decision making processes while keeping them away from conventional politics and ideological engagements. As a non-governmental and non-profit organization TOG prefers to avoid from ideological engagements; and its principle of “respect to diversity” aims to cover all the people disregarding their political views. Everyone can join TOG if they do not declare their personal political views.

However, in my opinion, there is nothing that lies out of politics, since power is ubiquitous. One cannot define politics out of the space of daily interaction, without excluding some forms of power relationships. TOG’s statements and the tools it uses are well-informed by neo-liberal political reason, and it reproduces it by introducing a new code of conduct for the youth. As I have mentioned previously, by using technologies of citizenship TOG secures voluntary compliance of its target group. As Judith Butler suggests, saying that TOG depoliticizes the participant youth would be “missing the point that the subject is an accomplishment regulated and produced in advance. And as such is fully political; indeed, perhaps most political at the point in which it is claimed to be prior to politics itself.”<sup>152</sup> With its different programs, projects, schemes and the expert knowledge that it relies on during its operations,

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<sup>151</sup> “Fakat politika yapabilirsiniz!”

<sup>152</sup> Judith Butler, *Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Questions of Postmodernism*, in *Feminists Theorize the Political* (eds) Butler and Scott (London: Routledge, 1992)13.

TOG occupies a prominent place in efforts of making up active citizens. Cruikshank reminds us that:

The citizen is an effect and an instrument of political power rather than simply a participant in politics. The measure of democracy is not the extent to which citizens participate in politics rather than stand back in fear or apathy. That is to mistake power for what it excludes rather than what it produces. The critical question for democratic theory is how citizens are constituted by politics and power. To answer that question, one must recognize the contingency of the political itself.<sup>153</sup>

By encouraging active participation and self-empowerment, TOG turns the volunteers' selves into terrains of political action and it forms a link between one's self-improvement and social progress. Thus, it would be wrong to say that social responsibility has replaced political participation. By labeling its projects as 'social responsibility projects', TOG constitutes the political at the social level, "where the individual's liberty is brought into harmony with social progress."<sup>154</sup> As Cruikshank consistently argues, "once the social became the object of reform, agitation, and science, the political lost its spatial association with sovereign power and the state".<sup>155</sup> We need to look how 'the social' is materialized by liberal arts of government to see that the advent of the 'social' did not displace the political but did refigure the political. Following this argument I claim that, setting up this linkage between the self and the society is has genuine political implications. As Barbara Cruikshank puts forward, "the social is not the space traversed between citizens and the state; it is neither the space of uncoerced association (as in civil society) nor the

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<sup>153</sup> Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects*, (Cornell University Press, 1999), 5-6

<sup>154</sup> Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects*, (Cornell University Press, 1999), 7

<sup>155</sup> Ibid : 7

space of conformity and domination (as in social control). Rather, the social confuses and reconstitutes the boundaries between the personal and the political, the economy and the state, the voluntary and the coercive.”<sup>156</sup>

This activation process, which relies on a particular form of knowledge and norms, is itself political. Prohibition of “doing politics” and expressing ideological views is then a governmental strategy that masks this specific form of rule that penetrates individual conducts. Their space of action and how they participate is informed by this prohibition. It would be misleading to say that this prohibition is coercive per se; rather it is the most attractive feature of TOG for most of the volunteers. The participation has been decoupled from the word ‘political’, so there is no political participation, you should just participate. Which eventually lead to questions of volunteers in the youth council: “Participation, participation... But what we are participating in?”<sup>157</sup> But the professionals were hesitant to put the word ‘political’ in front, which would confuse the volunteers and worsen the situation. The professionals are also aware of the widespread fear among the volunteers about the word ‘the political’. In the third chapter, I will discuss how the volunteers and the professional workers approach to these concepts of “the political” and “the participation”. I will try to elaborate on how this prohibition is appropriated by the volunteers and the professionals in different manners in different situations. It is significant to note that TOG is not a fixed entity; these concepts and their implementation are always open to re-definitions.

Next in this chapter, I will try to present how this youth participation is materialized in the field. After giving one example from its most established network

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid: 6

<sup>157</sup> This was a widely asked question by the ‘participant’ volunteers in the youth council of November, 2008. The gap in the definition of the term participation revealed itself by this simple questions.

projects I will share my observations from a “training of 5 keys trainers” event which I had the chance to attend in November 2008.

Do you have an “idea of your (my) life”?

“Idea of my life” is a network project which is implemented by TOG now in 11 universities with the sponsorship of the second largest mobile communications company, AVEA. The third party involved in this project is a private consultancy firm which contributes to the project by delivering “entrepreneurship trainings” and consultancy services to the young entrepreneurs. The project supports youth entrepreneurship by giving relevant training, funding the selected business ideas which are developed by the participants, and it also provides mentorship to the young entrepreneurs during their business adventures. As it is declared in the project’s website, it aims “to develop a model for sustainable development by combating rising unemployment among young university graduates. The project supports and encourages young people to become entrepreneurs who in the long term will develop not only their own future but make a substantial contribution to social and economic development”.<sup>158</sup>

One of the volunteers in each of these 11 youth communities is appointed as the one who is responsible from “Idea of My Life” project. They are in charge of advertisement of the project at the university (this involves hanging the posters and distributing the hand-outs of the project, plus informing the students who are interested), organization of several ‘entrepreneurship trainings’ which are implemented by professional trainers of the consultancy firm (obtaining the necessary permissions from the university management, arranging appropriate rooms

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<sup>158</sup>[http://en.hayatiminifikri.com/Idea\\_Of\\_My\\_Life\\_Project\\_About/detail.aspx?SectionID=sBBHiUoOnHeqNq4ACYN7UA%3d%3d&ContentId=Y7JoR07vaxCW2ekoEAnvwQ%3d%3d](http://en.hayatiminifikri.com/Idea_Of_My_Life_Project_About/detail.aspx?SectionID=sBBHiUoOnHeqNq4ACYN7UA%3d%3d&ContentId=Y7JoR07vaxCW2ekoEAnvwQ%3d%3d)

for the trainings and making the announcements for the upcoming events), and also facilitating the communication between the project participants and TOG office.

You do not need to be a TOG volunteer to attend this project. It can be thought of as a service brought by TOG youth communities to the university students. There is also one project coordinator at the TOG office that mainly coordinates the responsible volunteers at the universities and who is also in charge of monitoring and reporting the project to TOG management and the sponsor company.

The project starts each year with several visits to the universities, in which the project coordinator, representatives of sponsor company and consultancy firm are present. They introduce the project to the candidates, putting a strong emphasis on the problem of unemployment with reference to lack of necessary opportunities for youth entrepreneurship. These events are followed by a series of training sessions in which the participants are supposed to gain skills of doing market research, developing consistent business ideas and marketing strategies. At the end of the year, the participants prepare their own business plans and successful business plans are awarded credits in cash which is delivered by TOG. The selection is done by the ‘Entrepreneurship Committee’ which consists of high level managers from the sponsor company, chairman and other members of TOG’s board of directors and some other prominent businessmen who are accepted as successful entrepreneurs. Members of the committee are appointed as mentors to awarded entrepreneurs in order to guide them in establishment and management of their own businesses. Two years after the award, the young entrepreneurs start to pay back their credits to TOG which is charged by a small amount of interest rate.

“Idea of My Life” project is accepted as one of the most successful projects which have ensured its sustainability supporting 60 different business ideas in three

years. It provides a huge amount of funding to TOG, and 10-15% of this funding is received as a free resource which can be transferred into administrative expenses or used in implementation of different projects. During my last days in TOG at the end of 2008, the credited entrepreneurs have started to pay their debts although with some difficulty. And at the end of the year 2009, the funding for the project is now at risk, due to change in the sponsor company's management.

Constitution of youth as a group of people with shared problems like risk of unemployment, lack of services which develop their entrepreneurial and managerial skills and with shared characteristics of creativity and flexibility, are the driving force of this project. When the main goals and principles of TOG are considered, it makes sense why this project is implemented by great support of TOG management. "Preparing the youth for the life and for the business life" and "Providing guidance, counseling and mentorship to help them in their personal developments" are two goals of TOG which also define the need for youth "personal development to get ready for the life". Pertinent to discussion about the concept of participation, here we see that another definition of this concept is "participation to labor force". The sense of liminality and 'not yet being an adult' is inherent in the designation of youth as a separate group with shared characteristics and problems. When we put the other efforts to turn the young people into active citizens with the above mentioned definition of participation; we come across a nice blend of these two separate models of participation; participation in decision making processes and in the labor force. Young people are accepted as being out of the labor force, as passive consumers who are waiting to grow up and obtain the right to vote. They will accumulate the necessary skills by volunteering, taking responsibilities but also through ensuring their economic well-being which will eventually lead to social progress. According

to me, what is striking about this blend is not only the new linkage between one's self-improvement and social development in general, but also it presents a complete picture of a decent life. A young active citizen should also be a good entrepreneur in the guidance of their successful mentors. The problem of unemployment is defined as a personal deficiency and self-improvement and professional assistance are recommended as the solutions to this problem. In close association to this, we see that the "consumer model" is used to shape the conducts of the young volunteers. They need to make right decisions to gain the maximum benefit out of the situations they are facing. These individual decisions either help them to survive in this ruthless world, or lead to failures which will result in unemployment and poverty. Volunteering in social responsibility projects would bring them the social capital<sup>159</sup> they need, and if they develop applicable business ideas TOG will also provide them with the necessary financial capital to take part in business life. In the same context, the notion of "competitiveness" is glorified, disregarding the social and economic inequalities that these volunteers are facing. The young people's behaviors are molded into certain accepted modes, disregarding the other possibilities of being in the world.

On the other hand, this project forms another relationship between the young people and TOG, because they become indebted. TOG does not obtain any profits out of this credit management; rather the income is used for the sustainability of the project. However, this new creditor- borrower relationship is not like the regular relationship between a bank and a customer. Since it is not a commercial entity, the volunteers are informed of the fact that when they do not pay their debt back, it will

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<sup>159</sup> Here I refer the concept of "social capital" which is developed by Bourdieu (1985). In his interpretation of 'social capital', it is not merely economic but also accounts for all the social symbols one can access. Rankin (2002) on the other hand defines it as set of dynamic relationships determined by virtue of one's social position.

really harm the project and the foundation in general. Their debts will probably be compensated by donations or the foundation will no longer be able to carry out the project. Because there is no risk of being legally sanctioned. This knowledge puts an extra burden on their shoulders due to the strong emotional connotations of TOG as a foundation. Furthermore there is always the possibility of being disgraced in front of the whole TOG community.

Another important feature of this project is being a strong tool to legitimize neo-liberal policies by obscuring the structural reasons of unemployment. In addition, with a scientific reference to entrepreneurship and management skills it reshapes the conducts of the participant volunteers. By giving this example I tried to show how TOG blends two ways of participation and presents a full picture of a decent life course. It draws the borders of a space where the citizens can be active while charging them with extra responsibilities in the confines of the same terrain.

### Delivering 5 Keys: Drawing the Social

Unlike other thematic trainings like “Reproductive Health” or “Democracy and Our Rights”, 5 Keys Training is the basic introductory training to which all TOG volunteers are expected to attend. Each key has a different color and a different content. The series of trainings start with “the yellow key which can be thought of as an orientation to TOG for the volunteers. The mission and vision of TOG, its projects and organizational structure and 6 main principles are explained. The Yellow Key used to be given by the field coordinators but now volunteer fieldworkers are in charge of delivering this orientation to the other volunteers in their region. The Blue Key, the Red Key and the Green Key trainings consist of more technical knowledge about civil society, project cycle management and teamwork in voluntary

organizations, respectively. The last one is the White Key and in order to achieve it you have to show active participation in one of social responsibility projects. When a volunteer complete all these steps, he/she also becomes entitled to obtain a TOG identity card.

