

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FORMATION OF  
URBAN COMMONS

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FORMATION OF URBAN COMMONS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FORMATION OF URBAN COMMONS**

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This thesis aims to examine the function of civil society organizations in the formation of urban commons. In the last half century under the domination of neoliberal ideology, cities have witnessed significant changes. While the modern city has transformed into areas where a series of struggles are given, urban areas are increasingly determined by the logic of the market mechanism. Under this determinism, the concept of commons, which are created through non-market social relations and the production forms other than economic impetus, offers a significant set of political alternatives. In contrast to profit-oriented marketization and privatization structure, when the commons reconsidered in urban context, it would be realized that this has the potential to create new social relations. If these relationships are institutionalized through the practices of organization of civil society, it will be an important tool that creates, transforms and manages urban commons. In this respect, practices that prioritize civil society and relieve the civil sphere and public sphere from the domination of both the state and the market offer very important commoning practices for the urban commons. Both concepts, civil society and the urban commons, must be taken into account the fact that they are highly complex and generate a rich

academic debate. The relationship to be established between these two concepts has the potential to offer a wide repertoire for understanding the endless power struggles in cities under global neoliberalism due to the antagonism of both.

**Keywords:** Urban Common, Civil Society, Third Way, Public Space

## ÖZ

### KENTSEL MÜŞTEREKLERİN OLUŞUMUNDA SİVİL TOPLUM ÖRGÜTLERİNİN ROLÜ

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Bu tez, kentsel müştereklerin oluşumunda sivil toplum örgütlerinin işlev ve rolünü incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Neoliberal ideolojinin egemenliği altındaki son yarım yüzyılda şehirler önemli değişikliklere uğramıştır. Modern kent, bir dizi mücadelenin verildiği alanlara dönüşürken, kentsel alanlar giderek piyasa mekanizmasının mantığıyla belirlenmektedir. Bu determinizm altında, piyasa dışı toplumsal ilişkiler ve ekonomik saikler dışındaki üretim biçimleri aracılığıyla yaratılan müşterekler, bir kavram olarak önemli bir siyasi alternatifler seti sunmaktadır. Kâr odaklı piyasalaştırma ve özelleştirme yapısının aksine, müşterekler kentsel bağlamda yeniden düşünüldüğünde, bunun yeni toplumsal ilişkiler yaratma potansiyeline sahip olduğu görülecektir. Bu ilişkiler sivil toplumun örgütlenme pratikleri üzerinden kurumsallaştırılırsa, kentsel müşterekleri yaratan, dönüştüren ve yöneten önemli bir araç olacaktır. Bu açıdan sivil toplumu ön planda tutan, sivil alanı ve kamusal alanı hem devletin hem de piyasanın tahakkümünden kurtaran uygulamalar, kentsel müşterekler için çok önemli müşterekleştirme pratikleri sunmaktadır. Hem sivil toplum hem de kentsel müşterekler, son derece karmaşık oldukları ve zengin bir akademik tartışma oluşturdukları gerçeği dikkate alındığında, bu iki kavram arasında



kurulacak iliřki, her ikisinin de tařıdđı antagonizma nedeniyle kresel neoliberalizm altındaki kentlerde bitmeyen iktidar mcadelelerini anlamak iin geniř bir repertuar sunma potansiyeline sahiptir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kentsel Msterekler, Sivil Toplum, nc Yol, Kamusal Alan

*To my family*

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CPR	Common Property Resources
CSDC	Civil Society Development Center
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labour Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
TUIK	Turkish Statistical Institute





## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The contemporary cities have undergone many important changes since the 1970s, which is called the post-Fordism period. These changes, experienced under the influence of global neoliberalism, have transformed the modern city into areas on which a series of struggles are fought. The starting point of these struggles is that people understand themselves as a social being and feel compelled to constantly reproduce in order to live more prosperously. In fact, this search, which has been going on since the age of enlightenment, has been in an effort to define the society with an individual-centered perspective. Although the relationship between society and the individual has been manifested itself in different ways in the historical process, today individualism and the right to property are considered to be the most sacred concepts. As David Harvey said, ‘we live in a world, after all, where the rights of private property and the profit rate trump all other notions of rights one can think of’ (Harvey, 2012). Cities, on the other hand, have gradually increased their feature of being the space of the society in which modern people live in the last half century. Henceforth, the urban has become a vibrant and highly contested political arena for social struggle around issues of democracy, citizenship, identity and human rights (Enright and Rossi, 2018). While the urban space is also the scene of these struggles, it is inevitable that it has to transform itself in these conflicts and struggles. From this point of view, while cities mediate the reproduction of the social, they inevitably compel ‘the individual’ part of this change-transformation process. At this point, as Harvey (2012) states, “then the question of what kind of city we want cannot be divorced from the question of what kind of people we want to be, what kinds of social relations we seek”.

Although the questions about people and the society s/he lives in are very old debates, the social relations in the modern city and the forms that these relations reveal are a

fairly new one. Contemporary social and political thought sees the notion of urban commons as one of the important consequences of these relations. In particular, the commons are imagined as opposed to the profit-driven structure of marketization and privatization which are preeminent within contemporary neoliberalized societies. Commons, beyond being a political alternative discourse on its own, has the potential to build new social relations within the urban process. From this perspective, the commons consist of a shared interest or value that is produced through communal relations (Pusey and Chatterton, 2017). If we are going to consider neoliberalism as an inherently urban phenomenon based on the analysis of Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey, it is necessary to examine the commons, which is the most important political discourse developed against it, in the urban domain. When Hardt and Negri (2009) (as cited in Harvey, 2012) argue that “we should view ‘the metropolis as a factory for the production of the common,’ they suggest this as an entry point for anti-capitalist critique”.

This current debate, which attributes originality to the city, also includes another dimension. The city's production and reproduction of the social is a phenomenon that mostly unorganized relations and struggles take place in a spontaneity. We can even see the urban commons as a positive externality that somehow emerges from these complex networks. However, the sociality of the individual living in the city gains a political meaning whenever s/he digress this state of spontaneity. To put it more clearly, what brings people together in urban space is their ability to be together around impetus that compels them to be. Löfgren (2016) describes it as invisible norms, routines and competences that make it possible for people with different backgrounds to share the same spaces and create temporary forms of communalities. Thus, the social also creates a political space. This area is called the civic space in the current academic literature. The civic space corresponds to the area where the modern urban individual socializes. The community of individuals who experience the civic space also corresponds to civil society. Therefore, civil society constitutes an important dimension of the city's originality.

The aim of this thesis is to reveal how the concept of civil society can be related to the urban commons. It should be realized that this ambition might sound presumptuous,

given the fact that both notions are quite complex and constitute rich academic discussion. However, the relationship to be established between these two concepts has the potential to offer a rich repertoire for understanding the endless power struggles in cities under neoliberal globalism due to the antagonism that both concepts have. **Thus, the main hypothesis of this work is: civil society is the primary constituent on formation, protection and perpetuation of urban commons within the cities that under the global neoliberal capitalism threat.**

The purpose of this discussion is to interpret and describe the significance of both concepts in light of what was already known, and to explain any new understanding and fresh insights about the problems of current cities withhold. In order to situate this research in an existing body of work, literature review method, which is a secondary research method, was used majority of the thesis. However, while discussing a more concrete understanding of civil society and how its natural settings should be comprehended, the example of Turkey was observed and described quantitatively. In addition, while discussing the results of the relationship between civil society and urban common, the case study method, which is a primary research method, was used. Such a method was chosen because there are insufficient resources for a larger study, but a deeper understanding of the context is also desirable.

Henceforth, the conceptual framework of the urban commons will be discussed first in Chapter 2. First, the theoretical framework of commons will be discussed, because the urban commons is primarily the re-emerging form of commons literature. The basic perspectives that form the basis of the commons debate will be discussed and the concept will be tried to be revealed in the current literature. The discussion of the common originally begins with Garrett Hardin in his controversial essay *The Tragedy of the Commons*, published in *Science* in 1968. Hardin's conclusion from an individualistic point of view corresponds to two different aspects today (Hardin, 1968). In conceptual terms, commons are identified in two main approaches: (1) a neo-institutionalist (or neo-liberal in broader sense) approach inspired by the seminal work of Elinor Ostrom, which has been very commanding (2) a neo-Marxist perspective aimed at protecting the commons from privatization. It aims to help the concept of commons be understood in depth by discussing the results of both perspectives. At the

same time, it will be focused on how the urban common should be problemized by dividing the commons into two different forms, namely tangible and intangible form. From this point of view, it will be explained how common is understood in terms of urban domain. The unique meanings of the urban commons, which have a more complex meaning especially in terms of cities, when evaluated in the context of the tangible-intangible distinction will be emphasized. Finally, the significance of the scale discussion, which should not be ignored in urban discussions, for urban commons will be evaluated. Such an assessment is essential, above all, to properly understand the scale attributed to the urban commons. Moreover, two important processes that gained importance after year 2000, namely localization and globalization, must be taken into account in the urban commons literature, as they are processes that directly affect the urbanization process. In academic literature, it is generally considered as an ongoing process between year 2000 and today. However, in the 20-odd years that have passed, the effects of globalization and localization have felt even stronger. In a way, it can be said that although we are still in these processes, we have witnessed the emergence of a new period. In the post-2000 period, when global neoliberalism continues to dominate, many of the problems that capitalism promised to be solved still await solutions. It is perhaps very important in this respect that the commons debate reappeared in the academic literature and kept it on the agenda.

In Chapter 3, the concept of civil society, which is also quite complex, will be discussed. This chapter of the thesis will begin with investigating different conceptualizations of civil society. Because the concept of civil society has a very old history in social sciences. However, today it has become a very powerful political, economic and social tool, beyond being just an academic field of study. In Michael Edwards's words "(t)oday civil society seems to be the 'big idea' on everyone's lips – government officials, journalists, funding agencies, writers and academics (Edwards, 2004). In this respect, a correct understanding of the concept of civil society requires a brief conceptual evaluation. First, it will be focused on which currents of thought the civil society has been shaped by since the age of enlightenment, and then the place where civil society stands today will be demonstrated. The use of civil society as a tool primarily depends on its correct description. Afterwards, civil society organizations in

Turkey will be examined in order to give a concrete meaning to civil society. Another reason for examining civil society associations in Turkey is to demonstrate constraints of institutionalization civil society. Since the concept of civil society, which will later in Chapter 4 be associated with the urban-common, is a concept that must be understood within the social, political and economic context. For that, it has become necessary to discuss at length in a separate chapter.

Finally, in chapter 4, the aforementioned relationship between these two concepts, namely civil society and urban commons, has been tried to be revealed. While preparing the infrastructure of this relationship, the Third Way approach, which promotes the importance of civil society at the urban level, should be taken into account, and firstly, the view of the Third Way approach to the city was emphasized. The policy proposal presented by the Third Way has two important consequences. Firstly, this policy proposal was carried out on the issues that both the state and the market had difficulty in finding solutions, and both laid the groundwork for the emergence of civil society and raised the existing civil society advocacy. The second implication of this policy proposal was to reintroduce the public sphere debate, providing the necessary space for promoting the urban common. However, since it would be a biased point of view to accept all the assumptions of the Third Way approach as they are, the criticisms that can be brought to the Third Way are also emphasized. Finally, in terms of constituting a concrete example of the relationship between civil society and urban common, a short evaluation was made on fellow countrymen associations in Turkey and it was concluded.

Thereafter, in Chapter 5, the conclusion part, the end for this proposition has been endeavored to be drawn by deduction and summarizing the issues cited above. Although this research has some limitations in certain respects, it is concluded by sharing a few ideas about the issues that needs to be further studied.

## CHAPTER 2

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF URBAN COMMONS

The commons have arisen as an alternate political watchword of recent years. The idea of the commons is at the focal point of ongoing discussions focusing on how mankind should undertake the administration of natural resources. In particular, the common is considered as an adverseness of the benefit driven courses of action of marketization and privatization. However, this implies that the commons have a hallmark that must be preserved within neoliberal societies against capitalism. The common interest or wealth obtained through social relations is considered to belong to everyone. It's anything but a political moral to object when resources (for instance land, water, seeds, air, food, biodiversity, social practices) that gives direct actual prosperity starting to face privatization. Yet, it is essential to look past these qualities and consider commons to be composite social and political elements supported by specific social practices and relationships. The commons, then, at that point, can likewise be considered as a social relationship of the people who assemble, build, guard, and reproduce the commons. The commons are made real through the practice of commoning, which does not simply reflect a set of bounded, defensive or highly localized spaces (Pusey and Chatterton, 2017).

From this point of view, commons have two main streams in current discussions. The first is the neo-institutionalist strand that treats the commons as a resource management problem and proposes organization through networks of mutual aid and solidarity and through non-market arrangements based on social needs rather than individual utility maximization. The second is what is considered as a neo-Marxist strand, looking at the both the defense of the commons against iterated processes of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey, 2003) and the production of alternative

communal economies outside of capitalism as such (Enright and Rossi, 2018). Both strands have important conceptual contributions to the revitalization of the commons concept. These formulations, which are intertwined in part and reach somewhat similar results, will also contribute to the evaluation of the results of the social, economic and political dynamics of today's capitalist city in the context of common.

In this sense, below, the commons issue will be tried to be theorized in general in this context, and then the urban commons will be discussed.

## **2.1. COMMONS**

Commons can be regarded as natural resources such as the air, the water, pastures, forests and etc. in a political economic sense. This material meaning of commons, is often claimed to be the inheritance of humanity as a whole, to be shared together in classic European political texts (Hardt and Negri 2009: viii). Specifically, the commons are conceived in contrast to the profit-driven arrangements of marketization and privatization which are hegemonic within contemporary neo-liberalized societies (Enright and Rossi, 2018). Although the concept of commons dates back to the onset of Industrial Revolution in the 1760s where enclosures of English land, and dispossession of peasants from that land (Pusey and Chatterton, 2017), the modern usage of commons, according to Enright and Rossi (2018), originally theorized by Garrett Hardin in his controversial essay *The Tragedy of the Commons*, published in *Science* in 1968 (Hardin, 1968).

Natural resources and environment regarded as factor of production since the Industrial Revolution. But especially within the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the natural resources of the earth understood to be scarce and subject to degradation inevitably. What Hardin (1968) bring forward was individuals who seek to maximize their own benefit will eventually overuse these scarce resources. The strong metaphor he used to illustrate this was a certain number of herdsman feeding their cattle on the shared meadow. In this case, it is rational for every herdsman to add one more cattle to their herd because the costs of overgrazing are socially shared (the negative externality in economic terms) but the gain of adding yet another cattle is private gain. With Hardin's own word;

Therein is the tragedy. Each man [*sic*] is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit – in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons. [. . .] Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all.

(1968: 1244)

This example can be augmented to all common goods that create both negative or positive externalities while people use them. The solutions to avoid this tragedy then, will be vary depending on the nature of the common. Hardin' (1968) suggestion to overcome this dilemma was either privatizing the properties or keep them public but allocate them according to wealth or merit. According to him it might also by lottery. Or it might first come first serve, again depending on the situation. So as a result, thinking has often polarized between private-property solutions or authoritarian state intervention (Harvey, 2012). It is important to note that, Hardin's main aim was draw attention to the "population problem". Population, as in Malthusian understanding, naturally tends to grow "geometrically," or, as we would now say, exponentially. This means that the per capita share of the world's goods must steadily increase to maintain the privileges that people currently enjoy. Hardin (1968) explicitly state that, population growth must be brought under control in order to avoid human misery in the immediate future because world is, as a common, has finite resources with the foreseeable technology. He tried to show that technical or technological solutions of overpopulation cannot be found in a world where individuals have a freedom of breed. So he concluded that how many children a family had would be a matter of public concern. In short, if there is a 'mentio' about common resources, it is necessary to keep in mind that there must be a public-private discussion about its management. The public-private discussion was made more clearly and in detail in Chapter 4.

The academic discussions of the right approach to tackle commons issue, namely the dichotomy between private enterprise system and public governmental interference, was playing the main role until the publication of Elinor Ostrom's *Governing the Commons* in 1990 which offered an alternative solution to the problem and managed to challenge binary opposition between public and private (Ostrom, 1990). Ostrom noted that Hardin's main concern was overpopulation, but on her Nobel winner work,



she deliberately aimed her critique on natural common property resources (CPR), taking into account with prisoner's dilemma game and Mancur Olson's utilitarian conception that spelled out in his influential *The Logic of Collective Action* (Olson, 1965) because her engagement with the issue was to contest utility-maximization approach on CPRs. Ostrom's work was questioning the presumptions that agents 'cannot change the constraints impose them' (1990:7). In explicit contrast to the individualistic understandings of CPR which had been widely adopted as foundations for public policy, Ostrom centered her theorization on processes of self-organization and self-governance in the management of a "natural or man-made common-pool resource-system" (Ostrom 1990: 30), understanding them as an alternative to both the market and the state (Enright and Rossi, 2018). On that note, her understanding of collective action is 'a group of principals can organize themselves voluntarily to retain the residual of their own efforts' (1990: 25). Ostrom and Ahn later explained this mechanism as;

Self-governing systems in any arena of social interactions tend to be more efficient and stable not because of any magical effects of grassroots participation itself but because of the social capital in the form of effective working rules those systems are more likely to develop and preserve, the networks that the participants have created, and the norms they have adopted.

(2003: 11)

Ostrom (1990) emphasizes the role of social institutions that generate norms, impose sanctions, and improve the incentives for collective action, basing her analysis on field observations that demonstrate the success of collective action in management of commons. Arguing against a general theory of collective action, she contends that particularities matter a great deal but postulates a set of "design principles" that may serve as a guide. These principles include

- clearly defined boundaries to the commons, with a defined community associated with the resource;
- rules to manage the commons that are appropriate to local conditions;
- arrangements to manage collective decisions, which are themselves subject to collective negotiations;
- gradated sanctions, with heavier sanctions for repeated or more egregious violators of rules;

- low-cost and widely accepted mechanisms to resolve conflict; and the absence of excessive government interference.

In short, Ostrom suggested that neither ‘Leviathan’ nor privatization can be only way to solve the tragedy of the commons. There is a third way of which historically grown, institutionalized rules allow for self-governance of the commons (Ostrom 1990). The conclusion Ostrom arrived at was not just theoretical, she also systematized her suggestions empirically based on variety of case studies users of common-pool resources (Ostrom 1990).

It is safe to say that Ostrom’s work promoted the interest of commons within the literature. But discussing the commons in urban sense requires a different understanding of the notion itself. Differentiations particularly arise from two aspects of the ‘urban common’. First, the urban domain is much more complex and interrelation in terms of not just scale but socially and economically as well. Second, commons cannot be limited to static natural resources. In fact, the modern usage of commons often refers to variety forms of commons. Ostrom herself was critical of merely understanding the commons in terms of subtractive CPRs. On latter study she co-edited with Charlotte Hess, Ostrom made a distinguish between subtractive and non-subtractive resources (Hess and Ostrom, 2006). Harvey was explicitly critical about Ostrom’s understanding commons in her original study, *Governing The Commons*. He states that;

... she limits her inquiry to so-called natural resources such as land, forests, water, fisheries, and the like. (I say “so-called natural” because all resources are technological, economic, and cultural appraisals and therefore socially defined.) Ostrom expresses no interest in other forms of common property, such as genetic materials, knowledge, and cultural assets, which are very much under assault these days through commodification and enclosure.

(2012: 103)

Within the common literature one of the most influential contribution can be found the work of Hardt and Negri’s (2009) *Commonwealth*. Their emphasize on intangible form of commons opened up whole new channels for disputation. In addition to the earth and natural common, commonwealth also and even primarily refers to collectively produced and used human resources such as ideas, language, information and affects (Enright and Rossi, 2018). For Hardt and Negri (2009: 139), “this form of the common

does not lend itself to a logic of scarcity as does the first”. The contestation of strict enforcement of managing commons between the private and the public similar to Elinor Ostrom, or as they elaborate, the “equally pernicious political alternative between capitalism and socialism” (Hardt and Negri 2009: ix). But for Hardt and Negri, neo-liberal understanding of instituting the commons cannot be implemented within existing institutional apparatuses, but is linked with the coming into being of a communist future (2009: ix). As radical it may seem, they advocate that, the commons are not something to be inserted into liberal republican structures. They argue that, since contemporary societies are based on intellectual and linguistic reciprocity, commons are strictly tied etymologically and historically to the political vocabulary of communism. As they note, “what the private is to capitalism and what the public is to socialism, the common is to communism” (2009: 273). The key example they make needs no further explanation;

Language, for example, like affects and gestures, is for the most part common, and indeed if language were made either private or public—that is, if large portions of our words, phrases, or parts of speech were subject to private ownership or public authority—then language would lose its powers of expression, creativity, and communication.

*(2009: ix)*

Hardt and Negri’s work is very much depended on their perspective of the contemporary society that we all share today. For them, one primary effect of globalization, is the creation of a common world, a world that, for better or worse, we all share, a world that has no "outside" (Hardt and Negri, 2009). And within this world, according to them:

Contemporary forms of capitalist production and accumulation in fact, despite their continuing drive to privatize resources and wealth, paradoxically make possible and even require expansions of the common. Capital, of course, is not a pure form of command but a social relation, and it depends for its survival and development on productive subjectivities that are internal but antagonistic to it.

*(2009: ix)*

In this sense, commons have a key function within capitalist accumulation. The disassociation between two mainstream understanding of commons, despite the

similar opposition to recipe of public-private dichotomy, begins here. Whereas Ostrom's or neo-liberal policy proposals emerged from the challenges of accounting for the role of civil-society associations, local governments and informal actors in resource management within a post-Fordist and increasingly interdependent world, Hardt and Negri base their understanding of the common on a heterodox Marxist interpretation of contemporary knowledge-based capitalism (Enright and Rossi, 2018). It is important to note that, according to Hardt and Negri (2009) contemporary capitalism relies on communal forms of value production, namely on the exploitation of what they call "biopolitical labour". This insight is a generalized form of Harvey's process of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey, 2003).

Acknowledgement of the two aspects of commons, namely the tangible form such as air, water, lands, and all other natural resources and the intangible form such as knowledge, languages, codes, information, affects, is rather crucial when attempt to define urban common. Now, both forms of commons are subject to exploitation of biopolitical labor, but intangible form of commons are part of a process of reproduction because they are byproducts of social relations, practice of interaction and cohabitation. Since urban area is the sphere for these social relation the, "(m)etropolis then, is a factory for the production of the commons" (Hardt and Negri, 2009). In addition to that, within the urban sphere, even tangible form of commons would find opportunity be redefined which will be elaborated more latter chapter. On that account, applying commons to urban domain provides a quite fruitful base for discussion both theoretical and practical application of commons.

## **2.2. URBAN COMMONS**

The original commons literature in the social science often disregard the scale factor. The commons, especially when they conceived in physical form, defined at unscaled environment. It can be a pasture area locally shared by herdsman, a greenery park zone available to all city-dwellers, national park or coastal area offered to benefit all citizens. The 'scale problem' creates a unique challenge for governing commons in that sense. Because achieved solutions at local scale for example do not necessarily make for good solutions at national or global scale. This is also why the lessons gained

from the collective organization of small-scale solidarity economies cannot translate into global solutions without resort to nested hierarchical forms of decision making (Harvey, 2012). Moreover, the common resources that subject to enclosure are typically rural areas such as forests, pasture areas, rivers lakes and etc. In relation to that, recent implementation of progressive communing often refers to implicit anti-urban ideology within conceptualizations of the commons to the fact that urban environments are conventionally regarded as places bringing strangers together, thus originating an experience of fear and suspicion rather than of community and solidarity (Enright and Rossi, 2018). Yet an emergent literature can be found which seeks to promote urban commons not only in Hardt and Negri, (2009) and Harvey (2012) but also in others (e.g. Blomley, 2008; Parker and Johansson, 2012; Susser and Tonnelat, 2013; Parr, 2014). Now the significance of recognizing two separated forms of the commons comes in sight at this point.

First, the tangible forms of commons deserve to be looked in more skeptically within the contemporary city. Hess and Ostrom (2006) defines the common as ‘a resource shared by a group of people’. When this ‘group of people’ come together in the city, their activities create not just an economic outcome, but also generates modes of collectivity in immaterial, relational outcomes. As Louis Wirth (1938) described in his seminal article ‘Urbanism as a Way of Life’:

The city has thus historically been the melting-pot of races, peoples, and cultures, and a most favorable breeding-ground of new biological and cultural hybrids.

*(1938: 10)*

Elaborate on that, Park argues that the city does not simply provide the stage for its inhabitants to act out their scripts; rather, they are ‘characteristic products of the conditions of city life’ (1925: 14). Thus, the sociological aspects of the modern city presence an enormous potential of reshaping activities of ‘group of people’. What is common in the city, then, would directly be linked to activities of the people. The common Hardin or Ostrom portrayed particular dissented from commons within the city. Jerram (2016) argues in his contribution to this notion, particular urban commons are not simply out there, waiting to be exploited; rather they must first be produced and then constantly reproduced.

Certain parts of the city, such as roads and parks, are often seen as limited resources. In other words, while these places are used by people, since they are not unlimited, it reduces the use of others. For instance, since the capacity of the roads is limited, any additional vehicle added will have a negative impact on this shared resource. Interestingly, however, the city alone does not represent a resource without the people who use it. These resources have no value unless they are actively associated with these places, that is, without those who use the streets, avenues, and parks. And indeed, both the commercial and subjective value of particular places (such as parks or shopping malls) may increase by being used and shared, meaning that – at least to some extent – they constitute non-subtractive resources (Borch and Kornberger, 2016).

In this case, consumption actually turns into a productive action for the urban commons. Skaters using the parking lots or cyclists using the roads actually contribute to the cultural value and atmosphere of a city with their activities. Again, these implications actually call into question the applicability of the 'source' analyzed in Ostrom's work for the urban common. She assumes resources to be non-problematic, objective and given; yet in reality the urban commons result from people using, consuming, appropriating the city. Hence, an urban resource is fundamentally different from Hardin's and Ostrom's CPRs: the grass on a meadow might be given – but the resources that constitute the commons of the city are contingent on urban actors' ability to use them (Borch and Kornberger, 2016). Treating the urban commons only as a resource that dwindles with use, overlooks this structure of urban common that is produced as it is consumed.

Second, intangible form of common is also founds its roots within the urbanization process itself, especially and more rapidly within the global neo-liberal world we all live and share. The intangible form basically refers to ideas, codes, cultural heritage, intellectual accumulations which in general, knowledge that produced at every scale. But urban scale on the other hand, becoming increasingly central to knowledge-intensive and tech-driven capitalism (Enright and Rossi, 2018). Urban economies are being deeply reshaped by the advent of a wide range of experiential economies, in which conventional boundaries between production and consumption, between labour

time and leisure time, are increasingly blurred (Enright and Rossi, 2018). The city or urban scale, then, holds its unique characteristic feature of providing atmosphere that intangible forms of common being crated. Hardt and Negri explicitly advocates this particular aspect of city as;

In the biopolitical economy, there is an increasingly intense and direct relation between the production process and the common that constitutes the city. The city, of course, is not just a built environment consisting of buildings and streets and subways and parks and waste systems and communications cables but also a living dynamic of cultural practices, intellectual circuits, affective networks, and social institutions.

*(Hardt and Negri 2009: 153–154)*

In summary, the emergence of the urban common parallels the increasing interdependencies of global neoliberal capitalism and the emergence of the need for resource management. The response of civil society, local governments and informal actors to this need has given the urban commons a normative meaning. Hardt and Negri's (2009) writings looks at the urban common with a rather heterodox Marxist approach. In a sense, the transfer of public goods, which we directly call common goods, to capital accumulation through the exploitation of biopolitical labor in the value production process. This occurs because the common perceived as tangible asset. While tangible urban common goods such as air, natural resources and the environment encounter the exploitation of biopolitical labor, intangible urban common goods such as ideas, cultures and intellectual accumulations refer to a positive point. Because these abstract urban commons have the ability to be reproduced as they are consumed. It is crucial to understand the commons not as a resource that is diminished through (over-)use but instead to investigate how the urban commons is entangled in and contingent upon its consumption (Borch and Kornberger, 2016). There is a leastwise hope to achieve by emphasizing this form of commons, i.e. is to move discussions of urban commons some steps forward and to point to timely topics and directions of research not yet explored in the literature. At that point, it is actually the civil society - urban common relationship that will be emphasized in Chapter 4.

### **2.3. LOCAL ROOTS OF URBAN COMMONS**

The current wave of interest in urban common began as a reaction to late neoliberalism. Contemporary capitalism is known to have a crisis-prone character (Enright and Rossi, 2018). Meaning that the economic crisis that causes social and economic problems such as unemployment, income inequality and poverty is inherent to capitalism. However, despite these deficiencies, especially after the 2nd World War, capitalism emerged as victorious of the bipolar ideological rivalry, i.e. socialism vs capitalism, that started under the development paradigm. More strikingly, with the peaceful denouement of the Cold War, Francis Fukuyama (1992) finally ‘ended’ history itself, pronouncing liberal-democratic capitalism as good as it gets, however flawed, effectively closing down additional renderings of alternative state worlds. In fact, we can read all the remarkable paradigm changes from the industrial revolution to the present day as the history of the projects capitalism has imposed to overcome the crises it has fallen into (Şengül, 2009). However, such a discussion is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Significantly, the crisis of 2008 and its aftermath have reignited interest in the geographies of social justice and inequality, and in cities as strategic spaces to observe the conflictual dynamics of capitalism, particularly those rooted in the financialized housing market (Enright and Rossi, 2018). When the cities were the places where the consequences of the crisis were most severe, the search for solutions had to include the city, at least on the basis of discourse. This urban perspective, moreover, has opened new vantage points from which to view struggles over the commons (Enright and Rossi, 2018). Thus, the source of interest in urban common emerged.

The globalization process and the new problems that this process has caused constitute one of the most important discussions of the current period. The fact that the 2008 economic crisis first started in the USA and then spread to the whole world has been one of the most important indicators of this problem. Globalization corresponds to a complex process that includes economic, social, political, cultural and spatial dimensions and in which all these phenomena turn into an international structure. Therefore, globalization should not be perceived as a technical process that is an inevitable result of technological development. On the contrary, the phenomenon of



globalization is a political-economic process that has to be associated with the capitalist capital accumulation process and has winners and losers within this framework (Şengül, 2009).

Another dimension that draws attention in the globalization debates, which this thesis actually wants to focus on, is the consideration of globalization and localization process as interwoven two tendencies. The neoliberal approach has established the relationship between globalization and localization on the basis of the increasing access of the local to larger markets in the process of globalization and thus, competition and cooperation advantage. Therefore, these two concepts, which seem fundamentally opposite to each other, have been considered as two separate processes that exist together. Increasing access to the global market is a positive process that contributes to the development of local communities by using local resources effectively and efficiently. It is possible to follow this understanding in the approaches of international organizations. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) report (1999) (as cited in Boekel and Logtestijn, 2002), local economic development is a participatory development process that supports partnership and cooperation activities between public and private sector actors in a specific region by using local resources and competitive advantage, allowing the joint formation and implementation of a general development strategy, creating a suitable business environment and supporting economic activities.

The understanding behind this approach is that while the globalization process erodes nation-states, as a result of this erosion the power under the control of nation-states is transferred to local units. Thus, while nation-states become insignificant, local dynamics gain importance. In this case, the spatial scale problem become the focus of the globalization-localization problematic. However, treating the question of scale as a technical issue refers to an ambivalent point. Because globalization is a process that should be comprehended historically and geographically. From a historical point of view, space plays a founding role in defining power relations. Local, nation-state and global scales and the relations between these scales are determined by power relations, and within the framework of these power relations, there are dominant scales emerging in every historical section. Therefore, contrary to the prevailing understanding, the

creation and dominance of scales is not a technical process. On the contrary, what kind of scale will become dominant is determined by political struggles within the limits set by technological development, which itself is a part of political relations (Şengül, 2009). Political struggles are always related to the 'social'.

From such a perspective, while discussing urban common, it is necessary to question the meaning of space and discuss its relation to the social. Because, urban common primarily defines itself in a scaled space. So when common is considered as urban common, a spatial scale is assigned to it. According to Urry (1981), what defines the local scale is the interaction of the social with the spatial and the combination of social relations that this interaction produces on a particular geographic scale. Intangible urban common, similarly, generated as a result of social relationships. If space emerges as a result of the positioning of social objects relative to each other, understanding this formation is possible with the analysis of the relationship between these objects. In this context, it can be said that spatial differentiation is, by definition, created by the differentiation of social objects. In this sense, since space is not an object, it cannot have a causal power and initiate the process. However, when a process is initiated with the effect of the social, the space can make an impact and difference on this process. For example, urban space cannot cause the working class to define itself as a class and become conscious in the face of capital. This conscious can only arise from the relationship of the working class with capital. Nevertheless, the concentration of workers in the urban space can facilitate or accelerate the organization of this awareness process resulting from the exploitation relationship. In short, the ontological status of the space is not sufficient to define scale, nor does it have a feature that can automatically create social relations.

From this point of view, it can be argued that the most fundamental process behind spatial differentiation is the uneven development of social phenomena, social production and reproduction. In capitalist societies, this situation constantly reproduces spatial inequalities by moving from one place to another in order to increase the profit and competitiveness of capital. General scholarship in human geography and other critical social sciences had insisted on how neoliberalism should be understood as an inherently urban phenomenon (Enright and Rossi, 2018). This

understanding is founded on Henri Lefebvre's and David Harvey's analyses of the secondary circuit of real estate capital, which highlight how the exploitation of the built environment, as well as the production of urban space more generally, play central roles in the dynamics of capitalism (Enright and Rossi, 2018). According to this understanding, the rent created over the urban space is actually a kind of transformation of the common. Another form of this can be seen in the axis of privatization of public goods. According to the interpretation of Peck (2012), privatizations have become more intense especially in the provision of urban services within the scope of austerity policy. In this perspective, urban environments are viewed as contra-cyclical regulators of economic development in a context of capitalism, particularly through the exploitation of the rent gap in the built environment, the privatization of public services, the expansion of consumerism and the commodification of social relations (Enright and Rossi, 2018).

In the traditional sense, enclosing the common is considered positive for better management. Hardin has also defended this, while Ostrom has pointed out that this is possible with a mix of private and public tools. However, when it comes to the urban common, the privatization of public services in the neoliberal economy results in the detriment of the segments that benefit from these services, especially the working class (Jeffrey *et al.* 2012). This, in fact, beyond the housing crisis, which is the result of the redistribution of rent. It is to cause capitalism to create deeper crises. Within this, struggles over the commons are viewed as a response to the processes of capitalist expansion, particularly within the framework of contemporary 'planetary urbanization' (Brenner and Schmid 2014).

Yet, it should be noted that urban commons are neither a set of tools constituted to solve this crisis, nor an ideological or methodical strategy. Urban common is what emerges as a result of models developed to reduce the consequences of the crisis. The search for solutions of the crisis-prone character of capitalism seemed to be reached through a model called 'localization'. In a sense, we can call this the reinvention of the local. Foucault (1980) opposes a holistic struggle against capitalism while explicitly promoting the local. Foucault, evaluating the issue in a power relationship, puts forward local struggles as a strategy of resistance to multiple power relations. At this

point, 'local', defines social relations that have emerged in a specific area. In addition to seeing the local as a new field of struggle within the framework of the left view, another interesting point is that the New-Right movement has policy suggestions and practices that similarly emphasize localization (Şengül, 2009). This movement, which started under the leadership of Anthony Giddens (1998), placed a significant emphasis on 'local governance', 'decentralization' and 'localization'. In a word, local has been one of the most prominent concepts both on the right and left (Şengül, 2009). As explained in detail above, it is possible to say that the process of localization, which is assumed to proceed side by side with globalization, is at the center of discussions today.

What we should understand from 'local' and 'localization' is actually a very important issue. 'Localization' in the popular sense, actually corresponds to a scale. But it is difficult to say that this scale represents a universal standard. Local not always necessarily means the urban scale. Because urbanization corresponds to a socio-economic and socio-political process, and it is not static but dynamic. There may also be local scales in urban areas. Moreover, local has been a concept that is sometimes used to denote even rural space. Therefore, it is necessary to clearly state that there is a confusion of concepts regarding the ontological status of the local. In summary, defining the local and the local scale is much more problematic than other scales. The local scale is difficult to define because of the supra-local characteristics of the social relations that define it. Social relations in supra-local processes often create chaotic and complex consequences that also affect the local process.

Another important aspect of the emphasis on locality is the reference to the positive relationship between localization and democratization. Localization enables local units to gain more autonomy by reducing the power of the central authority. At the same time, it is argued that the localization process will increase participation which improves pluralism and contributes to democracy. Localization, occasionally used synonymously with decentralization, refers to efforts to strengthen village and municipal governments, both in terms of demand and supply. On the demand side, it strengthens citizens' participation in local government - by, for example, instituting regular elections, improving access to information, and fostering mechanisms for

deliberative decision making. On the supply side, it enhances the ability of local governments to provide services by increasing their financial resources, strengthening the capacity of local officials, and streamlining and rationalizing administrative functions (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). Since the urban common is itself the result of a policy implementation, not a policy proposal, it can be positioned more on the demand side of the issue of localization. Nonetheless, this issue has been dealt with extensively elsewhere and is beyond the scope of this work.

It can be argued that the scale of the nation-state, which was thought to be weakened by the impulse of globalization, started to be replaced by a local scale including pluralism. All local cultures, identities and codes that the nation-state oppresses for the sake of homogenization thus gain a space where they can express themselves. In a sense, this transformation, which promotes and disseminates pluralism, has the potential to create a space where the local can express their unique cultural patterns and identities (Tekeli, 1996: 88). Now, instead of a space that the nation-state can easily conquer, there is a need for a civic space with a culture of dialogue, persuasion and discussion (Tekeli, 1996: 88). In this context, according to Hirst (1994), the rediscovery of the local scale reinvigorated long-standing ideals of associative democracy, which advocate the centrality of self-governing associations performing public functions as a response to the failure of both the state and the market.

While the regaining popularity of the urban common was caused by the crises of capitalism, the emergence of the need for localization was caused by an older crisis, which is the state failure. The most important consequence of the issue of state failure, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, beyond the question of scale, is that it puts civil society at the center of the debate. This approach, which emphasizes the necessity of a third sector between the market and the state and called "civil society", is basically trying to create a new perspective by radicalizing pluralism (Şengül, 2009). According to Cohen and Rogers (1995), the radicalization of democracy is not a task that can be assigned to the working class alone, as it was in the past. Civil society organizations should be seen as the most important elements of such a process. With the mobilization of organizations in civil society, it is possible to overcome the problems such as inequalities created in favor of large-scale capital, the

failure of political parties reflect representation, the exclusion of the masses that make up the majority of the society from the political system (Cohen and Rogers, 1995).