The three technical trainings of Blue, Red and Green keys are usually delivered by the volunteers who complete the special “training of trainers” through which they acquire a comprehensive knowledge about civil society, project management and teamwork. After an announcement of the upcoming training of 5 keys training, the training department collects the applications-the forms filled by the volunteers who are eager to become trainers. The applicants need to convince the professional trainers of the TOG office to be selected as participants to the training. Their level of engagement to TOG and their expressive abilities are the key parameters that are considered. Geographical and gender distribution are also important, because after the trainings they will be assigned to deliver trainings to their own regions. However, personal relationships with the professional trainers and the general impression about the candidates inevitably play a significant role.

The training 5 key trainers that I have attended took place at a hotel in Şile, near Istanbul. We have met at the “office” and hit the road to the hotel for the training which took 5 days. Apart from 18 trainer candidates from different youth communities, there were 6 professional trainers, one more experienced volunteer and me as an observer. The whole training was quite long and it is not possible to go into every detail in the scope of this part. Rather I will raise some of most striking instances that I have witnessed.

First of all, it is important to note that, in all of these trainings special methods of non-formal education are maintained. “Compass” is the main source book not only for the methods but also the department’s general approach to the notion of training.<sup>160</sup> Unlike formal education, non-formal education is ‘voluntary’, ‘learner-oriented’ and ‘participatory’. It is ‘about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship’. Non-formal education is ‘based on experience and action.’<sup>161</sup> Peer-to-peer education is encouraged, not only to overcome the hierarchies in formal education based on age differences but also to empower the trainer him/herself during the training process. It is strongly believed that, one can and should learn from his/her peers both as an instructor and a trainee. Committed to these norms of non-formal education, TOG training department utilizes all its methods and practices which are now acknowledged by the youth workers throughout Europe.

Instead of giving clear-cut definitions and make the trainees memorize them, the session about civil society started with asking questions about the words which used frequently, such as civic, civil, civil society, police and policy. The aim was to provoke participation among the volunteers. While some volunteers were more eager to take part in the discussions, some were more reluctant to talk. These “anti-social” ones were detected very carefully by the trainers. Every night after the trainings, we gathered in our work room to review the day. The detected anti-social volunteers constituted the main topic of discussions: “What should be done to socialize them?” The alienation, non-participation and cynicism were the evils in this context, they need to be defeated. Because they are risky for the atmosphere which the

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<sup>160</sup> Compass is a widely used human rights education hand-book which has been released by Council of Europe with reference to youth Council’s youth policy which has been declared in 1998. This guide book is very popular among youth workers due to its inclusive approach to education and its rich content in terms of methods.

<sup>161</sup> These descriptions have been taken from the official website of “Compass”.

professionals are trying to create, the training should be based on dialogue and none of the volunteers would be able to harm the ‘intimacy’ of the nascent community. To defeat these threats they develop their own strategies. First of all, for the small group discussions, they are divided in a very strategic way to secure a ‘healthy’ discussion. Nothing is left to chance, no arbitrary couplings are possible. Secondly, a strong trust has to be built to ensure the respect. Despite its horizontal and egalitarian structure, a trainer has to be respected and his/her words need to be listened carefully. For example there is an idiom in Turkish, which is widely used among professional trainers: “*Ayağına basmak*” means undermining one’s credibility by falsifying his/her statements. When it is done by another professional trainer, it is worse than a sin. You cannot even add some points; this would also imply that she/he has lacking some insights about the topic. The participants should have a discussion but not the trainers. The professional trainers have to be very consistent and should deliver a monolithic discourse in front of the participants. This is very important to ensure the necessary trust and respect. In contrast to the whole egalitarian methods they use, the power differential between the trainers and the participants lie here. The power is exercised in a very indirect but effective way.

Here I do not want to analyze the “content” of the trainings. Rather, I want to show “how” these trainings are realized and in which ways the volunteers are called to participate. But one of the sessions was very striking in terms of showing the way of participation which is proposed by the professional trainers. As I have mentioned before, the sessions on civil society began by asking questions, and in the end it also left the participant with unanswered questions. They couldn’t receive any concrete responses to their questions. But in fact the main argument about “civil society” and “active participation” was lying in the middle. One of the trainers told a story called

the “bean theory”. Its name was given spontaneously and inspired by the figure that’s drawn on the blackboard, which symbolizes a group of people, or society. The trainer first put some Xs inside the bean, symbolizing the ‘individuals’. Then he separated some of these Xs from the society as the ruler group or government. Then he continued:

You see, here are the lonely individuals who have many problems. Here are the decision-makers; they enact the laws that regulate these individuals’ daily affairs. These people do not know each other but probably they have some common problems. If they come together and raise their voice against the rulers they can change the legislation, they can influence the government. This is what we call civil society.

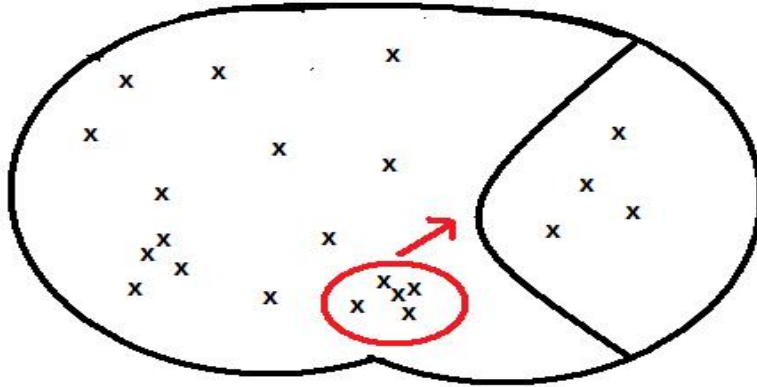
“Isn’t this doing politics?” asked one of the participants. “No, we are not doing politics here; we can just influence the politics.”<sup>162</sup>

First, the portrayal of the society as separate individuals who are strangers to each other on the one side and the rulers on the other side was quite interesting. It is a simple but strong representation of the society, which could be perceived and maintained very easily.

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<sup>162</sup> Here once more, I need to note down the specific Turkish words they prefer to use. “*Görüyorsunuz, burada bir sürü sorunu olan bireyler var. Burda da karar alıcılar, onlar yasaları koyuyorlar ve bireylerin günlük yaşamları buna göre belirleniyor. Bu insanlar birbirlerini tanımıyorlar ama ortak sorunları var. Eğer bir araya gelirler ve yönetenlere karşı seslerini yükseltirlerse yasaları değiştirebilirler, hükümeti etkileyebilirler. İşte buna sivil toplum diyoruz.*” “*Peki bu siyaset yapmak değil mi?*” “*Hayır, biz burada siyaset yapmıyoruz, politikaları etkiliyoruz.*”

Figure 1 The Bean Theory



However, many different presumptions about “a society” have been embedded in this simplicity. There are some people who hold the power, and as a citizen one can only ‘influence’ their decisions. A good citizen should be active and collaborate with the others. If she/he keeps away from these organizations, nobody would defend his/her rights. It shows the “decent” way of participation while describing the illegitimate.

No one would like to be the “x” on the top. In addition to this, the curve in the middle breaks the society into two hypothetical separate domains, the social and the political spheres. All the political affairs should be carried on within the borders of the small circle on the right. The citizens are belonging to the rest -the social sphere- in which they can solve their problems by coming together. If there is no need to change the legislation, they can also solve the ‘social problems’ on their own.

Furthermore, by this simple definition it can be thought of as a ‘dividing practice’ in the social sphere. The ones who actively influence decision making processes, behave in accordance to certain moral codes can be thought as affiliated individuals,

while who remain the out of the circle are depicted as ‘marginals’. The marginals should be also activated by the help of these affiliated individuals in order to learn how to act upon themselves for their own interests.

In these trainings, the bodily practices are used both symbolically and strategically. For the trainers, it is vital to convey the sense of “equality” between all the participants including the professional trainers themselves. For example, if the participants are sitting on the ground while listening to the trainers, then the trainers do not stand up; they prefer to stand on their knees, to show them they are on the same level. They have to be friendly but distant at the same time, to secure the necessary respect and attention. More interestingly the participants are also expected to use their ‘bodies’ in a very symbolical way, during the energizing activities between the long sessions. They are made to play some games, in which they have to prove their solidarity. For instance in one of these games, they have been divided into teams to play football. But members of the same teams were tied to each other from their waists; so not to make anyone fall they had to follow their teammates very carefully. It was an extraordinary scene in fact. Being tied to someone from your waist has connotations like belonging to a group and trusting the others so strongly that you leave your destiny in their hands.

The Training of 5 Keys Trainers started in a very sincere atmosphere and notions of friendship, altruism, trust and solidarity have been emphasized by different games, jokes and stories. Only some of the trainees knew each other from some joint organizations or from other trainings. But at the end of 5 days, they all became very close to each other by their shared enthusiasm for training. The last day was especially emotional. Some sentimental songs were played and some poems from Oruç Aruoba were read under the themes of “going”, “roads”, “hitting the

road”. And at the end of the last session, almost all the volunteers burst into tears. This intimate atmosphere was organized by the youth workers in a quite sophisticated manner. First and the most important thing was building the right atmosphere for the volunteers to feel comfortable and emotionally attached. It shouldn’t be forgotten that, these volunteers – now trainers- will be assigned for the delivery of several trainings in different cities in the upcoming months. They will have to travel for long hours from one city to the other, and they will need to cooperate during these trainings. Now they are a part of a distinct community of trainers, they should be attached to each other with shared objectives and more importantly with strong emotional bonds.

In conclusion, participation is a strong ordering concept of neo-liberal political reason and it is utilized by TOG in quite an interesting way. On the one hand by calling its volunteers to participate in its social responsibility projects it defines how a “good active citizen” should behave. On the other hand, by its emphasis on entrepreneurship and competitiveness in the free market, it stresses on the vitality of earning one’s own life to be complete adults. The blending of these two types of participation in fact, presents a complete picture of a decent life. Furthermore the stress on the political and the social as separate domains do not necessarily ‘depoliticize’ the participation of the volunteers. Instead, by defining all these activities in the social domain, it masks how the political is reestablished in the social domain and in which ways the volunteers are constituted as ‘young active citizens’.

### Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I first discussed the changing perceptions about ‘the youth’ in Turkey, to put an emphasis on the context in which TOG constructs its discourse. The public discourse has been dominated by disappointment about the young people, who are widely associated with apathy, laziness and selfishness. As Demet Lüküslü suggests, this disappointment and accusatory approach in fact arose from the “youth myth” which was constructed in the early days of Turkish Republic.

In such a context, I claimed that, TOG, like other similar voluntary youth associations, proposes a different attitude towards the youth which is based on trust in young people’s individual capacities. The stress on self-improvement and the linkage between one’s own progress and the social progress in general, bring the double movement of responsabilization and autonomization. Relying on neo-liberal political reason, TOG uses several strategies and mechanisms which make the government of volunteers at a distance possible. It not only claims an intermediary role between the nation-state and the ‘young active citizens’, but also defines how to be a ‘good citizen’, by its several projects and trainings. As a result, I would argue that it proposes a new myth of ‘young active citizen’ in the confines of neo-liberal democracy.

In the fourth chapter, I will try to show how the volunteers and professional workers of TOG position themselves in this web of relationships and the dominant discourse of participation. Different local implications of the same discourse will be elaborated in order to present a more comprehensive discussion.

## CHAPTER 4 MATERIALIZATION OF TOG'S DISCOURSE IN THE FIELD

In the first chapter, I have tried to provide a theoretical discussion regarding the demise of the welfare state and rise of neo-liberal political agenda. After contextualizing the developments in Turkey in this new world order, I have also presented the latest discussions about civil society sector putting a bit more emphasis on expansion of voluntary associations. The second chapter was mainly dedicated to one of the most prominent voluntary associations in Turkey, The Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG). In 2002, TOG was established with a mission of 'youth empowerment' and by the year 2009 it operates with more than 18.000 volunteers and around 80 different youth communities throughout Turkey. I have tried to analyze TOG's institutional discourse relying on its mission statement, one of its projects and one of its basic trainings. TOG opens a very interesting new subject position which I have labeled as 'young active citizen' which is supposed to be occupied by young volunteers who are actively engaged in social responsibility projects and self-improvement trainings. Until now, I haven't given any clue about how the discourse of TOG is materialized in the field and how these subject positions are occupied by the volunteers. Moreover, it is important to see how the principles and ideas about 'community' and 'participation' are appropriated by the young

volunteers themselves. In this chapter, my aim is to elaborate on these issues departing from my observations in the field, the interviews I have conducted and the e-mails which have been sent by the volunteers themselves. In the last part, I will also try to touch on the professional workers at the ‘office’, who are also a part of this huge ‘empowerment’ project.