This thesis aims to show that a seemingly weak relation, the civil society-urban common relation, has the potential to be a very powerful tool of resistance. To articulate abstractly from the politics of space is not meaningful in terms of the struggle for power. This is where local roots of urban common originate. Assigning a local scale to the urban common and emphasizing the discourse that it gains a political meaning through social relations is not enough to start and continue a power struggle alone. The ability to organize and maintain this struggle is possible with civil society organizations. Tekeli (1996) does not limit the field of civil society only to a communicative action, but defines it as an area where problems and demands arising at the urban level are formed and expressed. According to Şengül (2009), the political content of social urban movements experienced so far is weak. So rethinking civil society in this sense can revive group-based political struggle against global neoliberal capitalism. In order to do this, it is necessary to understand and analyze the civil society very well. In the next section, it is tried to show how civil society should be perceived as a tool by discussing civil society in depth.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

It is highly important to note that capturing the ‘civil society’ notion in academic writing, although considerably useful, is quite hard to overcome. Challenge originate from difficulty of defining “what is civil?”. From historical point of view, what philosophers and scholars understands from the ‘civil’ has been variating due to changes in society itself. Even with the contemporary democratic societies, it is almost impossible to find consensus for the definition of ‘civil society’. Hence, this part of the thesis will begin with investigating different conceptualizations of civil society. After a short review of the notion, civil society associations in Turkey will be examined in order demonstrate constraints of institutionalization civil society. Reviewing civil society associations as an institutional form of civil society may seem presupposition of the neoliberal approach or ignoring the strong interdependence between civil society and sociological uniqueness of society such as cultural codes, historical roots or organizational forms and etc. However, especially in terms of political sense within the contemporary societies, various orientation of civil society, although it is notably fruitful discussion to maintain, is more related to democratization process, seeking solution for social problems, widening to public realm, social development and reforming political discourse. This extension of civil society debate will not be covered in this thesis.

Building on this conceptualization and understanding, the latter chapter will have linked urban commons with civil society associations.

### 3.1 THE PURVIEW OF CIVIL SOCIETY

As stated above, the modern meaning of civil society has been transformed related to changes within the society itself. But it is widely accepted that origins of the concept of civil society can be trace back to Aristotle, the term *koinonia politike* that he uses the describe or define antique political society. The term *koinonia politike* that can be translated as 'society politics' or 'community of citizens'. For Aristotle the *koinonia politike*, an association of free and equal 'men', is the most important community of all communities which is almost equal to the *polis*, the polity or city-state (Onbaşı, 2008). The *polis* is the sphere in which free and equal men as "political animals" act politically. Aristotle explains:

... every community is established with a view to some good; for mankind always act in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community (*koinonia politike*), which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good.

(Jowett, 2020)

The deduction from this explanation is that, for Aristotle "civil society" (*politike koinonia*) was identical with "state" (*polis*). The most important feature of the term, thusly, being the highest form of community or association, exceeding other human communing or grouping without political meaning. Aristotle wrote that "all societies would seem to be parts of civil society [*koinonia politike*]" (Onbaşı, 2008). In short, Aristotle established an opposition between a civil society and an *ethnos* i.e. a society without an institution it becomes clear that for Aristotle civil society was the equivalent of what we today call the law-governed state (Colas, 1997).

"The conceptual and lexical identification of civil society with the state" remained unchanged for a long period of time (Colas, 1997). Within Western political thought tradition, the social contract theorists/philosophers, namely Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau, continued to understand the word 'civil' as the state; that is, they claim that groups of people who come together to form communities, around a social contract, empower certain people (the ruling class, politicians in the present sense), and that the resulting state becomes civil society itself. Hobbes for instance, claims that the people should give/transfer authority to a single power (king,



emperor, etc.) without question. The only way to stop the "conflict" situation is for an authority to silence the people with tyranny. He argues that as long as all individuals continue to hold the same right of nature no one can feel himself secure. "The mutual transferring of right is that which men call contract" and as a result of this, *the society with a state* (i.e. civil society) comes into existence (Onbaşı, 2008).

Locke's writings on the concept of civil society also convergent with the idea of the law-governed state. Blurring the line between state and civil society to a certain extent, he suggests, "It is actually society that grants the 'authority', and this authority is given to create the commonwealth, if it does not serve the interests of society, it will take back the authority it has given" (Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*). Deduction from this; there is a state, but also there is a community that generate and regenerate this state. The existence of the state is questionable, but this would not change the existence of the community. So for both Hobbes and Locke it is the existence of the state that makes a society civil. This is a particular/peculiar usage of the term "civil society" different from the way in which the concept is being employed in modern world and hence this peculiarity needs to be highlighted (Onbaşı, 2008).

The third voice of the social contract approach is Rousseau who additionally handled with the idea of civil society inside the system of a correlation between "civil society" and "the state of nature." Nonetheless, Rousseau's perspective and his examination between these two notion is altogether different from Hobbes and Locke in several significant regards. In a nutshell, first and foremost, Rousseau sees the rise of civil society as related with the rise of private property; not with the development of the state or a political area with a typical public power to comply. Rousseau famously claims that:

The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying *This is mine*, and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society. Humanity would have been spared infinite crimes, wars, homicides, murders, if only someone had ripped the fences or filled in the ditches and said, "Do not listen to this pretender! You are eternally lost if you do not remember that the fruits of the earth are everyone's property and that the land is no-one's property.

(Jonson, 2014)

While social contract philosophers treating the civil society within the socio-political framework, Adam Smith, building on Rousseau's private property contribution and taking the matter to an economic plane, in his seminal work, *The Wealth of Nations*, he made a distinguish between state and civil society and what he understands from civil society is the market that regulates everything. Hence, according to Smith, the market is the center of the debate and corresponds to civil society and civil society has no relation with the state. However, substantial contribution to this market-based approach to civil society developed by Adam Ferguson. In his classic text, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, views civil society as "a socially desirable alternative both to the state of nature and the heightened individualism of emergent capitalism". Ferguson's civil society enhancements are quite distinguishable, and by against the idea of civil society that Adam Smith bases entirely on the economy and the market, he points out that civil society also has a cultural side, it cannot be just a matter of market but also an acceptable way of social life, a mannerliness. In sober fact, this description is somewhat tribute, a praise to bourgeois modus vivendi. Nevertheless, Ferguson's conceptualization of civil society is very much imminent to contemporary usage of the term. Of course, it will not take long for Hegel (and partially Marx) to remonstrate this approach. Although Hegel's conception of civil society deserves a more explanation and will be examine in details below, in short, Hegel views society itself as in hierarchical form and recognize that there is a pattern of needs and these needs cause conflict in society, and civil society is a realm of these conflicts.

To sum up, as David Lewis points out, "both approaches shaped the concept's early evolution." (Lewis, 2001). It is with these methodologies that the change in the utilization of the idea of civil society started to happen. John Keane refers that "the language of civil society (societas civilis) traditionally used to speak of a peaceful political order governed by law came instead to refer to a realm of life institutionally separated from the state institutions (Keane, 1998).

Certainly, this approach that prioritize the bourgeois is to be subjected and criticized by Hegel and Marx. Hegel, drawing the modern, up-to-date portrait of civil society, especially by presenting the most essential fixation in the framework within the concept of civil society. Particularly, Hegel presents a new deeper dimension to the

civil society discussion by articulating social aspects of political and economic notion of civil society itself. According to Hegel, there is a hierarchy or array of necessity in the general society and these needs creates conflicts within the society, hence the civil society is the field of these conflicts. Instead of acting field of petit bourgeois' and civilized middle class's which is recently arise, Hegel's perception of civil society and the state are repositioned as two different constitutions. The state and civil society are distinctively unique formations and civil society is positioned opposite the state. The bourgeois co-relations has no practical effects except the legitimacy in the framework of law.

In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel defined civil society (*bürgerliche Gessellschaft*) in distinction to *der staat*; the strictly political state. In his thought, civil society is a modern concept that comes into being alongside the development of capitalism (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 122). It is generally agreed that, Hegel noticed a tension between the individualistic values that creates civil society and the reproduction of the community as an ethical entity (Onbaşı, 2008). In order to ease that tension, Hegel turns to the 'state' as the only possible solution to this conflict. He thinks that it is not utterly impossible to resolve this tension within the civil society itself (Onbaşı, 2008). Hegel argues that "men (individuals in modern terms) are dependent on one another and reciprocally related to one another in their work and the satisfaction of their needs" and suggests that individuals with all their particularities, selfishness, subjective self-seeking, and endless needs and desires etc. *are capable* of making a connection between particular and universal, once they become conscious about the meaning of freedom, the end of reason and education, the nature of human mind and complex interdependence of each on all (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 127). The individuals in civil society are expected in Hegel's thought to make a connection between their particularity and the universal, it is also what the state is expected to do. Thus, Hegel reaches the conclusion:

The result is that the universal does not prevail or achieve completion except along with particular interests and through the cooperation of particular knowing and willing and individuals likewise do not live as private persons for their own ends alone, but in the very act of willing these they will the universal and their activity is consciously aimed at none but the universal end.

(Hegel, 1967: 161)

This analysis of the Hegel's approach toward the concept of civil society shows that Hegel views the realm of civil society as the realm of particularism whereas the state as the representative of the long-term interests of the society (Onbaşı, 2008). Hegel conceptualized the state as the higher institution that embodied the highest ethical ideals of society and hence where contradictions could be resolved. In that sense, in Hegel's view state and civil society are not two mutually exclusive categories but they are relational (Onbaşı, 2008). Briefly, Hegel believed that although in the existing (real) situation civil society is characterized by conflicts among self-seeking individuals and their particular ends, ideally it is possible for the principle of universalism to develop in the civil society (Onbaşı, 2008).

Marx on the other hand, does not believe in the ideal possibility of reaching the principle of universality within civil society. For him, an analysis of civil society is a "materialist critique of social conditions". Actually this is related with Marx's approach toward history which he calls as the "materialist conception of history" and to which he integrates the concept of civil society. Marx introduced the perspective of political economy into the concept of civil society. He viewed civil society as the realm of material conditions that shape the other spheres of life including the state. What gives these material conditions their form is the mode of production i.e. the capitalist mode of production (It should be noted that, an examination of Marx's analysis and critique of the capitalist mode of production exceeds the limits of this thesis). Marx's main critique is that individual's 'rights' or 'liberties' within the civil society is actually inherently related to private property. The "rights of man" is in fact right to protect *private property*" and hence, the latter implies "the right to enjoy one's property and to dispose of it at one's discretion (*à son gré*) without regard to other men (Onbaşı, 2008). Marx argues, that "the sphere in which man acts as a communal being is degraded to a level below the sphere in which he acts as a partial being". So, the separation that is made between civil society and the state through "political emancipation" or "civil liberties" did result only in "the dissolution of civil society into independent individuals. According to Marx, civil society is only the field that social cast of the society is being regenerated. In fact, for Marx, the civil society poses the risk of preventing the possible revolution. It can be summed up that Marx wasn't

convinced the understanding of civil society as a field of freedom; as well as understanding of strict separation between state and civil society. It is sufficient to state that, as the proletarian revolution proceeds, it will take a different form and will have a different objective of using state power.

The most important representative of this stream, namely Gramsci, make an addition on top of the Marx critic by asking; why we do not make a use of this concept and benefiting the socialism' since we believe that civil society has such a manipulation power. The main impulse behind his concern with the concept of civil society is to dwell on the ways for the proletariat to have "hegemony" over other social classes in the society (Onbaşı, 2008). Related to this, he also wanted to know why the classes, which are in a subordinate position as a result of the workings of capitalist relations, still do conform instead of overthrowing the existing system that works to their disadvantage. As a part of this insight, Gramsci (1971) understand the state of affairs in terms of the relations between classes. According to him, "*the state is the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules...*". For Gramsci the concept of civil society implies the realm of ideological struggle taking place among the social classes (class being an economic fact) to reach hegemony over other classes in the society (Onbaşı, 2008). However, there is always the possibility that the ruling class may lose its hegemony and another class can win the hegemony in civil society. The significance is to use features of its tools properly.

So far, it has been discussed where civil society arises from in the academic literature and within the framework of which currents of thought it is shaped. In summary, civil society was perceived as a field struggle only in a conflictual relationship with the state, and within this framework it was discussed in a way that would create two different fronts. The first front, the liberal front, whose predecessors are social contract philosophers, has always understood the state by the word 'civil'. They claimed that groups of people who came together and formed a community authorized certain people (ruling class or politicians in terms of present meaning) around a social contract in order to coexist, and that the state that emerged as a result of this authorization was

civil society. Later on, Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson, on the other hand, added the virtues of the bourgeois class to civil society by associating civil society with the market. In other words, they added a liberating role to civil society. The socialist front represented by Marx, Hegel and Gramsci basically objected to this articulation and regarded civil society as oppression and class division.

Today, civil society is discussed on a very different ground. Global neoliberal capitalism, which has increased its influence especially after 1980, has pushed civil society into an indeterminate area between the state and the market. Civil society, which is associated with democratization by reproducing the pluralist understanding, has basically been reduced to a public sphere formation problem. As we will discuss in detail in the next section, modern conception of civil society refers to both an area between the market and the state, and organizational forms with certain characteristics.

### **3.2 MODERN CONCEPTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

It can easily be observed that, regardless of which approaches defines best the ‘civil society’ notion, two essential questions still remain as challenging when it comes to institutionalize civil society; i.e. capturing civil society associations as in organizational form. The first question, surely, what associations, organizations, foundations, establishments, institutions or structure can be regarded as civil society within the modern world? The second question would be than, what its legitimacy based on?

The answer to latter question would help us to figure out the former one, because the source of legitimacy is also defining feature of the element itself. And the answer is quite simple seemingly; it is based on being people and their spontaneity. According to Kukathas (2003), “Civil society is, straightforwardly, society; and there is much to commend in this answer, since it is, broadly, right”. Hence, it is safe to say that contemporary academics and thinkers agree at least about this: the legitimacy of civil society is the same with the legitimacy of the state; it’s the people. However, civil society cannot replace the state. Civil society is part of the solution, not of conflict. The purpose of existence of today's modern state is to create an area that provides

diversity, transparency and accountability. In this respect, the struggle for power in this area should be carried out on a more legitimate basis by positioning civil society not against the state, but next to it. Thus, the existence of civil society actually means limiting the power of the state.

Interest in the concept of civil society has undergone a notable change in the 1990s. The main reason for this interest, whose reasons will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, is that it has been claiming to bring a solution to a deadlock that has been going on for a long time. In the field of political theory, the concept is currently seen as a potential tool to overcome some of the main theoretical and political dilemmas. Many attempts have failed to reach exact definition of civil society, but a loose working definition can be found on Bernard (1998): a “third cell” between market and state, constituting a “civil space” occupied by “public beings”, that is, non-governmental and non-commercial citizens and organizations engaged and devoted to public good (Bernard, 1998). Although ‘civil society’ is understood in many different ways, and although there is much ambiguity in the concept, this definition has a functioning feature. According to this definition, civil society occupies the middle ground between government and the private sector. It is the space that we occupy when we engage neither government activities such as voting or paying taxes, nor in commerce such as working, producing, shopping or consuming. (Barber, 1996).

In this setting, the role of civil society becomes central. First of all, positioning civil society against the state brings with it debates on legitimacy and the political system. The state, in whatever form, represents a legitimate authoritarian power in a given area or space. Therefore, opening a new space to civil society means transferring some of this power. Such transformation, as Hirst argues, implies a transfer of power from the political system to civil society (1994). ‘Third Way Politics’, discussed in detail in Chapter 4, constitute one of the most important examples showing the results of this transfer. It is rarely mentioned, though, that the state, especially in modern democratic societies, actually derives its legitimacy with the promise to fulfill its duty of creating and protecting civil space.

Similarly, positioning civil society (as well as any other structure) separate from the market within the framework of contemporary neoliberal capitalism is pretty formidable task. The core value attributed to civil society is not having profit making purpose. However, it is a fact that a civil society organization needs a resource in order to maintain its activities, regardless of its size or form. Even just because of this, Angelli (1996) thinks that the private sector should be included in the concept of civil society (Angelli, 1996). Likewise, approaches that see civil society as a key tool for development argue that it is necessary to treat civil society as a separate sector.

In a way, it can be said that there is serious confusion in the definition and inference of civil society. This confusion becomes even more complicated when the acronyms CSO (civil society organization) and NGO (non-governmental organization) are considered. Civil society and NGO, although they are used as such in many texts, are not interchangeable terms. To make a very general distinction, CSOs refer to organizations that want to make an impact in society, propose a public policy, and emphasize more advocacy activities as a working method. NGOs, on the other hand, is an acronym used to express organizations that do not have a political agenda and choose more service-based working methods. CSOs refer to organizations that propose systematic reforms, advocate for rights in certain areas, and focus on division of powers. This does not mean a sharp distinction. In fact, the concept of NGO is mostly used as a more general concept. So these references to CSO can also be used for the abbreviation NGO. The use of CSO in this thesis has been especially used when expressing civil society in order to include the positive meanings attributed to civil society.

Then what kind of organizational forms are civil society organizations? As we can deduct from Hegel to modern times, one of the most influential (and agreed upon within academic literature) portrait of civil society is that whole of the sphere left vacant by the state. This is essentially corresponding to quite ambiguous and overarching set of institutions. Platforms, forums, (social) cooperatives, associations, foundations, chambers, unions, professional organizations, community based formations, social entrepreneurs and even some online communities can be considered civil society entities. Furthermore, these institutions that have listed are only those that



are defined at the national scale. At local or global scale, a wide variety of institutions and organizations can be found that are also considered as civil society. Any local communities or international organizations nowadays identify themselves as civil society. Hence, the institutionalization of this concept, which is itself extremely ambiguous, also creates uncertainty to the same extent. Notwithstanding, one of the most influential effort to overcome this uncertainty is manifested by the Salamon and Sokolowski, (2016). They create a definition for civil society organization that has agreed upon by setting some criteria. In short, there are certain principles that an organization should have in order to be considered as a civil society. It should be based on the basis of voluntarism, work for the benefit of the society, should be transparent, solidarity, value-oriented, autonomous and participatory. It should definitely have a certain task definition and have cooperation with other organizations. The accountability mechanism within and outside the organization should work seamlessly. Operations should be running without profit making purposes (which is one of the most controversial criteria). It also should have a management structure that will not allow the struggle of power and make an effort to avoid monopolization in its field (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2016).

As a result; organizations based on this concept, which itself is very perplexed, do not have a specific pattern, as well as do not have a consensus approach that will create outcome in every society. However, civil society has the function of opening a democratic space in almost every society. It contributes to the democratization process by mediating different voices and providing a variety of ideas. Of course, in order for these to be done, civil society organizations must absorb democratization within themselves. Especially, ensuring transparency in management and organizing in a horizontal hierarchical structure instead of vertical hierarchy is at the top of this. Organizations whose one important mission is to work to eliminate the inequality in society, consciously or unconsciously, can create an obstacle to eliminate this inequality by softening the area of existence.

### **3.3 CIVIL SOCIETY ASSOCIATIONS IN TURKEY**

As mentioned above, difficulties of institutionalization and theorization of civil society is also occurring when examining different aspects of civil society organizations in

Turkey. Although the concept of civil society has a direct relationship with cultural codes, the civil society-urban common relationship and the concept of civil society in Turkey does not constitute any exception within the framework of prominent factors and results. On the contrary, this concept, especially after 1980, is seen as the most important actors of Turkey's democratization and global integration process including particularly full membership process of the European Union (Göle, 2001). From this point of view, examining the civil society on a state domain basis, which has important effects on the social life of the urban class in many aspects, aims to concretize the ambiguous nature of the concept.

### **3.3.1 Historical Aspect of Civil Society in Turkey**

Although Turkey's civil society adventure showed a certain degree of continuity with the Ottoman past, the notion has undergone considerable change with the establishment of the Turkish Republic. When examining Turkey's political history periods, the years between 1923-1980, corresponds to the modernization periods of Turkey. However, the form of this modernization process has consequences that have a direct impact on the civil society adventure. Because this process was carried out by an initiative that had political, economic and ideological preconditions such as the construction of a secular and modern national identity. Maybe more importantly, this initiative was at the level of the ruling elite of the young Turkish Republic. In other words, this process was forced in opposition of public desire and it was top-down. When we look closely at Turkish modernization, it can be seen that it has carried out with a state-centered approach. It should be noted that the enormous willpower of this elite bureaucracy towards modernization is quite striking. The reason for the formation of an understanding of modernity in which the state as a whole plays a dominant role in various ways, is the "strong state tradition" that existed in the past. In the process of forming the republic regime in Turkey, state has acted as a privileged and dominant subject by operating in a completely independent way from the society because of the powerful assumption that the conversion capacity comes from the top. Within that period, it was the state, not the government, that constituted the primary content of politics, defining its boundaries, and determining who can or cannot participate in (Keyman, 2006). Therefore, according to the Hegelian understanding of civil society, it is very difficult to talk about a civil society atmosphere that would increase the

participation of social groups in politics during this period. The ground for an understanding of civil society that occupies the areas freed by the state and can demand the protection of civil rights and freedoms was impossible to be found within the public authority of the period.

Nevertheless, noticing the weakness of civil society should not mean that organizational life does not exist and does not play a role in this process. On the contrary, the government of the period supported the modernization process in accordance with the understanding of both the strong state tradition and the national developmentalism. They fancied an active society that will contribute to the process to reach the level of contemporary civilization swiftly. This organizational life included (a) public employees organizations, (b) foundations, (c) cooperatives, (d) associations (Içduygu & Keyman, 2004).

The years between 1980 and 2000 witnessed a period that transformed the understanding of civil society through the political and social changes experienced in parallel with the reorganization of the state-economy relationship in Turkey. In the civil environment shaped as a result of the emergence and consolidation of the neo-liberal discourse, which is the discourses of "individuality", "free market" and "minimal state" found a greater place in the political arena. According to Göle (2001), the concept of citizenship, which is defined on the basis of republic and duties, has been replaced by the concept of democracy and active citizenship, which is based on the philosophical principles of rights and freedoms that include individual and group-based demands for autonomy, pluralism and democracy. The seeds of a civil society perception that transformed this understanding were also planted in this period. (Göle, 2001). However, according to Özbudun and Keyman (2002), civil society has, in fact, been "turned into an abusive tool" by political actors because identity politics, misconduct by the strong state tradition and the free market ideology of this tradition, became dominant. As a result, civil society could only develop quantitatively, not qualitatively, in this period.

The current state of civil society in Turkey was shaped almost within the framework of the EU harmonization process after 2000 and took its final form. The increasing

importance of the concept of civil society in academic and public discourse is a development especially in recent years. It is possible to observe that both non-governmental activities are becoming widespread throughout the country, and the number of civil society organizations has increased as well as become one of the important actors of social change. According to the statistics published by the Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society, the number of active associations are steadily increased since the year 2000. We can see from Figure 3.1 that the number of associations, which was 73,377 in 2000, has increased by approximately 70% in total and reached 122,056 by 2021.

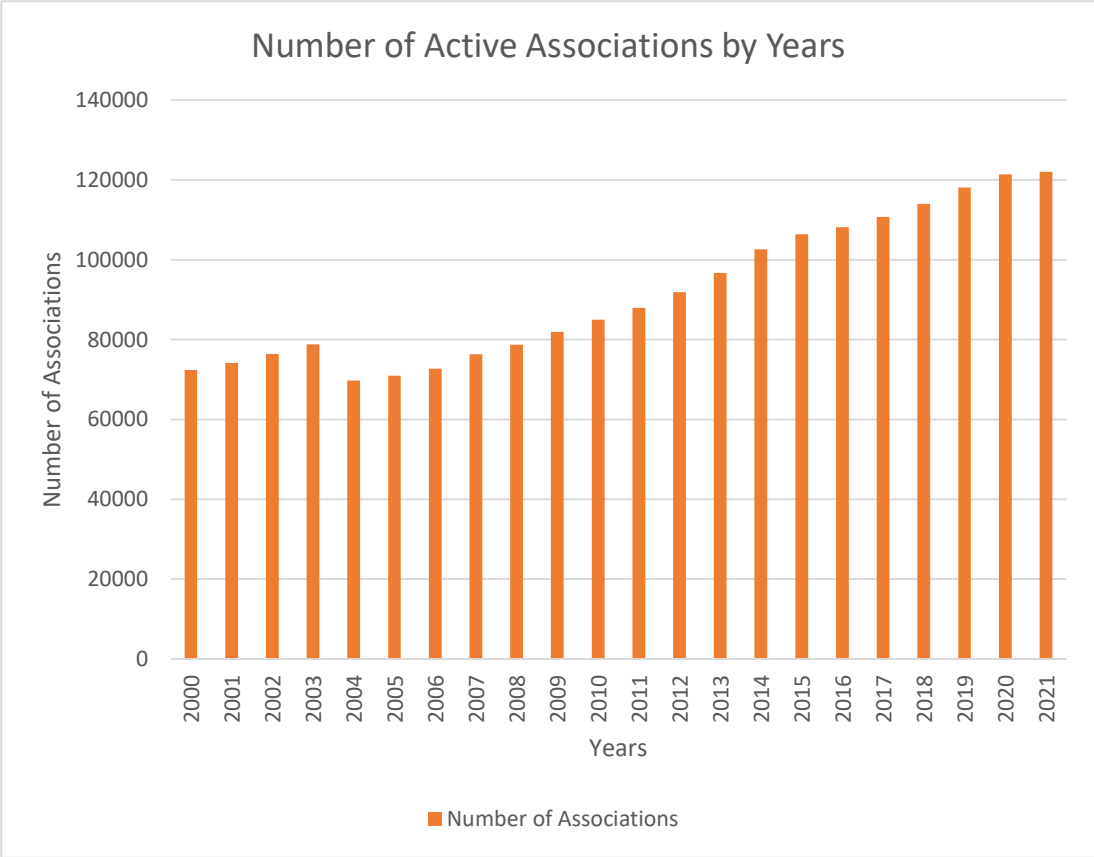


Figure 3- 1: Number of Active Associations by Years

As discussed above, civil society organizations in Turkey involve other organizational forms (associations, foundations, professional organizations, cooperatives and non-legal entities such as initiatives and platforms). But due to the limitations of the data for the study, only associations have taken into consideration in this matter. It should

also be noted that in the post-2000 period, civil society gained value not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. The most important reason for this is the "deepening and clarification" process in Turkey-European Union (EU) relations, which took place in parallel with the revival of civil society in Turkey in the 2000s.

Turkey-EU relations, which can be rooted back historically to the Ottoman Empire, experienced an important turning point institutionally with the Ankara Agreement in the 1960s. However, Turkey-EU relations, which essentially contain serious debates, ambiguities, even tensions and conflicts, entered a period of deepening and clarification in the 2000s. Since the Helsinki Summit in 1999, Turkey-EU relations have become more established and consolidated. This process gained a new incentive when Turkey received a conditional date to start membership negotiations at the 2002 Copenhagen Summit. The decision to start the negotiation process targeting Turkey's full membership to the EU on 3 October 2005 both symbolizes this deepening and clarification process, and as British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw emphasized at the time, "historic decision for Europe and the international society (Keyman, 2006). However, the decision on the full membership negotiation process was not taken easily. Firstly, until this decision, Turkey changed the position of candidate country given to it between 2000-2005 to the status of "conditionally starting the full membership negotiation process without delay" in 2002. Turkey then turned this into the "starting of the full membership negotiation process" in 2004 (Keyman, 2006). The Copenhagen political criteria basically point to the creation of the necessary conditions for democracy by the candidate country and its implementation in state-society relations. The establishment of a democratic state order, the protection of individual rights and freedoms, including minority rights and freedoms, form the basis of the political criteria required for EU membership. As Turkey-EU relations developed and deepened, situation forced the government to make various legal and structural changes and also to implement these changes in state-society relations in order to raise Turkish democracy to European standards. The developments in these years depended on Turkey's rapid democratic reform process and in this context, its success, which is implicitly means that full membership of EU considered as a great success, in adapting to the Copenhagen political criteria. Although the full membership negotiation process includes a problematic structure with an uncertain end and serious

problems and contradictions, Turkey, which started this process, has entered a process of significant legal and institutional change in the field of human rights, individual and cultural rights and freedoms (Keyman, 2006).

It is clear that this process has very important consequences for civil society in Turkey. First of all, the tendency of state/society/individual relations towards democratization, which started in the 1980s, increased even more with the effect of the effort to adapt to the Copenhagen political criteria in these years. The search for developing the language of rights-freedoms-responsibilities in society and arranging state-society relations on the basis of active citizenship has found the most suitable ground in the field of civil society. Because the development of civil society is directly dependent on the spaces that the state does not control and the implementation of individual freedoms with the understanding of participatory democracy. At the same time, considering that the EU treats civil society as a vital actor in the implementation of the Copenhagen political criteria in Turkey and the creation of a positive image of Turkey in Europe, we can say that the most concrete impact on the development of civil society comes from Turkey-EU relations (İçduygu and Keyman, 2004). On the other hand, such an assessment, according to Keyman (2006), ignores the problems, uncertainties and ambiguity in Turkey-EU relations and makes the mistake of looking at these relations with a one-sided causality. While civil society contributes and is affected by this relationship, it also helps shape this relationship and has a structure and capacity that affects its future. In other words, Turkey-EU relations have a transformative effect on civil society, as well as civil society on these relations. In this context, instead of a unilateral causality relationship, the place and role of civil society in Turkey-EU relations should be approached on the basis of "interaction and mutual causality" (Keyman, 2006). Finally, whatever the extent to which Turkey has succeeded in applying the Copenhagen political criteria in the EU process so far, its failure to make the necessary structural reforms permanent, the will it has demonstrated in establishing and maintaining participatory democracy, including civil society and the other economic-political consequences of the EU process in general, although disputable, it falls outside the scope of this thesis.

The post-2000 period has also witnessed the perception of globalization not as a temporary reality that can only be reduced to an economic phenomenon, but as a social phenomenon, a historical context that gives meaning to the changing structure of the world. The scale of civil society, in parallel with this, has gained direction towards the global scale. In this process, civil society and actors forming civil society has expanded into the global arena. Civil society has been considered as a key area and an effective actor for eradicating poverty, promoting democracy and good society management, resolving social conflicts, securing human rights and freedoms and protecting the environment (Naidoo, 1999). In relation to the revival of civil society and the EU candidacy process, civil society in Turkey has become a part of the globalization process, not an exception. This situation both increased the access of civil society to global financial resources (especially EU funds) and reinforced its newly gained ground of legitimacy.

As explained above from different angles, the state-centred Turkish modernity and the organic society vision have been the main obstacles to the development of civil society independent of the state and its tutelage. Despite the success of Turkish modernity in many different fields, identity construction has been the basis of the modern society creation process, and as a result, the vision of a state that constantly supervises and suppresses the public sphere has been a dominant understanding since the foundation of the republic. An oppressed public sphere is the most important obstacle to the development of civil society. Moreover, the emergence of the idea of civil society and the qualitative development of civil society organizations in the 1980s and 1990s took place in the shadow of the politics of identity/difference. Regardless of the motive, the liberalization of the public sphere will benefit society as a whole. After 2000, civil society took a different position. In recent years, civil society has not only contributed to the resolution of different demands and identity problems in a democratic platform, but has been perceived as a transformative way to prevent its development, encouraged and even seen as an actor that is sometimes overemphasized as discourse.

As a result, although the history of civil society goes back to the late-Ottoman and early-republican periods on the basis of professional chambers, foundation tradition and fellow citizens, civil society as an organizational life outside the political and

economic fields is very new. This situation, which was tried to be briefly summarized above, aims to help us understand the present day of civil society. Although the socio-political history of Turkey in the academic literature, the current period is considered as the continuation of the post-2000 period, "today's civil society" deserves to be examined under a separate heading, at least as of 2021 on the axis of civil society. Because, despite its development in the 2000s, the extent to which civil society is effective in Turkey today is also a matter of debate. Especially in recent years, the political developments in Turkey have greatly affected the EU process and therefore civil society. Despite the fact that Turkey has an ongoing candidacy and full membership perspective on paper, with the process that started with the refugee crisis in 2016, Turkey's status has gradually turned into a process that leads to a "Third Country" status in practice. This means that the EU full membership process has almost come to a standstill. On the other hand, the gradual centralization of the administrative system in Turkey, contrary to the course of the world, and especially the political power's efforts to re-control the public sphere, not only slowed down the momentum gained by the civil society in the early 2000s, but almost brought it to the point of reversing. In this context, in the next chapter, while trying to present the current picture of civil society in Turkey, first a brief analysis of civil society in terms of legal, functional and economic aspects will be made, and then the strengths and weaknesses of civil society as of today will be briefly evaluated.

### **3.3.2 Legal Status of CSOs Turkey**

First of all, there is no legal definition of civil society in Turkey. The definition of a civil society with a defined legal personality and a framework that we can put into a thematic system with criteria such as which organizations are considered as non-governmental and non-profit, working for the public interest cannot be made at least on a legal basis. Platforms, forums, social cooperatives, associations, foundations, chambers, unions, professional organizations, trade unions and even some online communities can be referred to as civil society organizations. However, they do not have a legal personality that corresponds to civil society neither in public law nor under private law. In a political sense, civil society is expressed as voluntary human communities operating in a separate field from the state. With a set of principles, especially non-profit and working for the public interest, this already vague definition



is given a legal meaning. On the other hand, it is possible to come across definitions that refer to organizations that operate for profit and not for the public benefit, but on their own behalf or for the benefit of their members, as civil society. In this sense, it is very difficult, even impossible, to define civil society in Turkey on a legal basis. However, this situation is quite understandable due to the socio-political nature of civil society. Because one of the most basic elements of civil society is autonomy. The fact that it is under the restrictive regulation of public law and in a hierarchical relationship with the public authority is an important obstacle to the development of civil society. Therefore, the main purpose of the legal framework should be to protect freedom of association, freedom of expression and the right to participate. Otherwise, civil society will become an extension of the public administration and face the danger of losing its function.

However, some authors, such as the Salamon and Sokolowski (2016) mentioned above, have attempts to define civil society within the framework of certain principles. We can say that the public authority in Turkey actually built the legal ground of civil society on a similar logic. If we look at the legal ground on which civil society organizations in Turkey operate in general;

One of the most common form is **association**. In Turkey, associations may be formed by notifying the Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society of the Ministry of Interior. Associations are considered to have been formed as soon as notification is given and can undertake activities on the date of notification. The Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society reviews the application within 60 days; and grants a 30-day period to the association to make necessary corrections in case of a missing document or a violation of rules in the application. However, in practice, there have been cases where the Directorate General, instead of receiving incomplete documentation, returned applications it found incomplete or missing a document only after a preliminary review during delivery of documentation.

Application by a minimum of 7 people is required to form an association. Nonetheless, an association should have at least 16 members to establish mandatory bodies (executive board and supervision board) during the general board meeting which

should be held within 6 months. According to report prepared by Civil Society Development Center (CSDC), unless these shortcomings are overcome, action will be taken to annul the association (CSDC Report, 2020). Prior to the constitutional referendum in 2017 that held in Turkey, the General Directorate of Civil Society Relations was operating under the name "Department of Associations". After referendum, the institution became a directorate and its institutional structure within the public hierarchy was changed. However, as a result of this change, a difference could not be made in the scope, vision and mission of the institution. As before, the business and operations of associations, unions, federations and confederations are carried out by the General Directorate of Civil Society Relations.

The second form is **Foundation**. The General Directorate of Foundations Institution, where foundations are registered, reflects another civil society tradition that has been ongoing since the Ottoman Empire. Foundations may be established when the foundation deed is registered by a court of first instance. The official process for establishing foundations may vary depending on the workload of the court where the application is filed. In 2018, the minimum asset limit for establishing a foundation was set as 60.000 ₺ (TRY) and filing a legal action with the Civil Court of First Instance cost 186,65 ₺ (TRY) (CSDC Report, 2020).

While these organizations are affiliated to the Ministry of Interior, the General Directorate of Cooperatives, which carries out the business and transactions of cooperatives, is affiliated to the Ministry of Customs and Trade. An exception to this is the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations affiliated to the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services. These organizations, each of which is organized as a foundation, are located in every district of Turkey without exception.

Also, **Foreign Organizations** should deserve to be looked in another form. Foreign organizations require a work permit to operate in Turkey. The Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society, in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reviews applications for work permit for 6 types of activity: Opening a Representation, Opening a Branch, Undertaking Activities in Turkey, Engaging in Cooperation, Becoming a Member of an Association or a Supreme Organization Forming an

Association or a Supreme Organisation<sup>16</sup>. In 2018, a total of 12 foreign organizations obtained permission to undertake activities. Out of these 12 foreign organizations, 6 obtained permission to establish a higher association, 1 to open a branch, 4 to directly undertake activities and 1 to become a member of a higher association. The total number of CSOs authorized to operate in Turkey in 2018 is 130 (CSDC Report, 2020).

In terms of types of association, Turkish laws recognize associations, foundations, federations, confederations, trade unions, unions and cooperatives as non-profit legal entities and disregard non-profit companies, social initiatives, social cooperatives and networks. Platforms are not considered as legal entity although they are defined by law. The fact that these types of association do not have legal entity and hence do not enjoy the same rights as associations and foundations, lead to a preference of these two main types of associations, namely associations and foundations, over others (CSDC Report, 2020).

### **3.3.3 Civil Society Organizations According to Organizational Forms and Fields of Activity**

At its most basic level, organization refers to the qualitative and quantitative skills and functions of an organization that strives to protect and promote the rights and interests of its members. The reason why individuals come together by forming a representative community to protect their own interests is that the organized use of rights and freedoms is more effective than the individual use. The feature of organizing as one of the building blocks of civil society came to the forefront in the 1960-1970s, when the union movements gained momentum. Today, it has become an indispensable right and tool for almost all civil society organizations. So much so that the freedom of association is considered an integral part of a democratic society and is guaranteed by the relevant articles of the Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Conventions of Human Rights. As such, it corresponds to a very legal and political concept.

On the other hand, the form of organization is a measurable and classifiable organizational mechanism skill that emerges from the principles applied by following certain methodologies. The purposes and methods that people come together in civil

life determine the nature of the organization they have established. For example, unions are formed when individuals in the same occupational group come together to protect and improve their economic rights against employers. On the other hand, chambers are formed by people who are organized to glorify the social reputation of a professional group, to set professional standards and to increase the technical knowledge and skills of their members. Establishing an association on a different basis, for example, on a voluntary basis, in order to fulfill one or more of the same purposes, is an example of a different form of organization. In short, it would be more inclusive to classify civil society organizations by considering both their purposes and activities and the way they are organized.