### Different Implications, Different Aspirations

“The heart in the logo of Community Volunteers is nothing other than our hearts that’s addressing our conscience.”<sup>163</sup>Mustafa (20)

During my 6 months of work experience in TOG, I had the chance to visit seven different cities and to meet hundreds of volunteers from different universities. Especially my visits to Kütahya, Edirne and Malatya were very influential in shaping my thoughts about TOG due to the long hours I spent with volunteers, talking, cooking, playing games and working. We have talked about several issues including the main reasons behind their volunteerism, what they think about TOG and its operations and how do they see their positions in relation to civil society activities in Turkey; and also about some personal matters like their goals after they graduate from university, their families’ attitude towards TOG and their volunteerism and the friendships they have built in TOG circles. It was striking to see that although there were several things which bind them in their expressions, there were a genuine diversity in their approaches to TOG and their positions as volunteers. While some

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<sup>163</sup> “Toplum Gönüllüleri’nin logosundaki kalp aslında bizlerin vicdanına seslenen bizlerin kalbinden başka bir şey değildir”Mustafa (20), Malatya, İnönü University

elements of TOG's discourse have been embraced by the volunteers to a great extent, some of them were taken with a kind of suspicion and even with cynicism to a certain degree. In this part, departing from my observations in the field and conversations with the volunteers, I want to attract attention to different local implications of TOG's dominant discourse. It is significant to note that the volunteers are not just passive receivers; instead they are the active agents in the articulation of the same discourse.

To begin with the main reasons of TOG's attraction to volunteers, I think it would be proper to mention the simplest thing TOG uses to define itself: its emblem with a red heart in the middle. A 'red heart' would represent various things like 'love', 'life', 'devotion', 'commitment'. It stands for innocence and truthfulness. It cannot be used to do something 'bad'; a 'red heart' is inherently a 'good thing'. Moreover, it is a sign of individual compassion and conscience. One of the ex-volunteers- who is now a professional worker at the 'office' - told me that:

When I first saw this emblem of TOG with a 'heart', I really liked it. It was on my notebook, on our t-shirts and on the stickers we pasted everywhere... I was proud of carrying this emblem, I still like it, it symbolizes that we are working for the good of the society...<sup>164</sup>

The notion of 'being good' is the most attractive part of TOG' discourse for some of the volunteers. The world is full of atrocities and inequalities and in this 'ruthless world' TOG is the place where one can work for the good of the society and can find the warmth and altruism that everyone needs. One can help the children on the street,

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<sup>164</sup> "TOG'un amblemini ilk gördüğümde çok hoşuma gitmişti. Defterimin üzerinde, t-shirtlerimizin üzerinde, her yere yapıştırdığımız çıkartmalarda... Bu amblemi taşımaktan gurur duyuyordum, hala da çok seviyorum, toplumun iyiliği için bir şeyler yaptığımızı simgeliyor..."

visit the elderly on special days and start a campaign to collect books for a school in a far village.

It is important to remind that TOG operates on two levels, although its ultimate mission is ‘the empowerment of the youth’, it claims to have a multiplier effect on the society. The empowered youth would be active in their own localities offering solutions to social problems with their own projects. First they need to be trained to gain enough social awareness to detect the social problems around them and the proper methods to strengthen ‘the others’.

It was interesting to see that, in contrast to the stress on volunteers’ self-improvement and their active citizenship, these notions are rarely adopted by the volunteers who are from lower classes. “Being good” and helping the others instead of self-improvement were more important to them. Furthermore their degree of identification with TOG is very high. Unlike their peers in İstanbul, Ankara or İzmir, volunteers from the universities which are located in smaller cities like Kütahya, Malatya, Urfa and Sivas show a greater emotional commitment to TOG. The absence of alternative leisure activities, low number of social and cultural events and oppressive environment of the cities make TOG communities more attractive especially for the volunteers who are far from their families. They find solidarity, warmth and friendship in their volunteer communities. They wear TOG t-shirts wherever they go, they hang TOG’s organization scheme on their walls, and they sign their e-mails as ‘community volunteer’. The special language that is created and circulated in TOG circles plays also an important role in this identification. All in all, being a member of TOG member becomes a part of their identity, “TOG’s heart becomes their heart”.

However it doesn't mean that these communities are working in a very horizontal manner. For example, although the training for trainers was open to all the volunteers, there are some specific requirements for becoming a trainer. Not only between different communities, but also in the same community these different titles create tensions from time to time. There emerges a distinction between the 'trainer volunteers' and 'project volunteers' which has been disclosed very clearly during one focus group discussion in Edirne.

There is a hierarchy between the trainers and 'project volunteers'. Everyone who joins TOG first engages in social responsibility projects and tries to do 'good' for the people around. But only some of the volunteers can become trainers, and trainers have claim of superiority over the other volunteers. They travel more, they meet more people and they are closer to 'the office'. The volunteers who are working for the projects make TOG what it is claimed to be, they show the real effort in the field, but the trainers are respected more.<sup>165</sup>

The focus group was convened for a research in TOG to measure 'TOG's impact on volunteers'. I was present in the group as an observer, and noted down their comments. Ahmet (20) was a trainer himself, and he was one of the most experienced volunteers of Tog Trakya, which is active in Trakya University in Edirne. His critical attitude towards his position and the emergent hierarchy in the communities was very interesting. First of all, he attracted attention to the biased relationships between the volunteers in the same community. The time you have spent in TOG matters and put you in a superior position implying an accumulation of

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<sup>165</sup> "Eğitmenlerle proje gönüllüleri arasında bir hiyerarşi var. TOG'a katılan herkes ilk önce sosyal sorumluluk projelerinde yer alıyor ve çevresi için iyi bir şeyler yapmaya çalışıyor. Fakat sadece bazı gönüllüler eğitmen olabiliyorlar, ve eğitmenler diğer gönüllülere göre kendilerini üstün görüyorlar. Daha çok seyahat ediyorlar, daha çok insanla tanışıyorlar ve ofise daha yakınlar. Gönüllülerin çalıştığı projeler esas TOG'u TOG yapan, sahada esas çabayı onlar gösteriyorlar ama eğitmenler daha çok saygı görüyor." Ahmet (20), Trakya University. November 2008.

experience in the field. But ‘becoming a trainer’ is something that can be done only by some volunteers who put themselves in closer contact with ‘the office’. ‘The office’ is the center, where professional workers make decisions and release money for the projects. Being close to ‘the office’ means being close to the power since ‘the office’ is the source of expertise and money. Only ‘some’ of the volunteers can become trainers, because first of they have to be mobile enough to go from one city to another which entails permission and economic support of families. Although their expenses during travels are compensated by TOG, this amount is limited and does not cover all the costs. On the other hand, some volunteers are rather more reluctant to apply because of their busy schedules at school and sometimes they simply do not feel competent enough. As a result more competitive volunteers usually become trainers. In this way, I suggest that TOG not only contributes to production of new subject positions and new power relationships by delivering several titles to the volunteers, it also reproduces the existent power relationships on a different platform.

Secondly, social responsibility projects are attributed as the main activities that ‘make TOG what it is claimed to be’. TOG is the place to ‘do good’, to work for the good of the society, not for one’s own personal benefits. I can easily say that it is the dominant approach to TOG in the field. Accordingly, the volunteers mostly come up with this type of ‘doing good’ projects which are not that much appreciated by ‘the office’. I will come to this issue later, but now I want to exemplify how this notion of being good is adopted by the volunteers who are from different cities.

Kütahya was one of my main destinations during my job as the ‘Microcredit Project Coordinator’. The students of Dumlupınar University have gathered under the youth community of ‘Kütahya TOG’ which was neither a student club nor an association in itself. It is just a group of students who were meeting regularly in one

of the houses of the students, in a café or in the Youth Center of the city.<sup>166</sup> In 2008, they were implementing a couple of different projects but the ‘microcredit project’ was the most remarkable project of their community. KütahyaTOG has been relatively successful in the implementation; they have been able to deliver microcredit to thirty-eight women in the city who were engaged in different businesses. The volunteers from Kütahya were praised by the TOG management in every instance, particularly when they were trying to show signs of success. Because the project was originally started by the volunteers in Samsun, and seventy-one women received microcredit from the volunteers. The volunteers were supposed to visit the borrowers regularly and collect the money back in small pieces. However, after some time, the volunteers who couldn’t receive the money back have been discouraged and left the project or TOG completely. The two project coordinators who were based in Samsun were fired due to the failure of the project; and this incident has lead to fierce discussions both in the field and in the office. If we come back to Kütahya case, they have been accepted as successful, because they have selected their target group from middle class women who were either housewives or already having their businesses. They have applied for microcredit either to enlarge their already running businesses or just to create an extra source for their leisure activities, mostly craftworks. Consequently, they were able to pay their debts in a timely manner; at least they were easily following their payment calendar.

On the other hand, the volunteers who were actively engaged in microcredit project in Kütahya have positioned themselves in a rather different manner. One of the very active volunteers was Semih (19) who was from Trabzon and in his second

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<sup>166</sup> There are several ‘youth centers’ in Turkey which have been established by General Directorate of Youth and Sports. They are criticized for their idleness and passivity. They are not utilized by the young people very commonly. But since they provide a convenient space to organize crowded meetings, they are used by TOG communities for meetings, trainings, etc.

year in Kütahya as a student in Dumlupınar University. He was telling me about the project:

*Ablacığım*, you have to see them, I feel really good about this project because we are helping poor women. You have to see how they show great effort to be successful. They have their own small businesses and they do better with the money we give them. At least they can cover the daily needs of their children.<sup>167</sup>

When we had enough time to talk more about their personal lives, I learned that Semih was working as a construction worker in the summer time to earn his pocket money. His family was sending 200 liras per month which is supposed to cover his rent, food and the other expenses related to the school. He was responsible for collecting hundreds of liras twice a month, and sending it to the foundation. It was striking to see that his economic condition in fact was much worse than women he was trying to help. Sometime later, the borrowers started to show some reluctance to pay their debts; they were either postponing their payments or not responding to the phone calls. Semih was trying to explain the situation to me;

We call them but they do not answer. I know, they do not have any money to pay back now. Please, let's wait a little bit. I promise we will follow them.<sup>168</sup>

The sense of guilt in his voice was very irritating for me. Semih, like many other volunteers, was feeling responsible for the project, to me and the foundation in general. Instead of helping the poor women, he was put in a situation in which he had

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<sup>167</sup> “Ablacığım, onları görmelisin, bu projede olduğum için kendimi çok iyi hissediyorum, çünkü fakir kadınlara yardım ediyoruz. Başarılı olmak için nasıl uğraşıyorlar, görmelisin. Kendi küçük işleri var zaten, ve bizim verdiğimiz parayla işlerini büyütüyorlar. En azından çocuklarının falan günlük ihtiyaçlarını karşılayabiliyorlar.” Semih (19), July 2008, Kutahya.

<sup>168</sup> “Biz arıyoruz ama cevap vermiyorlar, ama biliyorum, bu ara geri ödeme yapacak paraları yok. Lütfen biraz daha bekleyelim, söz veriyorum biz takip edeceğiz.” Semih (19), September 2008, Kutahya.

to monitor and follow the indebted women; and now he was trying to explain the difficulties that the women were facing.