In order to develop a better understanding of civil society in Turkey, the indicators and statistical data by Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society of the Ministry of Interior of Turkey will be used. As discussed above, other organizational forms should be examined in order to deliver comprehensive insight but again, due to the lack of the data for the other organizational forms, this part will be examined through only **associations**.

Associations make a good sample for study, both because they are the most common form and because they have sufficient diversity and inclusiveness. The easiest and most widespread function of establishing civil society organizations in Turkey is realized through associations. Because establishing an association requires less bureaucratic procedures than other forms, and it is easier to manage economically than other forms, as in the example of foundations. In other words, beyond just the available data, associations in academic studies often constitute the examination element of civil society. Even when civil society is under the spotlight in the reports of public institutions and/or the EU, associations are the most common elements of evaluation. Of course, as stated, different forms may be preferred depending on the purpose. However, it is obvious that the most basic form of civil life in Turkey is associations. As it can be understood when the next graphic is examined in detail, it is thought that associations established in almost every field of civil life and established in many different purposes and fields of activity can also provide good insight.



Figure 3- 2: Number of Active Associations by Field of Activity

Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society classifies the organizations by various categories respect to their field of activity. General distribution of organization in Turkey are given in Figure 3.2. According to this, Professional and Solidarity organizations reached 31.38% among all associations with 38,314 units, making it the most common field of activity. There are many reasons why this field of activity is the most common field of activity. First of all, civil society is already based on solidarity in the civil field. Therefore, this result is an expected result. Another important issue is the establishment of fellow countryman associations in Turkey for the purpose of solidarity. This is actually a result of the rapid urbanization and migration in Turkey in the last 40-50 years, as will be reviewed in the next section when discussing the fellow countryman associations in detail. The understanding of ‘fellow countryman’ formed the basis of the sense of solidarity of the rural people who migrated to the big

cities in large numbers. On the other hand, it is quite interesting that although professional chambers are both widespread and well-established in Turkey, there seems to be a need for establishment of a large number of professional organization.

Professional and Solidarity organizations are followed by 27,303 unit Sports and Sports related associations. It is not surprising that this field, which corresponds to a rate of 22.34% among all fields of activity, is also so widespread. Although sports clubs have gone the way of incorporation instead of association status in recent years, this includes a small number of clubs with a certain economic size. Therefore, sports clubs have an important share in civil society associations. On the other hand, the fact that sports are the most common hobby in modern society and especially in urban communities and the increase in the economic size of the sports industry in many different branches also play a role.

Associations Engaged in the Carrying Out of Religious Services on the other hand, constitute the 3rd most common field of activity with 18,521. Although the religious service in Turkey is constitutionally considered a public service, the fact that the association operates in this field with a high rate of 15.11% seems contradictory at first, but the high number of mosque construction associations explains this situation.

While 6213 (5.08%) associations work in the field of Educational Research activities, the number of Culture, Art and Tourism associations is 6046 (4.94%). These two areas are followed by Humanitarian Aid Associations with 5642 numbers. It is possible to say that there has been an increase in the number of Humanitarian Aid associations, especially after the refugee influx after 2016.

Another striking point in the figure 3.2 is the low number (1511) and rate (1.22%) of associations operating in the field of Rights and Advocacy. Civil society is the structure that cares most for the needs of under-represented or discriminated groups in the policy making process. It has a very important mission to criticize and monitor the state in order to influence changes and developments in social policies. In fact, the fact that civil society is advocacy-based rather than service-based is a preferred feature in

terms of its contribution to democracy. In this sense, it is clear that civil society in Turkey needs more and more qualified Rights and Advocacy associations.

### **3.3.4 Economic Aspect of Civil Society**

One of the most important debates about civil society, which is often overlooked, is the economic aspect of organizational life. Unlike the primarily profit-based private sector and public institutions funded primarily through taxation, most civil society organizations' financing is a mix of different income streams. Civil society revenues come from contributions from members and supporters rather than taxes or profits. First of all, the creation and maintenance of an organization's existence is directly dependent on its economic existence. Especially in the 2000s, there are EU progress reports and risk analysis studies that see both the financial environment in Turkey and the financial sustainability conditions of CSOs as the most important obstacle to the development of civil society (EU Turkey Progress Report, 2005:5). This situation is very important not only in terms of the means by which civil society's financing is based, but also in terms of the results according to the tool used. CSOs can naturally face resource shortages. CSOs that are fed from a single fund rather than from different funds will be able to reflect the behavior and structure of their main income source over time. For example, CSOs that rely mostly on government funds will resemble public institutions over time. There are different instruments for the government to financially support CSOs. State financial support; through grants, tax exemptions, contracts, coupons and loans. In general, if the government shares a common interest with a particular CSO, it will tend to provide financial support and also to exert great control over the organization. Conversely, if the government does not share a common interest with an CSO, the CSO may be ignored, denied legal status, not considered for grants and subsidies, or not have a favorable tax approach. Moreover, this relationship, which creates a civil society structure that is directly dependent on public resources, will cast a shadow over the independence and autonomy of civil society.

For CSOs that rely solely on earned income, however, there is a jeopardy that they will resemble market firms. To achieve this, non-profit associations were given the right to establish economic enterprises, while foundations were given the right to open businesses. The integration of civil society organizations into the market in this way,

on the other hand, brings with it a separate discussion topic as it will reinforce the profit-seeking behavior.

On the other hand, the issue of independence is beginning to lose its legitimacy for civil society organizations that try to survive only on donations and membership fees. Another important issue for Turkey is that the donation law has a very ancient and restrictive aspect. It definitely needs to be reconsidered and restructured to be both more inclusive and in line with today's financial environment.

Finally, one of the most ideal forms is to finance CSOs with projects and funds through the public and EU budget. In recent years, it has been observed that an increasing number of organizations have applied to these funds and provided their financing in this way. However, two important issues are overlooked here. First, we are witnessing an increasing number of the organization starting to deviate from its real purpose, by setting its mission and vision as flexible and broad as possible in order to apply for these funds. These funds, which are generally focused on thematic areas, create both a competitive and populist environment. Secondly, these projects, which focus on a certain time and work, are quite insufficient to create a sustainable income source for organizations. Many organizations are terminating themselves as funding from the project runs out. This makes financial sustainability of organizations almost impossible.

The determination of the economic size of civil society in Turkey can be made through associations, again based on the available data. Information obtained from the Directorate General for Relations with Civil Society is shown in Figure 3.3. Accordingly, the income of associations in Turkey has increased continuously since 2015. The total income of the associations, which was 10 billion 831 million ₺ (TRY) in 2015, increased by 12% in 2016 and reached a total income of 12 billion 299 million ₺ (TRY). In 2017, it showed a more significant increase (32%) and reached a total revenue of 16 Billion 245 Million ₺ (TRY). Similarly, in 2018, it increased by 28% compared to the previous year and reached 20 Billion 839 Million TL. Finally, with an increase of 11%, it reached a size of 23 Billion 275 Million 624 Thousand TL in 2019. In 2020, it decreased dramatically, even below 2015. It is desired that the civil



society gradually reach a greater economic size and contribute to democracy, participation, social development, freedom of expression, etc. to fulfill its social responsibilities more effectively. From this point of view, a continuous increase in the income level of associations can be evaluated positively. However, the total income level alone is not sufficient to measure the relative and real level of civil society. Thus, it is useful to look at the share of CSOs in the Turkish economy and its real increase.

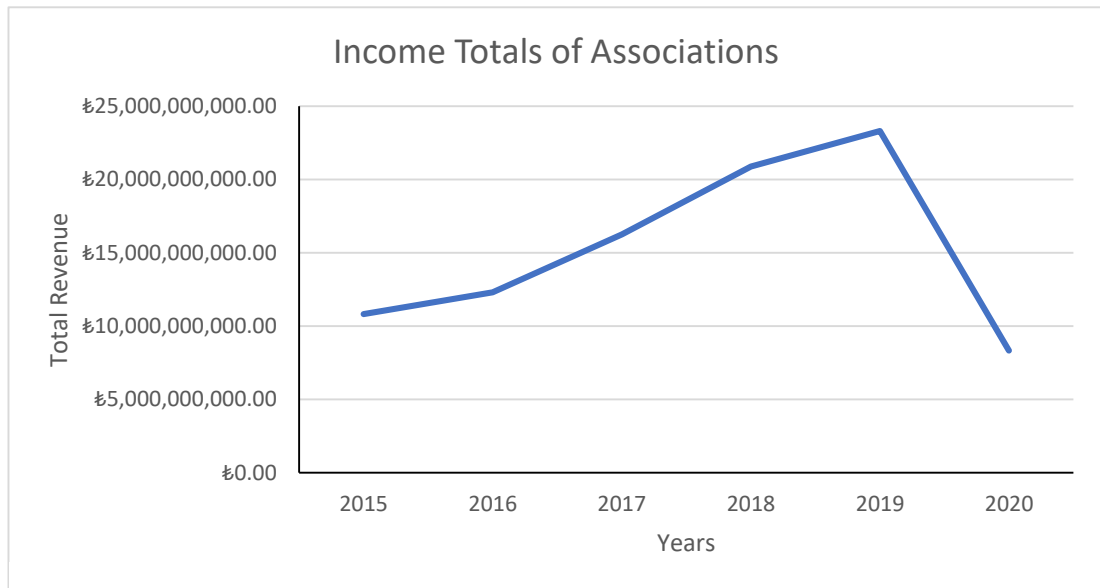


Figure 3- 3: Total Revenue of Associations

Figure 3.4 shows the share of civil society in the Turkish economy between 2015 and 2019. When evaluated over the total revenues of the association, the sectoral share of civil society in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) seems to be quite low, hovering between 4.5 per thousand and 5.5 per thousand. Of course, when the incomes of civil society organizations other than associations are added to this total income, it will increase a little more. However, it is not possible to reach such data at this stage. On the other hand, the change in its share in GDP provides meaningful data for us to understand the real situation of civil society. Looking at Figure 3.4, we see that despite the nominal increase in the income of the associations, the sectoral share in real terms increased slightly until 2018, but decreased again in 2019. It is not desirable for civil society to increase its income with a profit-driven approach by developing aggressive strategies like other competitive sectors. Therefore, many stakeholders, especially the public authority, have responsibilities in increasing the economic importance of civil

society. Increasing public funds, improving access to EU funds, and ensuring the sustainability of civil society through tax exemptions and subsidies are of vital importance.

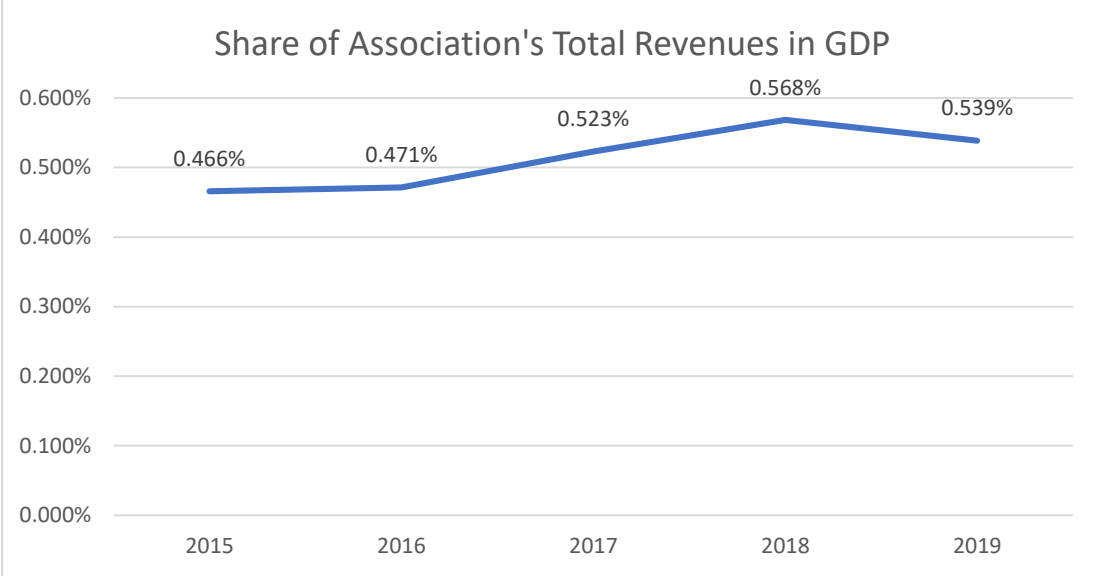


Figure 3- 4:Share of Association's Total Revenues in GDP

Another indicator by which we can measure the economic importance of civil society is the employment indicator. Figure 3.5 shows the number of people employed in associations from 2007 to 2019 by duration type. Accordingly, although there were periodic fluctuations in the number of people working in associations (including part-time and project-based work) from 2007 to 2019, there was a serious increase with 2.5 times. Similarly, the number of full-time employees has increased somewhat steadily since 2007 and has grown by 80% from 24,735 to 44,821 people. However, while it cannot be seen so clearly on incomes, as we can see more clearly on employment data, project-based work has been a very common type. As mentioned above, this situation creates problems in ensuring the access of associations to a continuous and regular resource and the continuity of their activities. Project-based experts are preferred instead of full-time and permanent professionals in associations due to factors such as the fact that the funds for civil society are generally oriented to a specific theme, the funds containing support for the institutional capacities of the organizations are not preferred by the funders, and the priorities in the policies for civil society are

constantly changing. While this situation makes the use of some fund resources more effective, it also harms the formation of an institutional memory in civil society.

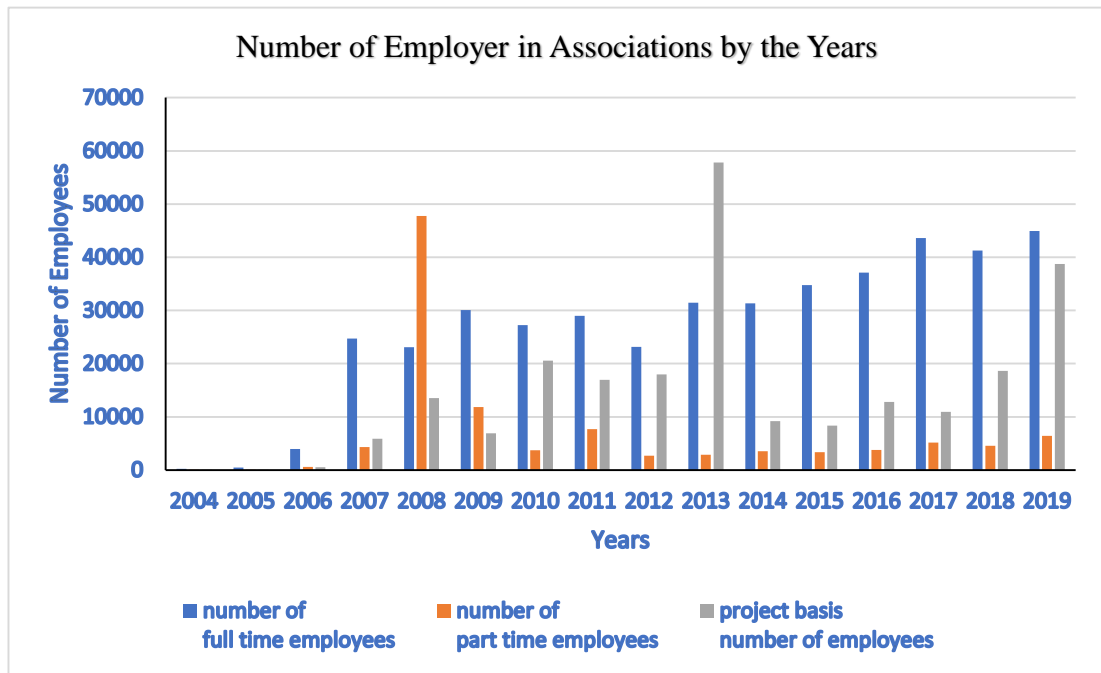


Figure 3- 5: Number of Employers in Associations by Years

Finally, by looking at the change in the number of people working in associations compared to the labor force in Turkey, we can see how it changes in real terms from Figure 3.6. Accordingly, while the number of people employed in associations was 17 per 10 thousand in 2007, it increased to 32 per 10 thousand in 2019. When we examine the general employment trend in Turkey, we can say that employment in civil society has followed a rather fluctuating process. The main reason for this is that civil society can increase its economic activities during periods when it can find resources, and inevitably stagnate in other periods.

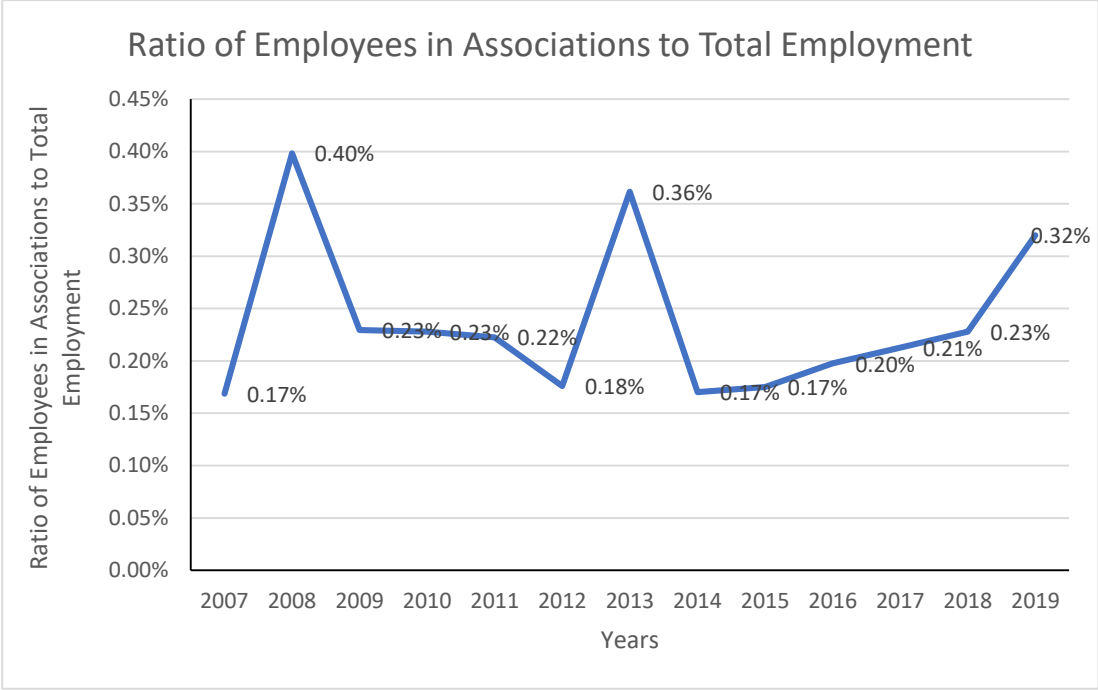


Figure 3- 6:Ratio of Employees in Associations to Total Employment

So far, it has been tried to reveal what the concept of civil society means concretely. The main purpose here is to reveal the socio-political picture of Turkey through the concept of civil society, while examining the example of Turkey. The concept of civil society, which will later be associated with the urban-common, is also a concept that must be understood within the social, political and economic context.

## CHAPTER 4

### URBAN COMMONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

It can be deduced from the issues cited above that one of the main aim of this thesis is to capture question that the modern society has been tackling with for a very long time; the relationship between the individual and the community (small or larger) in which s/he lives. While the urban commons framework provides the platform for this discussion via introducing and promoting intangible urban resources on which differently situated citizens (or broader sense individuals) and communities depend to meet a variety of human needs; civil society literature bring forth the method and tool for implementation and embodiment. On the one hand, urban common literature mainly focusses on resources within the cities such as community gardens, greenery areas, open squares and etc. And these urban resources give reference to use of public spaces. Thus, urban common typically becomes subject of resource management and adaptation of various tools, policies and decision making process; much like Ostrom's work to reach solution to problem (Ostrom 1990, 2005, 2010).

On the other hand, focusing on merely economic value of urban commons has a risk of ended up being rather wide of the mark. Handling urban commons as a 'resource management problem' is reductivism of sort. Because what gives urban commons its normative valence is the function of the human activity and social network in which the resource is situated (Foster and Iaione, 2019). In other words, urban commons only valuable when politically engaged people and their social interactions inherent to it. According to Harvey (2010), public spaces and public goods within the city mightily contribute the commons but it needs political action of citizens in order to make them as urban commons. For Harvey (2010), common is not to be construed without social relations and thusly there is, in effect, a social practice of commoning.

The term commoning, popularized by historian Peter Linsbaugh, captures the relationship between physical resources and the communities that live near them (Linsbaugh 2008). Translating into urban domain, urban commoning has somewhat similar provision with a small but crucial difference. Unlike resource depended governance, urban commoning has a potential of creating the social capital through the norms and networks of trust and voluntary cooperation, which is the core of urban commoning according to Foster and Iaione (2019). And this is particularly significant because as political scientist Douglas Rae has written, this social capital is the “civic fauna” of urbanism (Rae 2003).

It can be argued that the network of relations, solidarity and organization in the city constitutes the core of communing. In other words, the essence of social life in the city is the social solidarity of the citizens with each other. Once again, this is the essence of urban commons. Without this essence, namely without emphasizing the intangible form of urban common, the governance of urban commons or urban resources solely becomes the ‘resource management problem’. Harvey (2012) describes this nature of common as;” The common, even-and particularly-when it cannot be enclosed, can always be traded upon even though it is not in itself a commodity.” In other words, common easily becomes a subject of rivalry within the capitalist economic system, and there is no way to prevent overuse of that particular common. To put on his own words:

The ambience and attractiveness of a city, for example, is a collective product of its citizens, but it is the tourist trade that commercially capitalizes upon that common to extract monopoly rents. Through their daily activities and struggles, individuals and social groups create the social world of the city, and thereby create something common as a framework with in which all can dwell. While this culturally creative common cannot be destroyed through use, it can be degraded and banalized through excessive abuse. Streets that get clogged with traffic make that particular public space almost unusable even for drivers (let alone pedestrians and protestors), leading at some point to the levying of congestion and access charges in an attempt to restrict use so that it can function more efficiently. This kind of street is not a common.

*(Harvey, 2012:74)*

At this point, the relationship between the urban common and civil society emerges. Civil society is where communing embodies at the operational, legal, economic level and/or at the level of reflection of community life. There is a great significance to draw

attention to the relationship of civil society to urban communing. Principally, every urban common resource has to become publicly own resource by the whole society. The way to do this is by reproducing it through the network of social relations, in other words, by creating the intangible form of urban common. Otherwise, one of two undesirable results will occur. The first, resource turns into a public property and it will be the subject of administration and/or governance; which means it will be allocated by a political decision. This is the ‘Tragic nature of the Commons’ that Hardin (1968) speaks of. And there is no obviously desirable solution to that. Moreover, there is always the inherent risk that the government in power, which claims to be a possessor of public administration, will allocate it through urban rent or nepotism. The Weberian view claims that the state is a locus of power in its own right and this is misused in most cases. Urban common as a result, lost its essence by transforming into a public good. Secondly, as mentioned above, urban resources may become overuse, subject to rivalry in capitalist economy, and it may also cease to be common. In short, the unorganized behavior pattern, that is, the use of urban common resources that ignores the legitimacy of civil society organizations or excludes civil society, faces the danger of resource management being at the mercy of the public authority or the capitalist economy. Susser and Tonnelat (2013) regard commons as traditionally located within the bounds of a given community, it manifests the belonging of its members through a sharing principle, which is neither private nor public. According to them, the commons have suffered from the joint rise of both the private and the public domains, which have laid the ground for the marketization of nearly all objects and resources (Susser and Tonnelat, 2013).

Another consequence of disregarding civil society, or another entrapment that has been ignored as a result of disorganization, is that urban commons is too enigmatic to be reduced to resource management. Because for the first time in history, the majority of the world’s human population lives in towns and cities, with a steadily rising pace of global urbanization, but also because cities are global zones of intense exchange or interaction (Metzger, 2016). Self-sufficient economy of rural life based on that solidarity behavior has been disappeared. Agricultural production activities are an economic production for the city. That romanticized form of rural solidarity, that resurrecting neo-ruralist ideologies of authenticity, refers only to a marginal and

negligible percentage of the society. Nevertheless, at urban scale and within the capitalist world, the concept of civil society offers us the keys to creating surplus value through helping, solidarity and social relations. According to Harvey (2012) urbanization represents the perpetual production of urban commons but also the perpetual appropriation of these commons by specific groups and interests. Therefore, civil society can be very useful to find an answer to the problem of which social relations will divide this created value in the city.

## **4.1 THIRD-WAY POLITICS AND URBAN COMMONS**

### **4.1.1 The Basis of Third Way Approach**

Recognizing that the issues outlined above are of course not a new approach and it should be noted that the first equivalent of this approach in the political arena was the Third Way approach. Especially after the 1980s, some political unsteadiness, namely the dissolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries, steer the solution pursuit towards to market economy. However, after a short while, it was realized that market-oriented policies could not find a solution to issues such as increasing unemployment, social security, and income inequality. The answer to the question of whether resource management should be state-oriented or market-oriented is not well-marked for a very long period. Harvey (2010) for example, was not convinced Ostrom's (1990) CPR solution of 'rich mixtures of public and private instrumentalities' because the solution was disregarding scale problem. For urban common resources, lack of achieved or desired recipe is valid in the same way.

Anthony Giddens's 'Third Way' and its adoption by the New Labour, asserting the need to provide socially responsible answers to the challenges of the 'new capitalism', constituted the mainstream version of a larger academic and political stream that sought out a new route between the Keynesian social state and market-driven economic reform (Giddens, 1998). To put it briefly, this approach emphasizes the inadequacy of market and state-centered solutions and argues that a solution beyond these two rationales is possible. Third Way posits civil society at the very center and promote as an actor while suggesting that reappropriate series of merits such as democracy, participation, autonomy of local communities.



Since the concept of civil society viewed as responses to market and state failures, it is useful to discuss further of these two notions.

The first notion is the *Market Failure*. Markets fail when they are unable to allocate resources efficiently. Market failure depends on variety of reasons: one party to a transaction may have more information than the other; a firm may monopolize control over a market by restricting the entry of competitors. Common on its own may cause a market failure. Failures in information or coordination may cause a common need to not be provided by the market mechanism, resulting in a missing market (Mansuri and Rao, 2013).

Although inequality and poverty can coexist with both efficient and inefficient markets, market failures tend to deepen poverty traps and inhibit growth. Therefore, in theory, correcting or repairing market failures can help economies produce larger pies, and-in situations where the market failure disproportionately affects the poor-allocate larger shares of the pie to the poor (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). Correcting market failures is thought of as one of the central challenges of development (Hoff and Stiglitz 2001; Devarajan and Kanbur 2005).

One of the most important consequence of market failures is what economist called 'externalities'. In short, externalities are situations in which an act produces a cost (or benefit) that is borne (or enjoyed) by a party that was not involved in it. Externalities exist in the marketplace when the exchange of goods and services between two agents has consequences for people who were not involved in the decision. Externalities can be positive or negative.

A negative externality occurs when an individual or firm does not bear the full cost of its decisions. In this case, the cost to society is greater than the cost borne by the individual or firm. Examples include companies that pollute the environment without having to pay for cleaning it up. Negative externalities lead to the overproduction of goods and services, because sellers are not charged the full costs their goods and services impose (Mansuri and Rao, 2013).

A positive externality exists when an individual or firm does not receive the full benefit of its decisions. In this case, the benefit to society is greater than the benefit reaped by the individual or firm. Examples of positive externalities are spillovers from research and development. Positive externalities lead to the underproduction of goods and services, because sellers are not compensated for the full benefits of the goods and services they create (Mansuri and Rao, 2013).

When it comes to the government of commons, we are faced with a very unique type of market failure; coordination failure. According to Hoff, coordination failures are a special case of externalities in which the failure of individuals “to coordinate complementary changes in their actions leads to a state of affairs that is worse for everyone than an alternate state of affairs that is also an equilibrium” (Hoff 2000, 145). When parties to a transaction are unable to reliably connect and coordinate with one another, they are often forced into situations that make at least one of them worse off without making the other better off. The market is not always able to solve this problem, for a variety of reasons. Formal and informal institutions to enforce contracts may not exist or may be unreliable, for example, making transactions unpredictable and subject to manipulation and rent-seeking (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). In this case, state interference, namely government, is expected to be a solution of coordination problem with its regulatory tools. However, as we will see below, looking to government to solve market failures is problematic because it, too, suffers from problems of coordination, information asymmetry, and inequality.

The second notion is ***Government Failure***: Government failure occurs when a policy or political intervention makes resource allocation less efficient than the outcome produced by the market (Besley 2006). It is useful to distinguish government failures, which are common to all political systems, from political failures, which are government failures within a democratic framework. Like market failures, government and political failures are related to failures in information and coordination (Mansuri and Rao, 2013).

The classic information failure in governance is ignorance-the inability of a government to know the preferences of its citizens. Ignorance results in the misallocation of resources-providing schools where clinics are needed, building roads that head off in untraveled directions while septic tanks fester. Decentralization is often seen as a solution to this problem, because bringing government closer to the people increases the public's access to information and the government's knowledge of citizens' preferences (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). Also governments create information asymmetries by keeping the important information (details about contracts for public projects, budgetary allocations, and lists of people under detention, etc.) with authoritarian motives.

Governments are continually subject to various types of coordination failures, which result in some people being unable to influence decision making while others have undue access to state favors as a result of lobbying, corruption, or both. Coordination failures can also arise when incentives in the political system prevent good candidates from running for office, resulting in societies being managed by ineffective leaders, or when polarized sets of preferences result in inaction (a failure of collective action) (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). Coordination failures can create endemic problems such as absenteeism among public servants, which disproportionately affects schools and clinics in poor and isolated communities (World Bank 2004). They can also result in a "loss of the monopoly over the means of coercion" (Bates 2008).

Bates (2008) advocates that just as in case of market failure, the burden of government failure frequently falls disproportionately on the poor. Poor and illiterate people tend to suffer from vast gaps in information about laws and government procedures. One of the challenges of development is to understand where, when, and how to balance the power of the state against the freedom of markets. As markets and governments are fundamentally interconnected, the challenges of information and coordination influence not just failures within markets and governments but also the links between them (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). That puts civil society at the very center of the debate. Herein, it can be argued that the emergence of third way, a civil arena, could be a solution for overcoming government and market failures.

The alternative that emerged as a result of these two failures is *civil society*. Basic element of civil society is to build an effective local civic sphere. The philosopher Jurgen Habermas (1991) argues that civil society is activated by a “public sphere” in which citizens, collectively and publicly, create a “third space” that engages with states and markets. Thus, civil society is symbiotically linked to the effective functioning of markets and governments (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). An effective civil society is, then, the social arena in which citizens participate, voluntarily organizing to work toward their collective benefit. It is the space in which individuals turn into citizens. Mansuri and Rao (2013) argue that any collective effort to voluntarily mobilize citizens with shared values toward a common goal-consumer cooperatives, credit groups, neighborhood associations, religious organizations, social movements of various kinds, producer cooperatives, and a variety of formal and informal associations and advocacy organizations-is a civil society activity.

According to McCloskey (2006) and Mokyr (2010), in ideal state, civil society involves collective action, with justice, fairness, and other social norms as core goals; ideally, it is based on the principles of reciprocity, open criticism, and debate. In contrast, markets involve individual actors following individual goals of maximizing profits and generating wealth. These notions of justice and fairness may vary from society to society and group to group. But every social group has norms that determine what is fair and just, and civic action is mobilized based on these norms (Mansuri and Rao, 2013).

In general, firms tend to depend on a hierarchically organized division of labor, rather than equality, to meet their goals. Governments tend to be organized around politics, the goal of which is the reproduction of power; they depend on authority and loyalty to function. In contrast, civil society tends to be mobilized around common interests and the principle of equality (Alexander, 2006). All three spheres are needed to balance one another-and create a virtuous cycle. Market and government failures and inequity thrive in the absence of an active and engaged civil society, and civil society failures can exacerbate market and government failures. When the three spheres are equally healthy, they work in concert; the unequal tendencies of the market are balanced by the equalizing valance of the civic sphere, and the tendency of governments to

monopolize power is balanced by pressures for accountability and openness that come from civil society (Mansuri and Rao, 2013).

Absent appropriate regulation, markets would be motivated solely by profit maximization. In many cases, the short-term interests of a firm or industry do not coincide with the best interests of citizens. Similarly, in the absence of civic accountability, the interests of political leaders would be to hold on to power, capture rents, and preserve the existing hierarchy. It is expected from well-functioning civil society to interact with the market and government through various tools and a set of values and capabilities. Pressure from civil society groups has been responsible, in many parts of the world, for the establishment of agencies to regulate drugs, food, automobiles, and corporate behavior as well as practices that are unethical, inefficient, and inequitable, such as collusion and price fixing (Mansuri and Rao, 2013). An engaged civil sphere is even more critical to good government. If government is transparent and accountable, it is transparent to and held accountable by civil society (Mansuri and Rao, 2013).

#### **4.1.2 Third Way Politics and Cities: Civil Society on Urban Level**

The Third Way approach, which brings a liberal contestation to the rising left movements in the 1990s, has important consequences for the cities. According to Şengül (2009), the consequences of political and ideological transformations are striking especially the for cities. Because most of the services that define the welfare state and later become the target of the New-Right are of an urban nature; education, health, housing and more generally, local governments have been at the center of welfare state practice (Şengül 2009). Similarly, problems regarding social structure such as unemployment, housing problem, exclusion and marginalization, which are perceived as the unsuccessful consequences of welfare state policy, are mostly emerged and concentrated in cities (Şengül, 2009).

The importance of the Third Way (and more generally civil society), comes in sight particularly in discussion of urban commons. Before anything else, the bipolar system that emerged after the Second World War, namely capitalism versus socialism, couldn't able to find solution neither the management problem of urban resources nor

the problems related to social life. Especially in the mid-80s, it has seen how the cities shaped around the logic of the market started to be a place of economic and social inequality and they were unable to solve the problems of health, education, housing, etc. (Szelenyi, 1984). On the other hand, in state-centered cities, they also faced a non-democratic and non-participatory, somewhat an alienated structure under strict state control (Scott, 1999). In both cases, the resulting predicament was the inefficiency of urban resources by engulfing public space and struggles in social life through inequity. Of course, it should not mean that these results have been observed in every country and society on a linear timeline. Some governments and local governments have achieved much more effective and positive results through different mediators.

Historically, it can be argued that cities are shaped around two basic understandings: the first is the logic that evaluates cities on the basis of their market values, sees the urban space as a commodity that can be subject to exchange and pushes the wellbeing of the citizens into background; the second one on the other hand that contemplate the city around the values of its use and evaluates the urban space as a concrete living space rather than an abstract commodity (Lefebvre 1991: cited by Sengül, 2009). According to Giddens (1998), policies implemented within the framework of these logics create inefficient benefit distribution in cities and alienated communities rather than creating a society in which local communities have access to decision-making process.

The fostering of an active civil society is a basic part of the politics of the third way... 'Community' doesn't imply trying to recapture lost forms of local solidarity; it refers to practical means of furthering the social and material refurbishment of neighborhoods, towns and larger local areas. There are no permanent boundaries between government and civil society. Depending on context, government needs sometimes to be drawn further into the civil arena, sometimes to retreat. Where government withdraws from direct involvement, its resources might still be necessary to support activities that local groups take over or introduce – above all in poorer areas. Yet it is particularly in poorer communities that the fostering of local initiative and involvement can generate the highest return.

(Giddens 1998, 44)

Giddens (1998), summarizes the main elements of its proposed strategy for the empowerment of civil society under the following principles.

### **The renewal of civil society**

- Government and civil society in partnership
- Community renewal through harnessing local initiative
- Involvement of the third sector
- Protection of the local public sphere
- Community-based crime prevention
- The democratic family

In addition to Anthony Giddens, another important contribution that consider the Third Way approach as a solution to the resource problem on the urban scale comes from Paul Hirst. In this context, according to Hirst (1994), the rediscovery of the local scale reinvigorated long-standing ideals of ‘associative democracy’, which advocate the centrality of self-governing associations performing public functions as a response to the failure of both the state and the market. The “associative democracy” popularized by Hirst, primarily reference to the existence of a decentralized economy combined with the principle of cooperation and reciprocity. In other words, it is the replacement of the power of the central authority to a more local and reciprocal governance. In this framework, it will have ensured pluralism both economically and politically, and will be possible for local communities to gain autonomy (Şengül, 2009). According to Hirst (1994), significant alterations must be conducted in order to constitute that kind of a society and state structure. The state should delegate its functions other than arbitration to voluntary organizations. Purport to reject liberal and Keynesian solutions in economic terms, Hirst (1994) advocates transferring the duty of being the bearer of the social structure to the third sector, that is, to the sector whose primary purpose is not profit, which is formed according to the principles of reciprocity and voluntarism. In short, Hirst proposes to empower civil society while advocating for increased local autonomy, which is to promote of the minimal state standpoint.

Another Third Way construct similar to this understanding is also present in the work of Cohen and Joel (1992) but with an explicit contestation of Hirst’s minimal state standpoint. According to Cohen and Joel (1992), the state has a strategic position in strengthening associative democracy because the sphere of civil society, which is the source of associative democracy, is not, as claimed, neutral, of no political interest, and of equality. Therefore, “the state should be responsible for preventing unnecessary

fragmentation and friction in this area and, more importantly, for keeping the disadvantaged groups intact and ensuring their participation (Cohen and Joel, 1992)” (Şengül, 2009, p. 280). It should be noted immediately that this remark is shared by professionals working in the field of civil society today.

Despite their differences, the most important issue that third-way advocates have in common is that the state is clearly engulfing civil society. This is most evident in the disappearance of public space. The explicit contestation arose specifically to explain the inequality in socialist cities. According to Giddens:

Policies of community renewal must not ignore the public sphere. An open public sphere is as important at local as at national level, and is one way in which democratization connects directly with community development. Without it, schemes of community renewal risk separating the community from the wider society, and are vulnerable to corruption. ‘Public’ here includes physical public space. The degeneration of local communities is usually marked not only by general dilapidation, but by the disappearance of safe public space – streets, squares, parks and other areas where people can feel secure. The state can swamp civil society. This happened in the Communist economies of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, where there was no developed public sphere and where everyday sociability was largely confined to the home – usually there were few restaurants, cafés or public settings for social interaction. A healthy civil society protects the individual from overwhelming state power.