TOG opens new subject positions for the young which has an inherent claim of superiority in it. As the enlightened university students, they are urged to help ‘the others’ who are portrayed as poor, uneducated, needy, etc. This ‘super hero’ positions are filled very easily by the volunteers, they feel good when they are not depicted as the people in need but rather the ultimate problem solvers in the society. This scenario works in two different ways. Either the position is filled by middle class university students who refresh their beliefs about their superior positions and have a sense of relief brought by the idea of ‘doing good’ accomplishing their duty, or some volunteers are put in a position to deal with some people who do not avoid cheating and humiliating them. When I visited the place where the women were doing handcrafts together, it was really very annoying to see the women were ignoring the volunteers. In the next part, I will elaborate on this ‘super hero’ position and how the concept of ‘duty’ is recalled by the volunteers.

If we come to the story of Semih, he has applied for the scholarship which is given by TOG *to the volunteers who deserve them*.<sup>169</sup> However, since he couldn’t show up in the interview, he wasn’t qualified to receive the monthly payments. After some time I learnt that he only knew the interview date one day before the interview and he couldn’t come to Istanbul for it. Later, he left TOG completely due to his disappointment of the ‘Hrant Dink Scholarship Fund’.

Apart from the attraction of ‘doing good’, monthly scholarship which is provided by TOG is the other important parameter for the volunteers. If you deserve

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<sup>169</sup> It is clearly declared in TOG’s official website that, it delivers scholarships to its volunteers who *deserve* this scholarship.

this scholarship, you receive it until your graduation. How one can deserve this scholarship is another interesting point that should be raised. One has to be successful at school and should rather prove that she/he needs financial support. But more importantly, in order to deserve the scholarship, one has to be an active volunteer. The applicant has to prove his/her activity by presenting a list of his/her civil engagements; if she/he starts receiving the scholarship, she/he has to go on sending reports about weekly activities to the scholarship coordinator. These documents are filed very carefully, and monitored by the funding institutions.<sup>170</sup>

However receiving scholarships from TOG is not welcome by some of the volunteers. It is found unethical to receive money in turn of ‘voluntary’ service; they are not doing what they do to earn money. The volunteers who receive scholarships from TOG are put in a difficult position; they mostly hide their scholarship holder position from their friends. When there is a controversy between the local youth community and TOG management, the situation worsens. For instance, after a series of discussions about alcohol consumption and the Hrant Dink Scholarship Fund, the volunteer community in Malatya, in İnönü University, declared that they were resigning. They sent furious e-mails both to general e-mail groups of volunteers and to the chairman of the board, and gave up their all responsibilities and titles. However, the volunteers who were receiving monthly scholarships from TOG couldn’t do anything and kept their silence. While their friends were leaving TOG one by one, they had to stick to their positions. It would be misleading to claim that all of them were eager to leave but they couldn’t just because of the scholarship. But this doesn’t cancel out the fact that, these scholarships establish a different bond

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<sup>170</sup> One can deliver scholarships through TOG individually or in the name of someone. Some big firms also prefer to release scholarships using TOG as an intermediary institution.

between TOG and the volunteers. It has a binding power, and it is difficult for the volunteers to reject the scholarship and do whatever they want to do.

The third incentive to enter TOG, which is commonly vocalized by the volunteers, is related with gaining ‘social capital’. They do not directly say it in this way, but they mention that “it is a good thing to write on my CV”.

It has become a well-known fact that private companies started to ask more from the job applicants; the quality of education, previous job experiences and language skills are not enough now for being employed by a big corporate firm. One has to prove his/her sociability by presenting his/her engagements other than the school. If you do sports or have other interests like music, cinema or literature and if you take part in these types of communities, this will symbolize your social skills, your ability to work as a team or a leader. If you do not have special skills or interest in these types of activities, social responsibility projects are the best alternative to reveal your social skills. It entails all kinds of corporately approved feature of an ideal candidate; being eager to work with a team, taking responsibility, good communicational and managerial skills and leadership. TOG offers a variety of positions to its volunteers; it is not horizontal but rather vertical. As I have mentioned before, you can start as a project volunteer, then you can become a trainer, you can take part in organization of national events, you can become the coordinator of your own local community and in the end you can even become a board member. Only the most committed volunteers can become a board member, because you have to be elected by the youth council. If you travel a lot, attend every single event and become well-known in the field, it becomes easier to collect the votes from the volunteers. So your title in a sense signals the degree of your commitment and how close you are to the ideal volunteer-ideal active citizen.

Some volunteers openly tell that they have become volunteers because TOG is a reputable institution and being a volunteer in TOG paves the way for a good career in the future. It also provides opportunities for internship in big corporations. I have witnessed some firms applying to TOG and asking for interns to be employed. TOG plays once more the mediator role between the private sector and the volunteers in the field. Now, it has launched a new program called 'TOGstaj', through which it aims to provide a more structured mediator role. As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, the notion of participation covers the volunteers' participation in the labor force. Obtaining proper jobs will provide them the active citizenship as wage-earning, tax-paying and voting individuals.

Departing from these last two examples of scholarship and job opportunities which are created by TOG, I claim that these petite negotiations are very important elements of TOG's functioning. These daily exchanges between TOG and the volunteers in fact tell more about the nature of civil society activities in a framework of neo-liberal political rationality. These exchanges strengthen the idea of 'reciprocity'. You will be rewarded if you something good. Or just the reverse: If you do not contribute to the good of the society, if you do not try to improve yourself then you won't be able to benefit from what TOG provides. A major problem like 'unemployment' is once again reduced to personal deficiency. Institutional discourse of TOG in fact materialize in these petite negotiations in the field. On the other hand, it has also been very disappointing to see that lots of very committed TOG volunteers couldn't find jobs after graduation. In TOG they were board members with business cards of their own, frequently travelling from one city to another, having dinners with prominent businessmen, but suddenly they have lost their all titles and become ordinary job seekers in the market without much success.

### Silent Crowd Recalls Duty / Reactions from the Field

TOG's main objective is encouraging the youth to be active in social responsibility projects; and it is believed that through these activities they will be empowered while becoming 'young active citizens'. It aims to reach all young people in Turkey disregarding their different identities in terms of gender, ethnicity, class or religion. Furthermore, it is possible to say that its institutional discourse tries to increase the participation of young people who are usually excluded by the dominant discourse of the nation state; Kurdish students, young Alevite people, LGBTT individuals, poor students who are trying to survive in the cities they come to study, women with headscarves and young people from ethnic and religious minorities. For instance, there is a gender quota for the national events, if two volunteers are attending one event; at least one of them has to be woman. A volunteer community can never send two male participants, but two women are always acceptable. On the other hand, TOG has showed some efforts to increase its influence in the East and Southeast Turkey by opening coordination centers in Van, Sivas and Diyarbakır. However, only the one in Diyarbakır could survive due to financial and managerial problems. In contrast to these efforts to reach all the young people in order to create a diverse body of voluntary labor, it is not that successful in this objective.

I will suggest several reasons for TOG's failure in inclusive endeavors drawing on my general knowledge about how it organizes, plus my observations and experiences in the field. First of all, its volunteer communities are generally based in universities. This type of organization automatically excludes huge group of young people who are not able to go to university for several different reasons. It is

important to note that TOG tries to overcome this barrier through its youth centers in which high school students and young people who are not going to any university can be active. However these efforts have too little effect to change the general characteristics of the main active body: middle class, male and Turkish volunteers.

Secondly, we have to reconsider the general image of voluntary organizations in Turkey to understand why some people are more attracted to volunteerism than the others. As I have mentioned before the polarization between two types of civil society organizations have been apparent very recently; if we categorize them roughly they are the ones which define their activities in the confines of Kemalist discourse and the ones with Islamic tendencies.<sup>171</sup> I claim that TOG, with its neoliberal discourse, tries to open up a third space for voluntary activities which is more inclusive. It reiterates constantly that it's at a same distance to all political views, ethnic and religious identities, people from all segments of the society. As it is discussed in the second chapter, it targets the volunteers' relationships with their selves putting more stress on their self-empowerment instead of the effects of implemented projects. However, in contrary to its efforts, since it builds a connection between one's self-improvement and the general development of the society, eventually it recalls all familiar representations of the youth: as the driving force of modernization, enlightening segment of the society and the ultimate saviors of the country. By doing this, it reconstitutes the youth as a political category, aligning well with the constitutive ideology of Turkish Republic. It has no direct

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<sup>171</sup> There are two many comprehensive thesis which were written about these types of voluntary service provision. The first one belongs to Yasemin İpek Can, in which she points out a rise of new 'middle class nationalism' drawing on the fieldwork she has conducted in TEGV. "Volunteers or Governors? Rethinking Civil Society Beyond The Problematic of Democratization: The Case of TEGV", 2006. On the other hand, Ümit Erdoğan makes a detail analysis about Deniz Feneri Association which, he claims, the civil welfare provision organizations and their conceptions of poverty and methods of poverty alleviation create new power relations, subjectivities, and new relations among these subjects, in contemporary Turkey. "Neoliberalism and Civil Welfare Provision in Turkey: The Case of Deniz Feneri Aid and Solidarity Association", 2007.

reference to Atatürk's ideals or any other nationalist discourse. However, since TOG utilizes the dominant youth discourse which has been built in the confines of Kemalist discourse, it stands closer to the Kemalist block. This in turn, shapes its audience. Despite its efforts to differentiate itself from other voluntary organizations it attracts more young people who define themselves as the bearers of Kemalist ideals. The emblem of 'red heart' is another determinant as I have discussed above. It has strong connotations like doing good, feelings of compassion and altruism. A deep claim of superiority is embedded in the endeavors of 'being good' and showing compassion and altruism.<sup>172</sup> Some professional workers who are aware of the connotations of the logo usually complain in this way: "Who can we attract with this heart?" This rather controversial discourse of TOG is appropriated in quite different manners by the volunteers. The established beliefs about volunteerism and CSOs which provide social service to people in need, usually force the volunteers to evaluate TOG's activities in one of the categories. This leads to many controversies in the field which I will exemplify below.

When TOG has declared the formation of scholarship fund in the name of Hrant Dink, the management and professional workers were aware that they will receive mostly negative feedbacks from the field. As it was expected, some reactionary e-mails have been received one after the other. TOG has formed this fund in collaboration with the International Hrant Dink Foundation (UHDV) which has stated that "Community Volunteers cherish the memory and ideals of Hrant Dink" in its official website. Especially this statement has been severely attacked by many volunteers. One of the most interesting e-mails has been sent by a volunteer from Kütahya in which he was explaining why he left TOG. After mentioning his

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<sup>172</sup> Lauren Berlant, "Introduction: Compassion and Withholding", Lauren Berlant (ed) *Compassion: The Culture and Politics of an Emotion*, (Routledge, New York, 2004)

accomplishments and the positions he held in TOG, he told his complaints one by one, he said the most ‘disturbing’ thing about TOG was Hrant Dink Scholarship

Fund:

“The biggest reason behind my withdrawal is “the hrant dink scholarship fund” which was established a while ago. When it is considered in respect to diversity framework it is seen as quite normal. Because it is a foundation, which has the “societal peace” vision. In the beginning I also thought in this way. But, now when you do research about dink, we come across the sentence “Community Volunteers cherish the memory and ideals of Hrant Dink” on television, in a magazine, in a newspaper or on the internet. I am not a person who joined this community to cherish the ideals of hrant dink. I had joined to contribute to myself, to my environment, to my country. In the end hrant dink is a person who was sentenced to 6 months of imprisonment due to his words “The pure blood, which will replace the poisonous blood drained by the Turk, exists in the noble vein which will be constructed by the Armenian with Armenia.”

When the issue is “Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s” pictures it is said that “some people may be disturbed” by our office worker. “We wouldn’t distribute the pictures”, they say. In our foundation, a fund can be established in the name of a person who has been sentenced to imprisonment due to insulting Turkishness, his pictures can be hung everywhere in the office. However for the pictures of our Atatürk, whose ideas are still alive and who has saved our country with his fabulous brilliance and in a way which has no similarity in the world, it is said that “they may lead to disturbance”.