*(1998:85)*

The criticism of this idea summarized with a quote from Giddens and of the third way in general is given below. But perhaps the most important contribution of the third way, which seeks a solution to urban problem within neoliberal capitalism, is its revitalization of the public sphere debate. Because the area defined as public sphere by the advocates of Third Way policy, who represent liberal thought, and which is wanted to be protected from the domination of the state, is defined as urban common by Harvey (and other neo-Marxists), and they advocate keeping the market away from it.

#### **4.1.3 Public Space and Urban Commons**

While the liberal understanding represented by Third Way promotes civil society, it advocates the civilianization of the public space in order to create a theoretical



framework for it. The aim here is to advocate the transfer of power from the state to civil society. In order to democratize social relations by providing pluralism, the public sphere should not be dominated by the state. The issue that will be emphasized here is what the public space means to the urban common. Much has been written about the public sphere or public culture - the meaning of public space is used here as summarized in Low and Smith (2006). According to Low and Smith (2006), the streets of the city and their collective uses create and transform public space, and public space provides social benefits, albeit difficult to quantify.

Harvey (2012) and Susser and Tonnelat (2013) mainly use 'urban commons' to describe whole cities as resources for people living in them, and to assert that all urbanites have 'a right to an equitable usufruct of cities within the principles of sustainability, democracy, equity and social justice' (Lefebvre in Susser and Tonnelat, 2013: 110). In addition, Susser and Tonnelat (2013) sees public space and the public sphere are as commons; they include all 'public space, the public infrastructure, such as streets and squares, train stations, cafés, public gardens, and all forms of space where urbanites can rub shoulders and gather' (2013: 111). Harvey (2012) states that spaces become urban commons through social action; he describes the commons as 'an unstable and malleable social relation between a particular self-defined social group and those aspects of its actually existing or yet-to-be-created social and/or physical environment deemed crucial to its life and livelihood' and, in other words, as 'a social practice of commoning' (2012: 73). He argues that public goods such as water, public space, and sanitation services cannot automatically be equaled to commons. They first must be re-appropriated by citizens through political action before they constitute commons. At this point, this relationship between the public sphere and the urban common through political struggles raises the issue of access. As Harvey puts it 'there is always a struggle over how the production of and access to public space and public goods is to be regulated, by whom, and in whose interest' (2012: 73). This access problem actually manifests itself as an enclosure problem of the same nature for the urban common. On closer inspection, it can be seen that the main contestation of Harvey and other neo-Marxist writers are regarding the privatization of the public space.

The neo-Marxist approach points out that the privatization of the public space breaks this 'common' structure of the urban common. So urban common ceases to be common by the process of commodification. From this perspective, a house cooperative, for example, cannot be an urban common on its own. It will surely be affected by the surrounding urban real estate markets, just as it will also relate to public housing policies (Bruun, 2016). Therefore, the urban common can only turn into an urban common with the existence of the citizens who are politically associated with the public space. At this point, urban common actually means more than a physical built environment, a resource in the city, or public services. The intangible form of urban common discussed in the first chapter basically refers to this process.

Then, if the public sphere is a civil sphere, in other words, a civil society, and if the people who are politically associated with the public space create the urban common, then there is a much stronger relationship between civil society organizations and the intangible urban common than is thought. Deciphering this relationship alone may not seem quite significant. This relationship is also a response to the global neoliberal threat. The problems identified in the urban common literature as created by global neoliberalism, namely inequality, unemployment, marginalization, exclusion, increasing pressure on the poor, can be avoided by preventing the commodification of the urban common according to Marxist thought. Urban social movements, which were especially revealed in the literature of Susser and Tonnelat (2013), offer a new perspective of resistance by taking over the public space. Revisited through the Lefebvre's idea of '*Right to the City*', this understanding has put urban social movements as a reaction to the inequalities, marginalization and oppression of the poor in contemporary cities that are clearly indomitably re-shaped by global capitalism and neoliberal development. The strength of employing the concept of commons instead of public space to discuss social justice in urban contexts is a more comprehensive approach to the political and economic resources fundamental to social life (Bruun, 2016). Urban commons and the right to the city are about much more than securing public *access* to physical spaces such as the street, parks and other cityscapes and to social spaces, knowledge, media and information infrastructures such as the internet; urban commons and the right to the city are about securing people a *life* in the city (Bruun, 2016). Susser and Tonnelat (2013) identify urban commons as a tool of

ensuring people an equitable life. This understanding, which presents the reorganization of labor at the urban scale (a similar model proposal can be found in Şengül (2009)), claims to be a solution to the problems that arise by transforming the city to some extent.

But what is missing in the urban commons literature is the social aspect of this notion. According to Bruun (2016), the essence of urban commons is not just ensuring access to parks or other public spaces, but of offering people an equitable life in the city, and commons are not the same as economic resources or real property. In order to grasp urban commons from a broader view, it is important to recognize civic consciousness. The answer to the question of what could be the most effective tool to create, protect and maintain the social process that will push people to act jointly is the ‘civil society’. It is not enough just to seize the public space; it is also necessary to manage it in an organized way. **From this perspective, it is civil society that creates and transforms the urban commons.**

#### **4.2 CRITIQUES OF THIRD WAY POLITICS**

While acknowledging that Third Way was an effort to finding solution to a practical problem as well as a new political tool proposal in the period and in the literature at the time, it is clear for every scholar and academician to what extent it has managed to change or has erosive effect on neoliberal capitalism in the 20 years that have passed over it. It is not possible to argue that there is a solution to issues such as the problem of local communities, the problem of participation and democracy, the problem of accessing urban services to the whole society in neoliberal capitalism, which has become stronger today with the effect of Globalism. Therefore, it would be appropriate to make a brief evaluation of the Third Way approach for better or worse.

At the expense of repeating, Third Way pointed to the search for a solution other than statism and market economy on the basis of the discourse when it was introduced. In practice, however, Third Way seeks solutions for the aforementioned problems within the neoliberal system. Therefore, it can easily be seen that it emerged as a rescue project of the New-Right, which was facing a loss of power in developed countries (Şengül, 2009). In fact, according to Faux (1999), it is primarily a rationalization for

political compromise between left and right, in which left moves closer to right. Another British critic, Alan Ryan, was not convinced that the Third Way in fact, have an effective response to these problems (Ryan, 1999). It is possible to say that the representatives of this notion, other than Hirst, have not offered a new solution in this sense. In this case, three different critical reviews for the third way emerge.

The first is on the controversial nature of the relationship between the state and civil society. While there is a Weberian assumption about the state, which is under a firm bureaucratic structure, civil society is, on the contrary, an ambiguous meaning that includes a number of positive values such as democracy, participation, reciprocity, solidarity etc. Although civil society has these virtues to a larger extent, imputing an a priori positivity to civil society has neither a basis nor a well-intentioned initiative. Because this initiative attributes an ontological status to civil society while disregarding reality outside of sociological relations, and it gives civil society a utopian role/responsibility of overcoming all social struggles. Instead, it is a more attainable goal to try to overcome the problems by putting the duty and responsibility on the state to strengthen the current role of civil society. It is unclear in Third Way what kind of mechanism or driving force will compel the state to play this role (Şengül, 2009).

Second is the uncertainty of what should be understood from 'local communities'. "In practice, it is understood that the Labour Party government in Britain means traditional communities by local communities (Brown, 1994)" (Şengül, 2009, p. 292). It is inevitable that "such an understanding of local community is far from inclusive of differences and will make universal values relative concepts such as equality and equity, freedom. (Young, 1990)" (Şengül, 2009, p. 292). In fact, this is why that communities on the urban scale should benefit from the institutional memory of civil society organizations.

Related to this is the controversial aspect of the view that centers local communities as an economic, social and political unit within global neoliberalism. To put it briefly, decentralization strategies weaken, in particular, the bargaining power of urban working classes against capital. According to Jamie Peck and his noteworthy book *Work-Place: The Social Regulation of Labor Markets*, "the emergence of hegemonic

despotism at global scale is associated with the downscaling of labor regulation in both sense of the word; *downscaling* is occurring in that material levels of protection are being eroded and is manifest in the aggressive localization of labor”. According to Peck (1996), global neoliberalism, which advocates the circulation of capital and labor by promoting deregulation, pushes local government units into a competitive environment and breaks the power of resistance of local communities (and reducing their overall gains) via forcing them from national scale to the local scale. The “local governance” perspective of the Third Way, corresponds to the understanding of local governments competing within the logic of entrepreneurship, rather than the local administration that produces services, which is a perspective that strengthens the neoliberal tendency (Şengül, 2009). From this point of view, the Third Way seems to embrace not the welfare of the local units, but the “urbanization of the capital” that Harvey (1985) insisted on demonstrating.

Of course, at this point, we know that urban solidarity networks existed in the city varied than civil society in one way or another, whether from a hometown consciousness, through neighbor-neighborhood relations, or through the use/sharing and/or creation of an urban commons in the city. This solidarity is inherent within the urban life. Describing or labeling it as civil society does not change the essence of solidarity. Likewise, it would be wrong to see civil society as institutions where the middle class reproduces only social and professional life. Civil society is the most important means of resistance of the urban middle class against capital and urban rent. Using these tools correctly will prevent civil society associations from being discredited by attributing different meanings to them. Therefore, the importance of civil society at this point is to increase the quality and quantity of the already established urban classless solidarity networks and to help them to confront a stronger political identity by gaining an organizational skill. Because the networks are already there, the bonds are strong enough and the demands of the urban people are also common: to achieve a more prosperous life. Communities that can coexist in terms of their needs and resources may also be more demanding against both to the state and capital. These demands can be conveyed more effectively through the skills acquired by civil society organizations through their work practices.

### **4.3 AN EVALUATION OF TURKEY**

In this chapter, the civil society-urban commons relation will be evaluated in terms of Turkish cities. The main aim is the present how unique and striking results can be found for Turkey's case when examining civil society-urban common relationship. To understand this, brief summary of the uniqueness of Turkey's urbanization process should be given first.

Unlike the Soviet bloc and the Western Europe, the urbanization process in Turkey took place under the heavy migration from rural areas to urban areas as a process with its own dynamics. The migration towards cities that began with 1950's is a phenomenon that deeply affected the socio-cultural panorama of the urban areas even today. Although the consequences of this demographic movement have been discussed in depth, it is a known fact that the public administration is not very interested in this problematic in that period. (Erder, 1995, p.112). Similarly, the reasons for this migration were also discussed deeply (Marshall aids, mechanization in agriculture, cheap labor demand required by industrialization in cities and so forth), but this thesis is mostly concerned with its consequences.

In the years following the Second World War, the role of the state in developed countries was significantly different comparing to role of the state in underdeveloped countries such as Turkey. In countries that have completed capital accumulation, the function of the state is to transfer this accumulation to non-productive secondary environments. Welfare state practices have prioritized urban investments as part of this resource transfer.

On the other hand, in Turkey, which is insufficient accumulation of capital, the state's priority is to allocate resources to industrialization before the urban investment. Therefore, the share to be allocated to urban infrastructure and services remained rather limited. Since this period corresponds to the peak of rural-urban migration period, there has been an excessive demand for urban infrastructure and services. Not only state did not try to find solutions to the problems that forced large communities to leave their homelands, maybe even more dramatically, no policies were developed to meet the vital needs of immigrants, such as housing, work and social security, in the

cities where they arrived after immigration. In other words, by not meeting the demands arising during the urbanization process, finding the required solutions is left to the initiative of local communities by the state. Consequently, faced with this indifference of the administration, immigrant groups created their own survival strategies and coping mechanisms in the cities. In most cases, they try to adapt to the city through the informal solidarity networks they have established (Şengül, 2009).

Thus, the insensitivity shown by the state in providing urban services, strangely, has encouraged the active participation of the urban poor in the urbanization process through informal practices (Şengül, 2009). These informal solidarity networks, which emerged through to the help of relatives and countryman (fellow townsman) among themselves, made it possible to maintain pre-migration relations in the urban area (Bayraktar, 2003). These networks, while focusing on solving urban problems with their own means, also functioned as an institutional participation mechanism in order to get a share from limited government resources. Tekeli (1994) argues that, in most cases, this type of participation based on ‘clientelism’, which prevents citizen based participation model. As a result, the set of informal relationships that emerged from this process, which mostly based on the understanding of countryman (fellow townsman), created intangible urban commons.

The reason for drawing attention to this point is that the abstract urban commons that are formed are not limited to urban needs, but also have economic, social and political consequences. These urban commons, stuck between the state and the market, found the solution in establishing associations. In other words, civil society has undertaken the function of bringing an institutional solution to this impasse. Bayraktar (2003) summarizes the process as the formalization of the informal network of solidarity. In any case, the public sphere created by the capitalist urban environment by excluding the interventionist state causes the formation of the urban commons. In order to sustain this urban common, tools of civil society are needed. The structures which we call fellow countrymen associations, offer us one of the most striking examples of this.

This remarkable point can also be summarized quantitatively. When the data compiled from the General Directorate of Relations with Civil Society and studies of the

Kurdođlu (1989) and studies of Bayraktar (2003) are examined, the course of association tendencies in Istanbul, the largest city of Turkey, over the years is quite striking.

In the 50s that migrate from the village to the city intensify, the fellow countrymen associations slowly starting to establishing. The only period that creates exception to this stable increase is between 1970-1980. According to Kurdođlu (1989), the reason for this exception is the associations in this period were under politicization and carried ideological functions and therefore, the military administration that has taken over the management, has closed many associations. Őengöl (2009) describes the same period as an exceptional period in which the social opposition increases. However, the reason for this opposition was caused by the results of the immigration is not well-managed by the state (Őengöl, 2009). In the next period, from the years 1989 to 2000, it is found that 1888 new associations were established, i.e. the number of associations has been increased five times. Similarly, a dramatic increase has been experienced after 2000. According to the data taken from the General Directorate of Civil Society, 6892 fellow countrymen associations actively operate in Istanbul as of April 2021 (see Figure 4.1). Among the reasons for this quantitative increase, there are factors that provide the development of civil society in Turkey after 2000, which discussed in detailed in Chapter 3. However, one of the most important factor is fact that tendencies for countryman communities to establish formal structures such as associations have a rapidly increased in recent years.

Of course, these rapid development has socio-cultural, economic and political results in which these associations reveal. From a social point of view, the associations that bring a formal feature to the unity, togetherness and solidarity needs of the people migrating or settled in the city are also fulfilling the need for socialization with the rural bond. From economic point of view, trades and transactions can be made more easily between the community members who trust each other as a result of the hometown bond. Associations also serve this purpose as a corporate crossroad function. Therefore, the existence of associations plays a catalyst role in terms of economic relations between hometown people. The associations also provide those who have reached a particular well-being to protect and increase their welfare. In



connection with this, within the framework of this sociocultural communing function of associations, people found bureaucratic conveniences and priorities in return for their votes. Similarly, politicians engage with local communities through associations. Politicians pledge to allocate public resources for the benefit of communities by using political power in exchange for the support of their hometown people (Bayraktar, 2003).

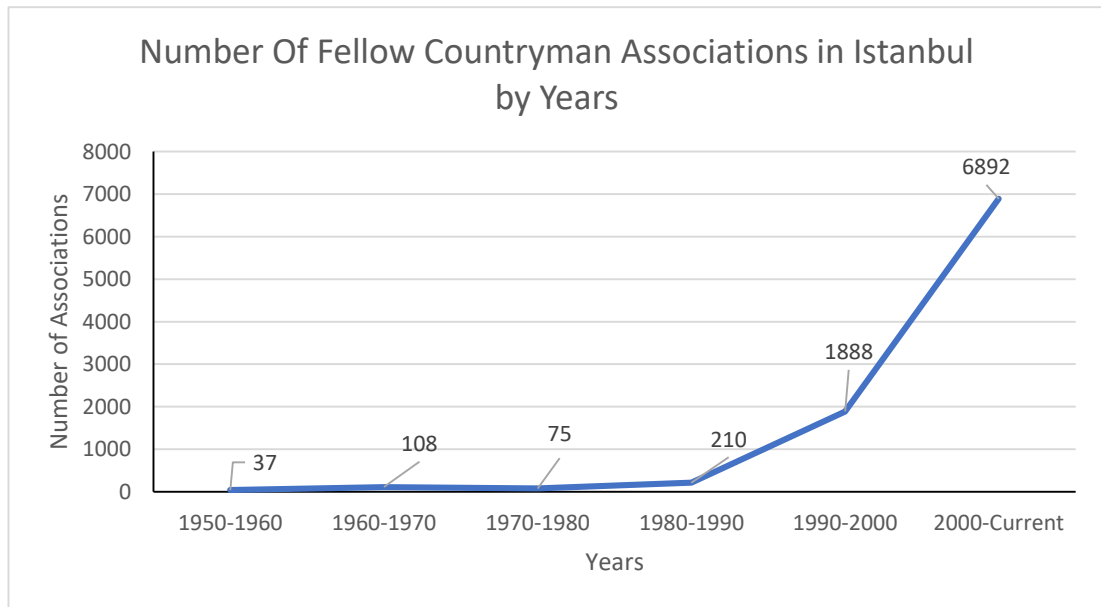


Figure 4- 1: Number of Fellow Countryman Associations in Istanbul by Years

Similarly, another indication that fellow countrymen associations are entirely urban commons phenomena is that these associations are more specific to urban areas. Urbanization rate in Turkey is 73%. In fact, this number increased to 85% after the Metropolitan Law No. 6360 enacted in 2014. According to Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), it is 93% in 2020. Even if this artificial increase is put aside, it is possible to state that it is rapidly urbanizing. In other words, it is possible to see similar patterns not only in Istanbul but also in other cities. Figure 4.2 illustrates this situation. When examined carefully, the number of fellow countrymen associations in provinces with intense urbanization is dramatically higher than in other provinces. So much so that it has become more appropriate to explain this situation with two different figures. As can be seen, such an organization is naturally preferred more in provinces where urbanization is intense.

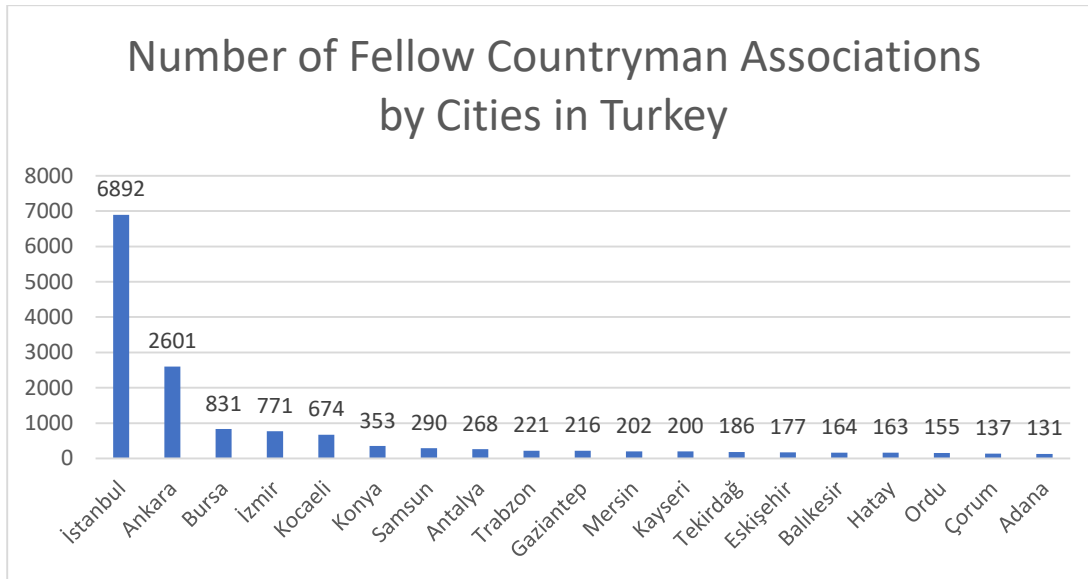


Figure 4- 2: Number of Fellow Countryman Associations by Cities in Turkey

On the other hand, as seen in Figure 4.3 and 4.4, the organization of fellow countrymen associations is almost negligible in less metropolitan cities. This situation shows us that this type of associations are actually incorporated with urban commons function. Because, there is no obstacle for people living in the same province to show the same organization with different motives, for example, to develop a sense of unity and solidarity or to move citizenship to the district level. Therefore, it can be easily understood that the primary function of fellow citizens' associations are to create an urban common with social, economic and political consequences.