My understanding from respect to diversity is definitely not like this...”<sup>173</sup> Melih (20), Kütahya, Dumlupınar University (The emphasis belongs to the sender)

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<sup>173</sup> “Bırakmamda ki en büyük neden ise bir süre önce kurulmuş olan “ hrant dink burs fonudur”. Normalde bakıldığında farklılıklara saygı bünyesinde gayet normal bir durum olarak görülüyor. Çünkü “toplumsal barış” vizyonuna sahip bir vakıf. Ben de önceleri böyle düşünmüştüm. Fakat artık dink ile alakalı araştırmalar yaptığınızda televizyonda, dergide, gazetede, internette karşınıza “toplum gönüllüsü gençler hrant dinkin anısını ve ideallerini yaşıyor.” cümlesiyle karşılaşıyoruz. Ben bu topluluğa hrant dinkin ideallerini yaşatmak için girmiş birisi değilim. Kendime, çevreme, ülkeme bir şeyler kazandırabilmek için girmiştim. Sonuçta hrant dink “Türk'ten boşalacak o zehirli kanın yerini dolduracak temiz kan, Ermeni'nin Ermenistan'la kuracağı asil damarında mevcuttur.” sözlerinden dolayı 6 ay hapis cezasına çarptırılmış siyasi birisidir.

Konu “Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’ün” resimleri olduğunda “rahatsız olanlar olabilir” deniliyor ofis çalışanımız tarafından, resimleri dağıtmayalım deniyor. Vakfımızda, Türklüğe hakaretten yargılanıp, hapis cezası almış bir kişi adına fon açılıp resimleri ofisin dört bir yanına asılabilir, ama vatanımızı

His words express his disappointment, because he realized that TOG in fact is not the place he thought “in the beginning”. He got annoyed when he came across the statements about community volunteers and Hrant Dink, because he used to be a very committed volunteer, but now TOG has betrayed to him. I haven’t touched any word in terms of spelling. He wrote the name of Hrant Dink with lower case letters insistently, he obviously is good speller though. It can be read as a manifestation of his disrespect. His commitment to Atatürk as a leader and to his ideals is apparent. I think what is more interesting in this text is the comparison he made between Atatürk and Hrant Dink. TOG refrains very consciously from being associated with Kemal Atatürk or any other nationalist discourse. Especially visible forms of associations like hanging his photos, putting some quotes from him on the published materials, referring to his ideals in a written manner cannot be seen anywhere. Hence, it is probably true that distributing his photos has been prevented by some professional workers. And it is also true that many professional workers put “What happened on January 19?” stickers on their laptops and some photos of Hrant Dink are hung in the office rooms. Many volunteers also have complained to me about these stickers, claiming that these symbols are very political (*siyasi*). In a similar manner, Melih asserts that, since Hrant Dink was judged and found guilty by the court, he is a political (*siyasi*) person that cannot be defended by TOG. On the other hand, Atatürk is not accepted as a political (*siyasi*) personality. Obviously these two names symbolize two totally opposite things for him, in spite of the fact that one was a

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dünyada eşi görülmemiş bir şekilde, müthiş dehasıyla kurtarıp fikirleri hala ilk günkü gibi canlılığını koruyan Atatürkümüzün resimleri için “rahatsızlık yaratabilir” deniliyor.

Benim farklılıklara saygı anlayışım kesinlikle bu değil...” Melih (20), Kütahya, Dumlupınar University,

commander and political leader and the other was a journalist who was shot because of his ethnic and religious identity. How it has become possible to compare these two different names as equals on the same ground, is beyond the limits of this thesis. I have given this example, because I think it is useful to understand the structure of the dominant mentality which connects volunteerism for the country and loyalty to Atatürk's ideals.

The discussions about the scholarship fund haven't stopped. Many other volunteers in Kütahya have left after Melih's withdrawal. Some other volunteers have opened a group in facebook to criticize the Hrant Dink Scholarship Fund. So many volunteers have contributed to the argument; even some office workers joined in the discussions in order to convince them. Finally, the board of directors sent an e-mail to all volunteers to underline the principle of 'respect to diversity' and TOG's vision of societal peace and defended the scholarship fund. The discussions mainly turned around the principle of 'respect to diversity'. As Melih has asserted 'this was not what they understood from respect to diversity'. It was too much for him and for many others. "Can the ideas which tend to reject 'diversity' be accepted and tolerated by 'respect to diversity'?" is a highly complex question that will remain to be discussed in this framework. Nobody has been satisfied in the end of the discussions; some people left, some people stayed. But this case was a good example to show how TOG with its inclusive discourse turns around and bites its tail.

Although TOG avoids using visible references to Atatürk, as an institution it never avoids to use it in a pragmatic manner. It positions itself vis-à-vis the other party which TOG intends to work with or will acquire funds. The alleged neutrality and claim of non-ideological status can be easily reshaped according to the situation. For instance, if a municipality shows signs of republican tendencies, then TOG's

activities are explained with too much reference to Atatürk's conception of the youth.

This pragmatism is also embraced by the volunteers. One volunteer from Malatya was telling me how he has become a master in fundraising:

If I see beads in the man's hand, I start the conversation with a 'selamun aleykum'. I tell them we are involved in charity (*hayır işi*) activities. When you talk in this way, they give lots of things. Once I was in kind of small factory. They opened the doors, they told us to take whatever we wanted. I filled two huge begs with stationary, I could hardly carry, if I could carry more I would take more"<sup>174</sup> Ahmet (19), Malatya, İnönü University.

This pragmatism is justified by the same discourse of "doing good". For some of the volunteers it doesn't matter where the sources come from, since they are sure that the sources will be used in a proper manner.

There are several other consequences of the formation of this rather mainstream voluntary body in the field. They become the active agents in the articulation of the same discourse. However due to different appropriations of the volunteers most of the time TOG's discourse is transformed into something totally different. They are articulated in discursive practices especially during the implementation of educational projects. We should note that volunteers usually develop their own social responsibility projects to solve the problems they detect around. Especially local initiatives belong to the volunteers. It is important to note that there emerge several possibilities of action. However these possibilities are mostly utilized by the dominant group in the field, the so-called 'project volunteers'. They do not have very close connections with the office workers and they are also

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<sup>174</sup> "Eğer mesela adamın elinde tesbih falan görürsem, hemen konuşmaya 'selamun aleyküm' diye başlıyorum. Hayır işleriyle uğraştığımızı anlatıyorum. Eğer böyle konuşursan, bir sürü şey veriyorlar, bir seferinde böyle küçük bir imalathane gibi bir yerdeydik, kapıları açtılar, 'ne istiyorsanız' alın dediler, kırtasiye malzemeleriyle iki koca torba doldurdum, ancak taşıyabildim, daha taşıyabilsem daha alacaktım." Ahmet (19), Malatya, İnönü University.

not very visible. They are rather more active in their own localities. This silent crowd plays an important role in reproduction of dualities between capable citizens and the people in need. They joined TOG to ‘do good’ and they carry out their activities until they crash into a wall like ‘Hrant Dink’.

The professional workers of TOG always complain about the monotonous project proposals they receive from the field. The projects that are developed by the volunteers are usually similar to each other: visiting the children in SHÇEK regularly, giving supportive trainings to poor children, or repairing and painting village schools. The professional workers are not that excited by these projects, because they want to encourage them to produce more advocacy related projects which in turn will lead to policy suggestions. The young people are not very enthusiastic about proposing new projects with an objective of empowerment of the youth. It is very abstract, even mythical. For instance there are a lot of volunteers who study in educational faculties of the universities to become teachers. They want to give free lessons to students in need to enhance their capabilities as teachers. Thus, they propose educational projects relying on the generally acknowledged problem of education. These types of projects cannot be rejected due to their inherent stress on a common problem and their suitability to TOG’s aim of youth empowerment. These projects are offered by the volunteers themselves and they want to improve their technical capacities in terms of lecturing. The transformation of TOG’s discourse happens exactly at that point. The space left for volunteer initiatives is exploited by this silent crowd of ‘project volunteers’. Without engaging in other TOG activities- like becoming trainers themselves, declaring their candidacy for board membership or struggle for leadership in the projects proposed by the office- they silently go and implement their projects, then they disappear after graduation.

Contrary to the first level of relationships that are constructed between the volunteers and the office workers and in peer-to-peer training, this second type of relationship between volunteers and their target groups shows different characteristics. Appealing to their own narrations, we can say that their stress on the notion of ‘duty’ is more dominant. The notion of duty arises from neoliberal rationality in which the society is divided into two groups, the capable citizens and the others who are dependent on their help. I have labeled this position a ‘super hero’ of the society. The connection they set between their self improvement and social development is looser. The improved social awareness is a tool to act upon the social problems with their own techniques, not to generate policy suggestions. They occupy the volunteer positions in order to accomplish their duties as sensitive and conscientious citizens. If we refer back to Berlant’s arguments, their approach can be considered as emergence of a new type patriotism which calls citizens to come together and to accomplish their duties for their countries.<sup>175</sup> They don’t approach TOG’s operations as leisure time activities; rather they emphasize the importance of altruism and compassion. While they avoid rights-based advocacy activities, they approach this type of activities in TOG with rather suspicion.

This different yet dominant line of thinking in TOG becomes visible when there is a controversy in management of the sources. For instance, in summer of 2008, TOG decided to organize international periodical summer projects in cooperation with foreign youth organizations in Europe. Department of International Affairs selected three cities to organize these projects. TOG wants to enhance its relationships with European youth organizations and to acquire an international

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<sup>175</sup> Lauren Berlant, “Introduction: Compassion and Withholding”, Lauren Berlant (ed) *Compassion: The Culture and Politics of an Emotion*, (Routledge, New York, 2004)

character in next ten years. These kinds of international organizations are organized to create a platform for cultural dialogue and to strengthen TOG's relationships with the other youth organizations. While the professional workers were selecting the cities, they considered their performance in previous periodical summer projects. Edirne has come forward as a good option because they had already organized two periodical summer projects and implemented them successfully. However, what the professional workers were ignoring was the fact that these two previous periodical summer projects were based on training of Roma children in the city. When the volunteer community in Edirne learnt that they were assigned to organize this international periodical summer project they became furious. I was there one day after they were informed by the office. I met one of the most active volunteers in the organization of periodical summer projects, Burcu (20) who was from the Faculty of Education in Trakya University. She started to complain about the recent decision:

We have been very successful in previous periodical summer projects. Because we know the Roma children, well. We give supportive training for their courses at school. They are really in need of support. But, now we have learnt that we won't be able to implement our project. What is this international periodical summer project? They haven't asked our idea. We don't want to do this in this way. Furthermore we do not have any capacity to realize this, and please look at the money they spend for this project, and we used to organize our projects with less than half of this money.<sup>176</sup> Burcu (20), Edirne, Trakya University.

The decision was made by the office and she was feeling that she has been put in a situation that hindered the accomplishment of her duty. As a teacher candidate, she

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<sup>176</sup> "Daha önceki dönemsel yaz projelerinde çok başarılı olduk. Çünkü Roman çocukları iyi tanıyoruz artık. Onlara okuldaki dersleri için destekleyici eğitimler veriyoruz. Çünkü gerçekten bu desteğe ihtiyaçları var. Şimdi öğreniyoruz ki, projemizi yapamayacağız, nedir yani bu uluslar arası dönemsel yaz projesi? Bizim fikrimizi sormadılar bile, bunu yapmak istemiyoruz, ayrıca bunu yapacak kapasitemiz de yok, ve de şu harcadıkları paraya bak lütfen, biz bu paranın yarısından azıyla kendi projemizi gerçekleştirebilirdik." Burcu (20), Edirne, Trakya University.

feels responsible for the education of Roma children in the region. Moreover, she claims that they acquired important experience during previous projects. I learnt what she meant by ‘lack of capacity’ later on. Very few volunteers could speak English and a possibility of an international event frustrated them. On the other hand, the office workers were defending their decision, arguing that it would be a good opportunity for the volunteers to improve their interpersonal communication skills and in contribution to cultural exchange. In the end, the project was organized by the volunteer community in Edirne but Burcu didn’t take any part in it. In a very short time, she disengaged herself from TOG activities and according to some of her friends, “TOG has lost Burcu”.

It seems that these two levels of different approaches to TOG’s mission will continue to coexist. TOG assumes a multiplier effect in the society. However obviously this effect is usually transformed by the volunteers themselves during the implementation of the projects. The negotiations on the definitions of the terms ‘self-improvement’, ‘social benefit’ and ‘social responsibility’ will go on. We shouldn’t ignore the heterogeneity of approaches. It is difficult to claim that young people are volunteering for completely different reasons and their conceptions are totally different from each other. Rather, there is a struggle between different views and the results are case specific. I think the examples above show that civil society organizations are not fixed entities and the members are not passive receivers. The advantage of approaching neo-liberalism not as an ideology but rather a governmental regime makes it possible to understand the complex strategies and the constitution of different subject positions in civil society organizations. The political possibilities that are opened up by more autonomization are not always lead to more democratization. Even when it is democratic, it entails different relations of power

and produces different hierarchies like in the case of ‘project volunteers’ and ‘trainers’.

### Politics and Politics / Meeting the State

‘Of course they are different. *Siyaset* means managing the state. However politics means thinking to achieve a goal and finding methods to do it. Maybe we can say that all the people engaged in *siyaset* are also politicians. But the reverse is not true. It means all the politicians are not involved in *siyaset*. Because people who engage in *siyaset* produce policies. But politicians do not manage the state.’<sup>177</sup> Mahmut (22)

‘Of course they are different. *Siyaset* means to do something while embracing just one ideology. Politics means to do something for the all ideologies.’<sup>178</sup> Cemile (20)

‘Yes, they are different. *Siyaset* comes from ‘*seyis etmek*’. Politics on the other hand means the way you walk, the stand you choose.’<sup>179</sup> Selin (21)

‘*Siyaset* and politics are very different from each other. I think politics before *siyaset*. Politics is the way you go in the *siyaset* and in some civil society organizations politics is the way you go to reach your goals.’<sup>180</sup> Mustafa (20)

‘*Siyaset* and politics have different meaning in terms of their origins. *Siyaset* means ‘to manage’. On the other hand politics can be described as ‘managing the state, the city’. In this context politics can be seen as a sub-question of the concept of *siyaset*. However nowadays since very few people know the difference, it is thought that both have the same

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<sup>177</sup> “Tabî ki de farklıdır. Bir önceki sorunun cevabında da belirttiğim gibi siyaset dediğimiz olay devleti yönetmektir. Oysa politika ise belli bir amaca ulaşmak için düşünmek ve yöntem bulmaktır. Şöyle diyebiliriz belki de her siyasetçi aynı zaman da bir politikacı olabilir. Fakat bunun tersi doğru değildir. Yani her politikacı bir siyasetçi değildir. Çünkü siyasetçiler politikalar üretirler. Ama politika ile uğraşan kişiler devleti yönetmezler.”Mahmut (22), Malatya, İnönü University

<sup>178</sup> “Tabi ki farklı şeylerdir. Siyaset belirli bir ideolojiyi de içine alarak bir şeyler yapmak, politika her türlü ideoloji için bir şeyler yapmaktır” Cemile(20), İstanbul, Yıldız Technical University

<sup>179</sup> “Evet, farklı şeylerdir. Siyaset seyis etmekten gelmektedir. Politika ise, yürüdüğünüz yol, seçtiğiniz duruşunuzdur.”Selin(21), Ankara, Bilkent University

<sup>180</sup> “Siyaset ve politika bence birbirinden çok farklı şeylerdir. Ben politikayı siyasetten önce düşünüyorum. Politika siyasette gidilecek yoldur veya bazı sivil toplum kurumları politika amaca gidilen yoldur.”Mustafa(20), Malatya, İnönü University

meaning. Even TDK<sup>181</sup> has accepted it in this way.<sup>182</sup>Yasin (20)

I asked the volunteers just this question: “Do you think *siyaset* and politics are different things?” I have received several different answers like the ones above. Despite their different explanations they were sure that, they are totally different concepts. From their expressions, it is understood that they are a little bit confused about what these concepts really mean. They remember the etymological explanations they have heard in the trainings, but in an incomplete fashion. But they have no hesitation about the difference between these concepts.

This novel invention of making two definitions for the same thing belongs to TOG. It can be thought as a tactic to attract more volunteers and also activate them for different goals. It is an outcome of a good observation and analysis of youth behavior in last decades. While ‘Siyaset’ is an antipathetic and troubled word, ‘politics’ is more charming and promising for the young people. As I have mentioned before, the political sphere is approached by suspicion and described as a corrupted place. Furthermore, they are face to face with a discouragement of their families about their involvement in *siyasi* activities. One of the professional workers told me:

It is the breaking point for us, since we say “*siyaset* is forbidden here”, if one has to make an analytical distinction between these two words. Since we want to encourage them to come up with their own projects and own solutions, we don’t want to dictate what they should do in this or that

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<sup>181</sup> TDK is an abbreviation for Turkish Language Institution (Türk Dil Kurumu)

<sup>182</sup> “Siyaset ile politikanın kelime kökeni olarak farklı anlamlara geldiğini biliyorum. Siyaset “idare etmek” anlamına gelmektedir, politika ise “devleti, kenti idare etmek” olarak betimlenebilir, bu bağlamda politika, siyaset kavramının alt konusu olarak görülebilmektedir ancak farklı olgulardır, ancak günümüzde aradaki farkı bilen kişiler çok az olduğundan, iki kavramında aynı anlama geldiği düşünülmektedir, öyle ki TDK bile bunu böyle kabul etmiştir” Yasin (20), Edirne, Trakya University.

situation. We want them to participate, but if we name their actions *siyaset* then our volunteers would flee.<sup>183</sup> Metin (32)

This distinction can be also thought the difference between policy making and providing policy suggestions. As civil society volunteers they are not mobilized to make policies. Rather they would create their own policy suggestions and produce models through their social responsibility projects. If we think in this way, by using this special terminology, TOG in fact, reproduces the distinction between the state and the civil society. The state belongs to the political sphere where the country is managed and important decisions are made. The civil society on the other hand belongs to the social sphere, in which there are some active citizens who work in order to influence the politics. Hence, there emerge two valid categories to act, in one of them decisions are made and in the other the citizens are placed and they are trying to influence them. It provides an image of state which is located ‘above the society’. Ferguson and Gupta have defined it as ‘spatialization of the state’. They have pointed that:

Through specific sets of metaphors and practices, states represent themselves as reified entities with particular spatial properties. By doing so, they help to secure their legitimacy, to naturalize their authority and to represent themselves as superior to, and encompassing of, other institutions and centers of power.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> “Bu bizim kaçış noktamız, çünkü her zaman ‘siyaset burada yasak’ diyoruz, yani eğer bu iki kelime arasında analitik bir ayırım yapmak gerekirse. Çünkü onları kendi projeleri ve çözüm önerileriyle gelmeye teşvik etmeye çalışıyoruz, şu veya bu durumda ne yapmaları gerektiğini dikte etmek istemiyoruz. Katılım göstermelerini istiyoruz fakat yaptıkları şeye siyaset dersek, bizim gönüllülerimiz kaçarlardı.” Metin(32), Professional worker in TOG

<sup>184</sup> James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, “Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality”

They underline the significance of the ideas of ‘verticality’ and ‘encompassment’. The former refers to how the state locates itself above all the other affairs, and the latter means its ability to cover all the other affairs in a fixed territory. I claim that, by using this distinction between *siyaset* and politics, TOG contributes to the efforts of spatialization of the state.

On the other hand, the reproduction of this distinction between the state and the civil society comes together with a new code of conduct, autonomization and responsabilization. An ideal young citizen should know his/her responsibilities and by presenting new policy suggestions he/she should influence the politics. This imaginary distinction provides the necessary conditions for their active participation. They feel comfortable with the relief of accomplishment of one’s duties as ‘young active citizens’ and not contaminated by *siyaset*, because they know in which category they are acting. However, the notion of active participation here is used as an ordering concept as I have mentioned in the second chapter. While expanding the types and area of its activities, TOG tries to cover all sorts of participation which are implemented in the confines of its discourse. It encourages its volunteers to go out on the streets and start their own movements. But these movements are usually highly structured and carefully organized. The topics are chosen very strategically. For instance they organize ‘We are reading books!’<sup>185</sup> campaigns, in which hundreds of volunteers come together, sit on the street and read their books silently. It is done in different cities simultaneously. The objective is to attract attention to the benefits of reading by inviting people to read more. This silent and harmless activity is very much appreciated by the local municipalities and university managements. It is

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<sup>185</sup> With an original name of “Kitap Okuyoruz!”, similar campaigns have been implemented in several cities simultaneously. The pictures volunteers formed have attracted attention of many different parties, one of these pictures in which volunteers are reading books altogether has been used in advertisements of Metis.

depicted as the most appropriate way of showing one's reaction to such an important social problem. 'These sensitive young volunteers' are the guides of ignorant crowds. I found these types of activities rather problematic for at least two reasons. First of all, young people are once more portrayed as the enlightening and modernizing forces of the society, which in turn reproduce the stereotypical features which are attached to youth and have become almost traditional. Secondly, and to my view more importantly, these types of activities on the streets have the claim of being the only truthful way to protest. It not only undermines the other possible ways of participation but also has a delegitimizing effect. These highly organized, well-structured and strategically planned street activities are presented as the best practice. It is underlined that, if young people want to be active on the street, they would rather be active in this way. The volunteers who have attended these campaigns are highly proud of it. I have heard several times from different volunteers that there is no need to shout and scream in the streets, to destroy the public property to attract attention, they have realized the most salient way of street activity. According to them, it is politics not *siyaset*, in any way.

### Working with 'the state'

Civil society organizations that primarily engage in social service provision have been under attack for several reasons. The criticisms depart from the point that, in 'advance liberal' countries, 'the state' has withdrawn from social service provision and massive privatizations have occurred in some basic areas like health and education. Thus by providing these services as well as engaging in poverty reduction and similar activities relying on voluntary labor, CSOs render the absence of the state invisible, and make it difficult to criticize the inequality of access to basic social

services. Furthermore, defining volunteerism as a duty, CSOs are criticized for their contribution to concealment of rights-based discussions. Although these are valid arguments, in my opinion they partly suit the situation in Turkey. It is true that Turkey has undergone serious privatization efforts, especially in the last decade. However, the contribution of CSOs and voluntary labor is still little with respect to the extent and variety of state driven social service provision. The state institutions are very huge not only in health and education but also in the care of elderly and orphans, developmental and poverty reduction activities. Thus, voluntary labor and CSOs in Turkey do not replace these institutions, but rather they work with them. Hence, in the Turkish case, it is important to scrutinize the implications of ‘working together’.

If we come back to the case of TOG, the notion of “working together” can reveal itself in multiple ways in the field. In practice, all the CSOs need necessary permission to enter state institutions and implement their projects. Local municipalities and governorships, Ministry of National Education, SHÇEK<sup>186</sup> are the key institutions for the implementation of the most TOG projects. The state institutions join the projects as ‘partners’ by providing the permission and sometimes the physical supply of rooms and vehicles. Being partners with state institutions and receiving their support are accepted to be very important assets. It brings legitimacy and reputation. The partnerships with state institutions do not only attract more funding but also more voluntary labor.

During my work experience in TOG, one of the most interesting things which has attracted my attention was the daily interaction between several state institutions

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<sup>186</sup> SHÇEK is the abbreviation for Social Services and Child Caring Institution (Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Müdürlüğü).

and volunteers in the field. For the volunteers “the state” is not an abstract phenomenon anymore. Rather it is embodied by an institution that they are working with, borrowing its car, and asking for funding or permission and using its halls. “The state” is embodied, and TOG plays an important role in this process. “The state” is materialized as an entity that citizens can cooperate with and TOG is accepted as a mediator. This also brings the distinction between the state and the citizens. They are imagined to be separate entities which can work together. Here we can refer to Timothy Mitchell’s conception of ‘state effect’, through which he argues that

State-society boundaries are distinctions erected internally, as an aspect of more complex power relations. Their appearance can be historically traced to technical innovations of the modern social order, whereby methods of organization and control internal to the social processes they govern create the effect of a state structure external to those processes.<sup>187</sup>

The idea of partnership with ‘the state’ is based on the idea of state’s externality to the processes. There are some social problems and ‘the state’ is at the same distance to these problems with TOG. Getting permission and signing agreements with state institutions are turned into technical procedures. Here, it is best to call upon volunteers’ views given that different perceptions of ‘the state’ are available in the field. It is very interesting to see how the volunteers position themselves vis-a-vis “the state”. For instance, when I asked Cemile (20) her views about civil society activities in Turkey, she answered:

“[civil society] is important in Turkey, it is important in the World. Waiting for the state, the concept that we have built

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<sup>187</sup> Timothy Mitchell, “The Limits of The State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics”, (The American Political Science Review, Vol. 85, No.1, 1991)

once upon a time, to satisfy all our needs would be foolishness, if the word is correct. Because the state has to deal with numerous things, which one it can detect! So, should we sit and wait for the glorious day to come? Of course not. In whatever subject we think the state is lacking something (or in which subject we have some discomfort), we have to do whatever we can and present it to the state. We should try to influence its policy or its political stand on this matter.”<sup>188</sup>

The portrayal of “the state” as both a concept “that we have built once upon a time” and as an active entity which “has to deal with numerous things” is quite controversial. But at the same time she claims that it would be “foolish” to wait for “the state” to solve all problems. She uses the word ‘glorious day’ in a sarcastic way, to describe the day in which the state will be able to satisfy all needs, but obviously it will never come according to her. The incapability of state is the main source of legitimacy for her action. ‘The state’ is very busy and not able to deal with everything, and the citizens should take some actions, otherwise it would be foolishness. Influencing the policies or political stand of the state is recommended once more as a remedy and as a legitimate way of activity.

When we consider their daily interactions, the volunteers’ attitudes to the state institutions change. The volunteers embraced the idea that cooperating with the state is a good thing. They would prepare their own projects and present it to the state to provide a model. The result will be a mutual learning and mutual development, of

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<sup>188</sup> “[Sivil toplum] Türkiye’de önemlidir, Dünyada önemlidir. Vakti zamanında kendi oluşturduğumuz kavramın, devletin, bizim her türlü ihtiyacımızı görmesini öylece beklemek tabiri-i caizse biraz ahmaklık etmektir. Çünkü o kadar çok şeyle uğraşması gerekir ki devletin, hangi birini görebilsin! E o zaman oturup o muhteşem günün gelmesini mi beklemeliyiz? Tabi ki hayır. Hangi konuda eksik hissediyorsak devleti( ya da hangi konuda rahatsızlığımız varsa), o konuda elimizden geleni yapıp devlete bunu sunmalı, o konudaki politikasını ya da apolitik duruşunu etkilemeye çalışmalıyız” Cemile (20), Yıldız Technical University.

both the volunteers and the state. However, I think we should think about this mutual learning process more carefully. It assumes the citizens and the state as separate entities and ignores how this distinction has been internalized. Moreover, this line of thinking conceals under which conditions and through which processes the volunteer subjectivities' have been formed. For instance Ahmet (19) from Inonu University has told me:

We have good connections with our municipality, here. And of course with the rector of the university. When we need something we go directly to them, but of course we know how to sit and talk. We have learnt it in the time. If you act properly you can get lots of things you want.”<sup>189</sup> Ahmet (19), Malatya, İnönü University.

In Ahmet's expression, the rector and the people in the municipality are portrayed as sources of authority and there are certain acceptable modes of behavior if you are dealing with state institutions. So it is fair to say that, while these daily interactions create a more solid perception of state, they also shape the volunteers' speeches and bodily practices. These are only some of the outcomes of “working with the state.” In addition to this, most of the volunteers accept the things they learn through this relationship as self-improvement. I have heard several times sentences like that : “Before I didn't know how to express myself properly, but now I can talk to a mayor or a governor easily. This is one of the most important things that TOG has brought me”. The self-improvement is measured by establishing right contacts and degree of ability to express oneself.

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<sup>189</sup> “Burda, belediyeyle iyi bağlantılarımız var, tabii üniversitenin rektörüyle de. Bir şeye ihtiyacımız olduğunda direk onlara gidiyoruz, ama tabii nasıl oturup konuşacağımı bilmen lazım, bunları hep zamanla öğrendik. Eğer doğru hareket edersen istediğin bir çok şeyi elde edebilirsin”. Ahmet (19), Inonu University, Malatya

By playing an intermediary role between the state institutions and the volunteers, TOG sets up new connections and materializes the state. This role of TOG not only creates an image of an incapable yet more accessible state but these interactions result in severe changes in the language that volunteers use. Rather than taking authoritative measures, the power of state reveals itself in these kinds of daily interactions, in some meetings or in a phone call.

In conclusion, the special terminology that TOG uses distinguishes politics from *siyaset*, and calls the volunteers to propose their projects and consequent policy suggestions to ‘the state’. This distinction not only contributes to the efforts in ‘spatialization of the state’ as an encompassing power above all the other affairs, but also points out how and where an ideal active citizen should act. The political - but not *siyasi*- participation recommended by TOG on the other hand, undermines and conceals the other possible ways of participation. Furthermore TOG encourages the volunteers to work with state institutions, which in turn leads to more interaction between two parties. These interactions strengthen the vertical image of the state and play a significant role in shaping their conduct.

### The Ultimate Community: The Office

TOG’s professional team is composed of young people who come from different disciplines. They define themselves commonly as ‘youth workers’ or ‘professional youth trainers’. Very few people are above thirty, and there are many workers who are also ex-volunteers. Most of them are based in the central office in Istanbul, yet there are some who are also appointed to manage the youth centers in Samsun and İstanbul or in coordination centers in İzmir, Ankara and Diyarbakır. Wherever they

are based, most of them are always on the way throughout Turkey. Especially field coordinators spend a little time at the office, they need to visit the volunteer communities, meet with the other stakeholder of the projects they are dealing with, organize several events in different cities, etc. However, it is fair to say that the İstanbul office is the place where TOG's heart beats. It is like a beehive, there is a constant circulation of people, ideas and plans. Volunteers come and go; old workers and new workers, board members and some more volunteers occupy the rooms and the garden.

Most of the office workers can be also described as activists with left-wing tendencies. They have other political connections and memberships to certain groups. This activism has been made visible by several posters, photos and stickers that are attached the walls of the same building. They also try to influence the working environment with their thoughts and beliefs. For example March, 8 and May, 1 have been made TOG's official holidays a long time ago, before the latter was accepted as a national holiday in Turkey. They try to make TOG a more libertarian place. That's also the main reason behind their disappointment of mainstream educational projects that are implemented in the field. They try to urge the volunteers to be more active in advocacy related projects. However these efforts do not always have fruitful results. Moreover, these advocacy movements are usually well-structured and cannot eliminate the power structure inherent in these relationships.

When I first started to work for TOG, I anticipated that they had a sense of hesitancy talking to me. Everyone was speaking in a low voice in the corners. Obviously something secret was going on. It didn't take too much time to learn that they were going through a unionization process, which wasn't exposed yet to the

management. After I showed my support to this process-even without knowing the main reasons behind it, I was able to learn the main dynamics which triggered the unionization process in a civil society organization. To start with, the previous coordinators of the Microcredit Project had been fired suddenly, without any notice. Both of them were ex-volunteers and devoted workers of TOG. Malfunctioning and inefficiency of the project were shown as the main reasons, and one day they had been put in front of the door and nobody could do anything. According to the other workers, the Microcredit Project itself was inherently not applicable in TOG because it was not suitable to the functioning of volunteer communities. (This also explained why they were hesitant to talk with me; I was the one who replaced their dear friends who had been fired in a very unfair way). On the other hand these two people were not the first ones who were dismissed, sent from TOG in this way or that way. Most of the workers were working project based which did not providing the job security. The claims of mobbing, long hours of working, low wages and absence of benefits were other factors that mobilized the workers to unionize and claim their own rights.

Almost everyone at the office declared their support and possible membership to the union, with an exception of few workers who didn't find this unionization appropriate for this or that reason. One by one we became the members of Union of Social Work (*Sosyal-İş Sendikası*) which works under DİSK.<sup>190</sup> There were some colleagues who were in direct contact with the people from the union; we were meeting to talk about discussing our problems and preparing the most suitable text for collective bargaining. In the meantime, the management was informed about the process, and first -as it was expected- the management's approach was not very friendly. The workers were accused of spoiling the 'spirit of TOG'; this movement

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<sup>190</sup> DİSK is the abbreviation for "Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey" (Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu). DİSK is known for

was unfair when the flexible working conditions were considered. They were a huge family, and now some strangers were invited to interrupt their *modus operandi*. However, TOG workers were very determined. No one left the union.

While these discussions were continued, more people resigned due to similar reasons of mobbing and bad working conditions. In three months time ten people left for different reasons. In the end the negotiations started. The management hired a lawyer, and that lawyer sat down the table with two men from the union and one representative professional. After several meetings and long hours of negotiations, the workers gained some rights while they had to give up some of their demands. The collective agreement was signed and Ibrahim Betil, as the chair of the board of directors, expressed his support for this process in the signing ceremony. It was a democratic movement, and as an institution which primarily supports democratic values and social rights it was an honorable thing to have a unionized working force. As a result an assembly was formed to decide on core issues like the cancellation of labor contracts, and for solving several other controversies in the foundation. However, very few things have changed after the collective agreement has been signed for the reasons I will explain next.

In all these series of events, there was a specific expression which deserves more scrutiny: “the spirit of TOG”. What is this spirit of TOG? Where does it arise from? Is it restrictive or emancipatory? I wanted to examine the relationships inside ‘the office’, because in my opinion these relationships cannot be thought as independent from the dominant discourse of TOG. The so-called spirit of TOG, meant to be binding not only volunteers but also the workers themselves. And without doubt this spirit of TOG has a vacuuming affect; it absorbs whatever it touches, starting from the professional workers.

First of all, I have labeled 'the office' as the 'ultimate community' because, the ideas, the practices of being a 'real' community is produced here. The relationships are constructed by strong emphasis on solidarity, friendship and altruism. As a civil society organization, it shouldn't be a place where people are working just to earn money and coming together because they are obliged to. Rather, they seem to be united by a sense of activism, shared principles and political views. All the decisions should be made democratically; all the different ideas should be listened carefully. This environment is further reinforced by the recruitment of ex-volunteers who comes from the same tradition. It is an ideal place for the most volunteers to work; most of them admire the professional workers and dream about working at the office one day.

In spite of the fact that, TOG's working environment has many features that distinguishes it from other workplaces, it is not fully stripped from neoliberal rationality. I would even claim that, the workers themselves are governed by neoliberal rationality which penetrates their relationships through the norms of being a community. The workplaces outside of the civil sector are usually depicted by their non-human conditions, vertical organizations, hypocritical and competitive people who are doing everything behind the others. On the other hand, TOG has a horizontal organization and everyone is working for similar ideals. People are accepted as having no competition among them and they can show altruism. However, I think these discourses of friendship and altruism in fact are used to cover and preserve the power relationships imminent to the construction of the same discourse. They are not governed by coercive rule but rather by their own selves and a sense of belonging. It will be better to give an example to show how this rationale works.

More or less at the time of bargaining of the union, an internal rumor arose in the office. TOG was in a very bad financial situation and everyone should better reconsider their plans and budgets for the rest of 2008. The head of Administrative and Financial Affairs started to send e-mails warning the workers about their expenses and possible events. The management declared that TOG wouldn't be able to receive the expected funding, so all the workers had to be very careful about the spending. It was not just a rumor anymore, and the volunteers in the field learnt the situation in a very short period of time. The board of directors sent an e-mail to the common e-mail group of volunteers, telling them to be patient, that these difficult days will pass and encouraging them to find more local sources for their activities. In a similar manner the workers should be patient; these were the bad days in which people should show their solidarity and brotherhood. Not very later than these calls, there emerged the impression that some of the workers will be laid off. The budget was very tight and it was becoming more and more difficult for the management to cover the monthly expenses. The department heads made a meeting with the general manager and the story unfolded. They were talking to us one by one, and some of us were advised to change our positions to replace some other colleagues, or to coordinate more than one project. The bargaining lasted long. At that time, it was pretty clear that my project wasn't going well, and its implementation area was reduced to 3 cities instead of 6. I suggested working part-time and it was accepted. There was a scholarship coordinator position, and none of us were willing to fill this position. Eventually, one of the training coordinators, who was responsible for "Youth and Social Rights Trainings", was appointed as the scholarship coordinator. She was asked to be patient -these were the bad days- and when the financial conditions get better she would receive her position back. All these conversations

were made in an intimate atmosphere referring to the norms of solidarity and friendship. She worked in this position for six months, and then she resigned. Time passed but nothing has changed. There was no agreement on paper, because the relationship between the head of the department and her was built on trust. In the meantime lots of people were recruited and lots of people left TOG for similar reasons. The assembly couldn't help any of these issues. Even the union was absorbed by the spirit of TOG. In the last instance, one of the oldest workers of TOG has left office, because he was exposed to the general manager's mobbing. He declared that he won't take the case to the court because he doesn't want to damage TOG's public image. There can be internal controversies and discussions but some of the things should never be revealed.

TOG describes itself a huge transformation project and this project targets not only the volunteers in the field, but the workers themselves. The professional workers act as a community themselves united by shared objectives and principles. However, very similar to the case in the field, there are always excesses to this community. The power relationships become visible at these limits, when someone talks about unfair behavior or unequal treatment. And people are blamed easily for damaging the spirit of TOG or simply for their betrayal. It become visible first while the workers were trying to unionize against bad working conditions and to ensure their job security; as a result they were accused of being ungrateful and disloyal. When the financial condition of the foundation deteriorated, the same people – who unionized against the management to claim their rights- replaced their colleagues' positions. These replacements have been overlooked due to the constant emphasis on collectivity.

It has become a well-known technique to motivate the workers by creating an emotional attachment to workplace. Private companies utilize different activities to ensure the cohesion among workers. This in turn is believed to increase productivity (Bolton, 2000). Some events are organized, the workers are taken to play games, everyone buys presents for each other on special days, birthdays are celebrated. It is acknowledged that, when people have friends at the workplace they feel a higher motivation to go and work. Creating a horizontal division of labor on the other hand would enhance decision making processes by providing grounds for discussion and interpersonal exchange. TOG uses all of these techniques but its claim of being united by the same ideals carries these techniques to another dimension. Their very personal aspirations, self-expressions, ways of being in the world have been united under the same umbrella. However, this sense of unity does not change the fact that they are paid-workers and earning their lives out of their professions. It also doesn't change the crude fact that TOG is an institution which is run by private funding and donations. As a non-profit and non-governmental organization, it would lay off some workers when it doesn't have enough sources to compensate the wages. Plus, as a professional civil society organization it would try to keep most efficient workers, instead of the ones who don't show great performances. But I again suggest that, all these harsh realities are covered by a discourse of solidarity and friendship. Re-imagining workplace as a community makes it possible to govern people not by coercive rules but rather through their own autonomies. The existent power relationships are reproduced by the discourses of friendship and intimacy in a neo-liberal polity.

### Concluding Remarks

Throughout this chapter I have tried to discuss how TOG's youth discourse is appropriated in various manners in the field. Volunteers provide different justifications for their participation and they attach different meanings to their activities. While some volunteers express their commitment with more emotional references, some others do not hesitate to instrumentalize TOG for possible future benefits.

Despite its inclusive discourse, TOG is able to attract more middle class university students due to its organizational structure, the entrenched perceptions about voluntary activities, connotations of its emblem and its reproduction of several stereotypical characteristics that are attached to youth in Turkey. Although it has no direct association with any nationalist discourse- it even tries to decouple itself from these perceptions- the notion of 'duty' and a new kind of patriotism appear in the field. The gap between the management, office workers and the field create severe tensions from time to time.

On the other hand, it is fair to claim that, TOG is moving forward on its way to create the 'young active citizens' of Turkey. Volunteers who are more willing to take part in advocacy activities are growing in number. They have closer connections with the office workers and the management, they internalize the notion of active citizenship and show some enthusiasm to express their policy suggestions. Very recently, TOG has formed a new group of volunteers called GEG<sup>191</sup> (*Youth Action Group*) which is supposed to hold demonstrations on the streets to claim youth rights. They made their first demonstration this week in Ankara, to demand a

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<sup>191</sup> GEG is the abbreviation for the Youth Action Group (Gençlik Eylem Grubu).

‘national youth pass card’ to be used all over Turkey. However as I have mentioned in this chapter, these types of activities are highly structured and well organized so as not to cause any ‘security problem’. Although their demands are meaningful and it is ‘good’ that some young people express these demands aloud, we should note that the borders of active participation is drawn by TÖG’s discourse very carefully. Hence, we should consider the consequences of this type of participation caused not by what it contains but rather by its very form and sphere. They are acting in the social sphere and expressing their policy suggestions to the state above. They know their limits well, they never engage in ‘*siyasi*’ activities which would mean the transgression of the borders and threatening the spatiality of the state. More significantly, they are not kept inside these borders by force, but by their autonomy. Filling the subject positions that are produced by TÖG, they become active agents in articulation of the same discourse. With a claim to be the most proper way of participation, it undermines and delegitimizes other possible ways of participation. This strong claim is enhanced by the collaboration with state institutions.

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

In this study, I have tried to undertake a critical survey of TOG, as one of the most prominent voluntary organizations in Turkey, by focusing on specific historical conditions which brought the terms ‘civil society’ and ‘civil society organizations’ to the center of democratization discussions. A particular endeavor has been made to explicate the formation of ‘the youth’ as a political category and a group to be acted upon. TOG’s institutional discourse is analyzed in this thesis in order to explain the kind of technologies used to encourage the young people to take actions upon themselves in the name of both self-improvement and social benefit. Additionally, the materialization of TOG’s discourse is discussed to reveal other possibilities that emerge in the field.

I have argued that the rise of AKP government signaled a new period in Turkey’s neo-liberal restructuring even though the first giant steps were taken in the beginning of ‘80s. Not only because of the massive privatization movement, the remarkable rise in foreign direct investment and the beginning of the negotiations for EU membership, but also by putting more emphasis on the merits of democracy and civil participation, the AKP has opened up a huge space for civil society activities.

The number of NGOs has risen dramatically; civil society has emerged as a *third sector*, creating its volunteers and professional workers.

Turkey's neoliberal restructuring after the '80s and the rise of civil society organizations as important actors in the social and economic fields cannot be analyzed separately, because it is important to note the dynamic relationship between new world order and newly invented ways of government. I have argued that Turkey was not immune from the social and economic transformation of the world that occurred in the late '70s and '80s when the downsizing state, the reductions in welfare provisions and the globalizing economy have put the state's governing ability in question. However I have also showed that the old dualities of state-society, public-private and coercion-consent are not adequate for understanding how power is exercised today. Adopting a Foucauldian approach and departing from the governmental methods of 'advance liberalism' of Nikolas Rose, I have tried to show how the civil society organizations play a significant role in the exercise of power. To the extent that apathy, of especially young people, is problematized the individuals are invited to take action upon themselves and upon the social sphere especially by the voluntary organizations. Communities are formed as pre-political entities and new types of responsibilities are deployed in these communities. Simultaneous responsabilization and autonomization of the individuals make it government at a distance possible.

I discussed in the previous chapters how the youth in Turkey has been problematized as a group of selfish, insensitive and apolitical individuals after the '80s. In such a context, TOG, instead of using incriminating arguments, has propounded a positive image of the youth which is capable of achieving a social transformation. However, I have also argued that, the institutional discourse of TOG

is fed by neoliberal problematization of the self and turned the youth into an object to be acted upon. It has not only paved the way for the young people's government through their own autonomies, but also putting a special emphasis on youth participation it has constituted the youth as a political category. On the other hand, by forging volunteer communities in the confines of some specific sets of rules and principles, it has produced new types of loyalties and bonds that hold the volunteers together. The creation of these communities is loaded with allegedly shared characteristics, similar problems and aspirations. By proposing its own conception of 'the youth', TOG ignores the different possibilities even in its own field.

The materialization of TOG's discourse in the field shows contradictory features. Due to its emblem, its organizational structure, and established perceptions about the volunteerism TOG attracts more volunteers from middle class university students. More than focusing on their own self improvement, they underline the notions of duty, and express their senses of compassion and altruism. They constitute the silent crowd of the field, and do not hesitate to react against TOG's 'respect to diversity' principle. As long as the diverse characteristics of the volunteers are concealed, everybody in the field seems to agree on the necessity of such respect. But when the differences are expressed aloud, these expressions are not tolerated. Although, TOG uses the argument of 'diversity' to attract more and more volunteers, most of the time it results in the concealment of differences.

The volunteers join TOG with different aspirations, yet they all accept that they have learnt how to express themselves better in the public and gained self-esteem. Capabilities of self-expression and self-esteem are presented as key for survival, especially if you want to have a decent job and to learn how to deal with the state institutions. The normally 'alienated' state is brought closer by the claim of

TOG's intermediary role. State is reified as an entity, that one can work with and solve the social problems. With these representations, the state is assumed to be external to the formation of 'the social' and its problems. The social is under the responsibility of the active citizens who have social awareness.

I find the redefinition of the "social" and the "political" in these discussions very striking. Neoliberal citizenship technologies are utilized in a very rigorous way for this end. By using a special terminology, TOG distinguishes the political from '*siyaset*' claiming that the volunteers of TOG should engage in political activities but not *siyaset*. Departing from this argument, it is fair to say that by making this distinction TOG undermines the critical efforts that interrogate the state's power. The specific type of participation that is proposed by TOG with the support of the state institutions and private sector puts a question mark on the legitimacy of other sorts of participation.

The 'young active citizen' of TOG is responsible for taking action upon the social and proposing policy suggestions to the state. Since the subject position was created by the problematization of individual deficiencies, this 'young active citizen' most often is unable to see the obscured structural problems. On the other hand, the mobilization of volunteers in a rather regulated fashion for certain ends, conceals the exercise of power which brought them into being. The political is reconstituted in the social, but the limit of the political is drawn very carefully; it never touches the borders of the state's space of decision-making. In this way, as I have discussed, the active participation is being used as a discursive practice to legitimize the neoliberal governmental rule.

All in all, in order to understand the nature of civil society activities today it is necessary to analyze their different practices very carefully. Civil society is currently being portrayed as the locomotive of democratization; however civil society organizations are not fixed and generalizable entities with similar structures and activities. One needs to assess their practices are needed to be assessed within a broader perspective in order to see the technologies of power in effect. Although they are regarded as vital for more democracy, and as they try to build democratic mechanisms to operate with, these efforts can still contribute to the preservation of existing power relationships. We shouldn't forget that democracy is still a relation of power and it has to create its active citizens to survive. However this does not mean that active citizenship is a neutral construct; instead it is part and parcel of a new regime of power. By focusing on one of the very effective voluntary organizations in Turkey, I tried to open up a new space for discussing the youth and civil society in this critical perspective, which has not attracted enough attention from scholars in Turkey.

I have dwelled on the novel technologies of government to show how the youth is reconstituted as a political category with shared problems and aspirations. Despite its inclusive discourse, it is far from including all the young people, as my discussions of the case of TOG revealed. Finally I hope my work contributes to more extensive work on youth and "youth work", because although it is quite a new phenomenon for Turkey, it is spreading rapidly.

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