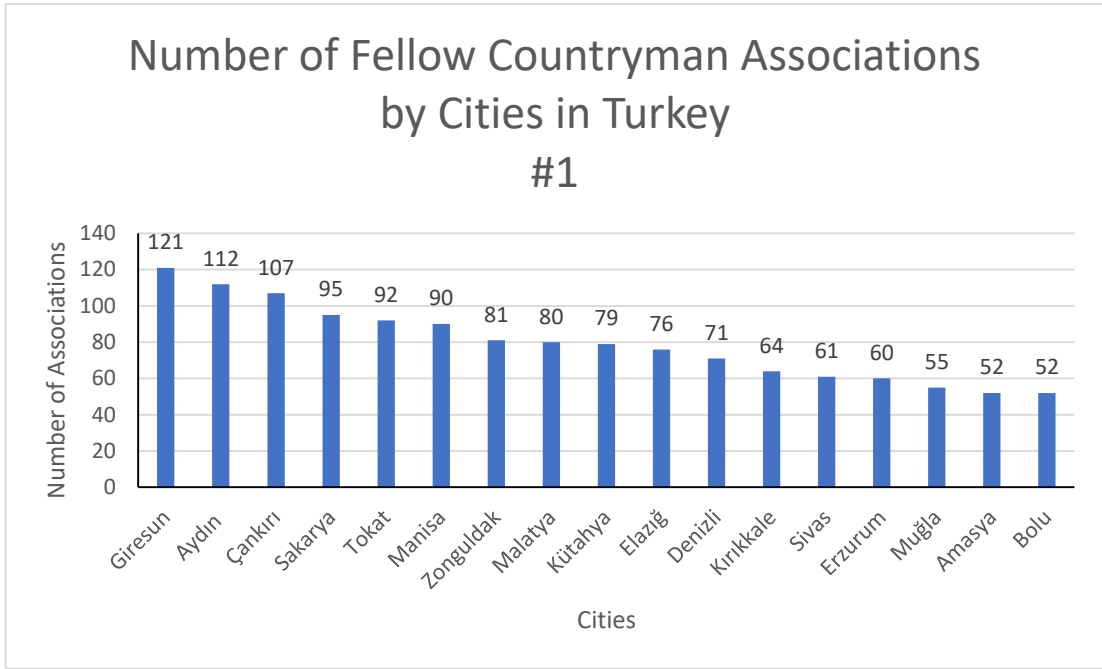


Figure 4- 4: Number of Fellow Countryman Associations by Cities in Turkey

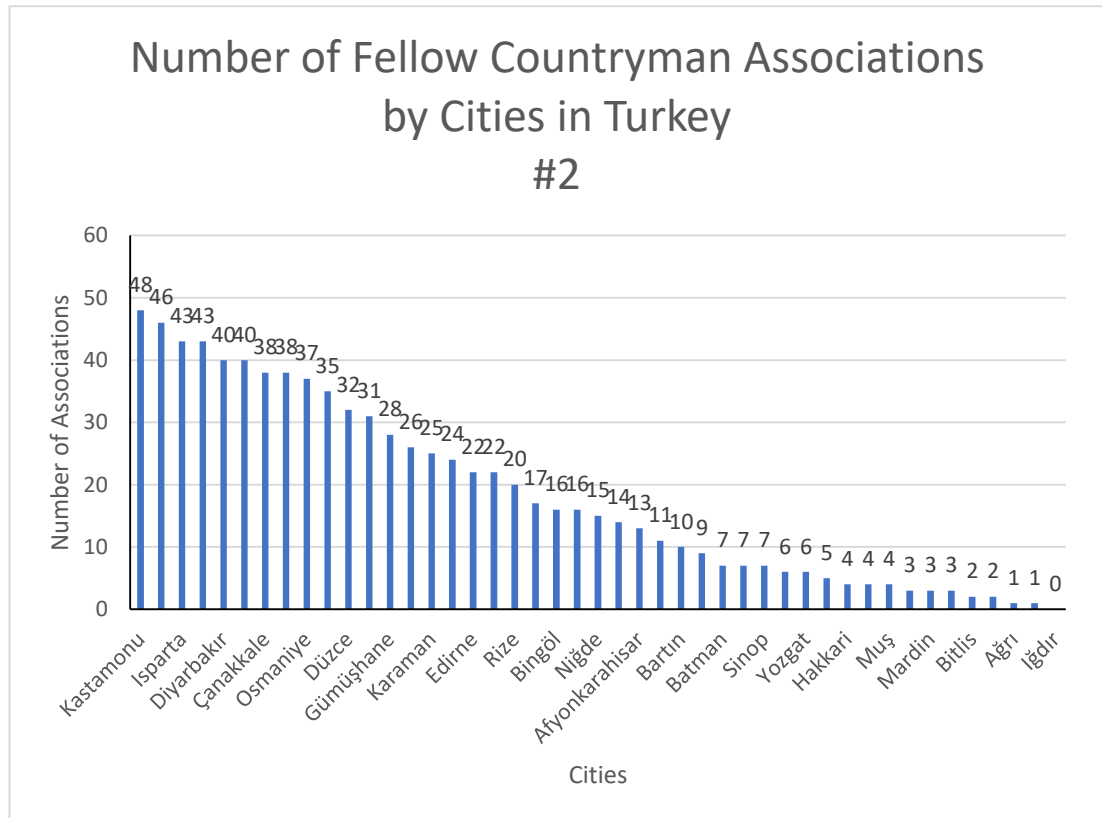


Figure 4- 3: Number of Fellow Countryman Associations by Cities in Turkey

Nevertheless, what is tried to be discussed in this thesis is that it may be useful to think of the emerging commoning movements as a beginning, rather than a result or end goal, within the two waves of global movement, urbanization and globalization. Because, as it has been repeated, commoning has the feature of being a concept that is applied to disseminate and unify different forms and types of oppositional activities, whether its theoretical basis is neo-Marxist literature or the institutionalist approach. The main object of opposition here is to prevent the consequences of the economic system, which has reached a concerning level in the current neoliberal system, threatening the commons both at the local and global levels. However, the practice of commoning, obviously, should not be perceived as a political revolutionary strategy as we know it. On the other hand, the discussion of the commons offers a social transformation paradigm based on the production of alternative practices, relationships, meanings and values in the social, economic and cultural fields (Firat, 2018). Therefore, we are faced with a macro strategy that envisages the establishment of a "dual power", that is, conflicting capitalist and anti-capitalist institutions, relations, practices and values (Firat, 2018).

At this point, it becomes very important to rethink the urban level. Because understanding the commons at a global level and turning the commoning practice into a global action involves a radicalism that proposes to challenge and change the prevailing economic rationale. Instead, it would be more realistic to offer more micro-experiences and strategies, and then transform these different experiences into networks that interact and learn from each other. Firat (2018) argues that a new space can be created by pointing out the relationship that has begun to be established between new municipal practices and commons against the danger of micro-experiences turning into self-contained liberated islets and new communal communities. What is "new" in municipalism here actually includes the inclusion of civil society in this process. The concept of Municipalism has been employed by both social movement activists and radical left-wing politicians to reclaim local government as a scale of action where both they can build a shared political realm through citizens' participation and empowerment (Bianchi, 2019). This model of participation is

suggested in a way to both reinvent and make the civil society effective at the city administration level.

In Turkey, on the other hand, “City Councils” have made the model of this strategy proposal practical. City councils, which can also be read as a form of the Third Way's local governance proposal, basically aimed to have citizens have a say in the management of the city, with a participatory democracy perspective. City councils are similar to civil society, as they are a civil dialogue space between the state and the citizen. As the intermediary role of political parties between the parliament and the public has gradually weakened, the need for civil organizations within the society has become important in Turkey, as in many other places. Representative democracy, or simply being represented in the parliament, is no longer sufficient to reflect the will of the society. Especially in a unitary state structure like Turkey, local assemblies formed by voting in local elections are far from offering participation. Therefore, although the city councils are discussed in many different themes, they open an important door by promoting participation. Because the participation here actually aims to participate in the management of the city's resources. Regardless of the issues such as the lack of a budget or the binding of the decisions of the city councils, it is a commoning practice that the people try to have a say in the resources at the city scale. Participation can only be achieved through an organized society. At this point, it is seen once again how strong the relationship between commoning and organization is. If we attribute a positive meaning to commonality in itself, it is essential that we establish the organizational experience itself as a commoning practice (Akçay and Kocagöz, 2019). From this perspective, fellow countryman associations in Istanbul can be reconsidered as a controversial commoning practice. Because the association-formalization trend put forward by Bayraktar (2003) for these associations does not aim to protect and reproduce the culture and value that is revealed only through urban relations through commoning. In other words, the practice of organizing here should not be considered as equal to the practice of commoning. Because the ‘a priori’ positive meaning that is intended to be attributed to commoning is sometimes in vain when the organization practices and, more importantly, the motivations of fellow countryman associations are examined closely. In a more general sense, this can be extended to civil society's "ontologically for the good" argument. But looking at this case is to present a broader

perspective in terms of understanding the relationship between the concept of the urban commons and organization, which is expected to belong to the leftist thought. First of all, it is obvious that under this tendency of association, there is the aim of solving the socio-economic problems created by the processes that started with urbanization. Istanbul already sets a very special example by emerging as a mega city. When we look at the increase in the population in Istanbul over the years, we can more easily see the relationship with the increasing number of associations. When we look at the population of the period, it is an already known fact that Istanbul was in a very striking continuous population growth. In Figure 4.5, the stability in the population growth in the province can be seen over the years.

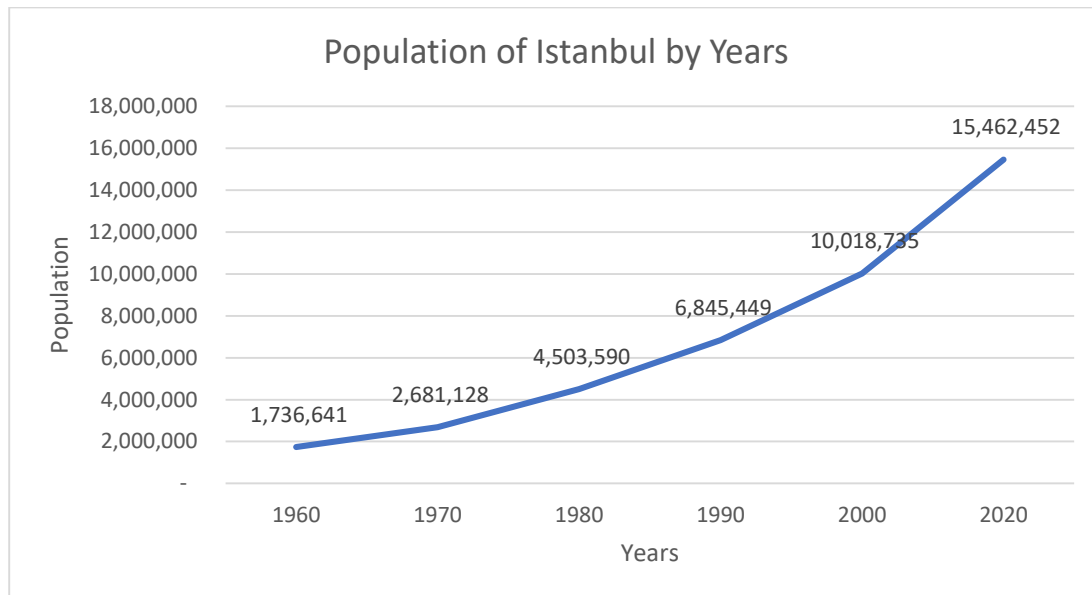


Figure 4- 5: Population of Istanbul by Years

A striking point here is the ratio of the number of fellow countrymen associations per capita in the relevant years. If we take a look at the population of the period, the number of associations and the number of associations per capita, it can be seen that the tendency to form associations is not only dependent on population growth. Especially after the 1990s, there has been a serious increase in the rate of associations per capita.

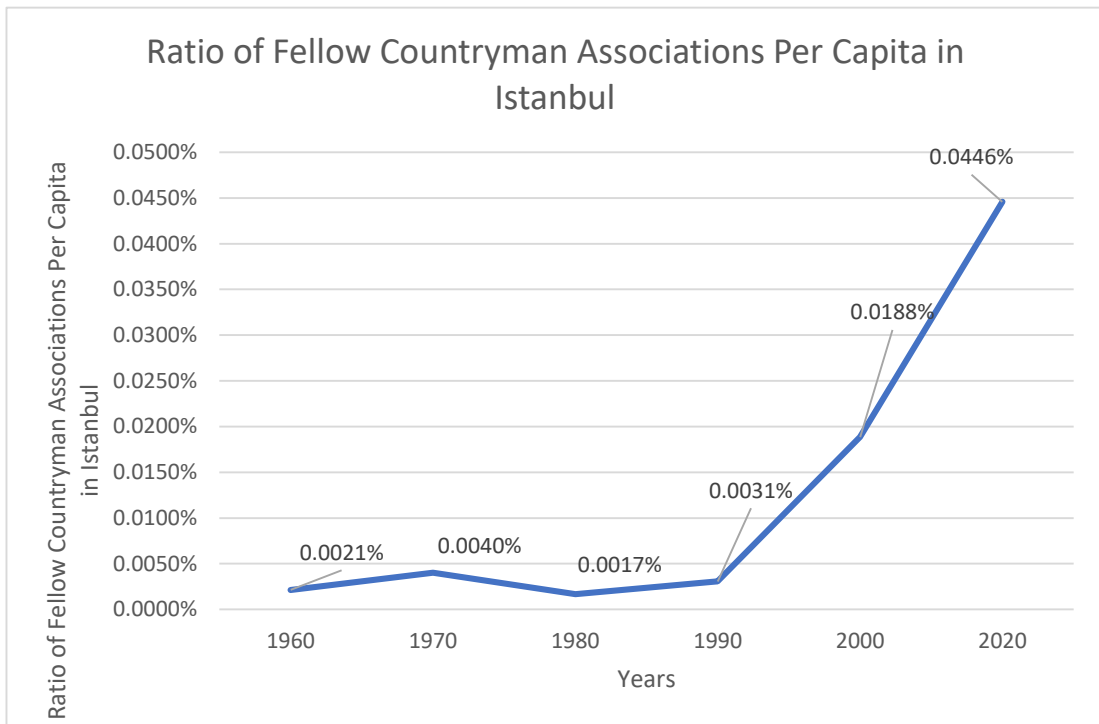


Figure 4- 6: Ratio of Fellow Countryman Associations Per Capita in Istanbul

On the other hand, the post-2000 period offers a perspective worthy of further examination. First of all, the economic accumulation regime, which was rapidly institutionalized in Turkey after 2000 and based on rebuilding everything, caused great destruction in the urban and (and even rural) areas. Mining, energy, excavation and mega infrastructure/superstructure projects and real estate sector, which do not require much technical knowledge and know-how, and which can easily be undertaken by importing physical capital that has become cheaper with the developing technology in the world, were seen as speculative earnings. Aiming to turn this gain into a political power, the construction activities proceeding on this road created serious threats to the physical commons that belong to everyone such as land, forest, water, air, orchard, pasture, park, square, neighborhood. In fact, the public sphere narrowed in parallel with the increasing entrenchedness of this twisted and one-sided productive economic regime; The abstract commons such as academia, the media, the internet, freedom of expression, assembly and association also suffered. Its social, political and cultural foundations were shaken. On the one hand, it dispossessed those who (re)produced on

these grounds, displaced them, made them lose their jobs, and made them losers of a kind of redistribution mechanism, on the other hand, it created a mass of people that wanted to take advantage of these changing resources and wanted to profit.

Urban politics was of course also affected when this mass attempted to collect what was left of this plunder by imitating commoning practices in the usual sense. In fact, it can be said that in post-2000 Turkey, urban politics was almost entirely based on access to this urban rent. Candidates for local government made government a means of reallocating city resources. Another interesting point is that the civil society element in Turkey has also been made a part of it. In other words, the Third Way politics became a means of accessing urban rent by imitating commoning practices. The problem here is that the contradiction between discourse and action is rendered invisible. When governments, which are accessed by reference to the common good of society, do not fulfill their promises in the management process, civil mechanisms need to monitor or restrict this. However, this mechanism did not work in Turkey. In other words, the civil sphere in Turkey has not been successful enough in creating civil society organizations that can be an organized opposition tool. The civic space should theoretically act as an intermediary between the state and the market, increasing participation and democracy. However, in the case of Turkey, we can see that this does not automatically turn into a mechanism that solves state and market failures, supervises them and forces them to the common good. When we think about fellow countryman associations in this sense, it becomes blurred whether they aim to benefit from urban rent by imitating commoning practices, or whether they are jointly/organized for the purpose of protecting the material and cultural resources owned from the state and the market. In other words, two similar associations that seem to have been established for the same purpose may want to achieve different results.

Therefore, when examining the direct relationship between organization and commoning, we must add the element of creating an oppositional political space. The opposition of the political field to be produced is not due to the necessity of reflecting an ideological point of view. By the nature of things, the state is the biggest appropriator, not only does it seize all of the political spheres, but also largely limits



and shapes the political spheres of the communities (Akçay and Kocagöz 2019). Thus, it forces all egalitarian movements to either harmonize with the political sphere with a state, or to produce an economic/political sphere that is not a state, and to make politics common (Akçay and Kocagöz 2019). In this respect, commoning practice must also focus on building an oppositional political space. Because the organization itself can turn into a power struggle. Moreover, organizations, in their ideal forms, cannot be free from structural inequality axes such as class-based inequality, gender-based injustice and disadvantages arising from cultural-based differences such as ethnicity and age (Akçay and Kocagöz 2019). In short, every organizational practice cannot necessarily be a commoning practice. For this reason, it is necessary to examine some examples that have succeeded in creating more impact in particular, taking into account what other motives reinforce this trend, as well as the impact created by fellow countryman associations in Istanbul as a whole.

The process of fellow countrymen associations in Istanbul discussed in this thesis is basically to discuss the reasons behind the formalization trend of community-based social groups in the city. This situation is, in a way, an extension of the institutionalization of civil society in Turkey after 2000. The emphasis here on the institutionalization of civil society has a deliberate purpose. The fact that we encounter in the process of production and reproduction of the urban commons is that the feature of resistance against neoliberalism includes locality, subjectivity and finitude. In other words, practices that produce and protect the urban common in different geographies and cultures of the world, although they are often in communication and resonance with each other, cannot turn into a global resistance. The most important reason for this is that these practices are not social movements that build institutions. Therefore, establishing the emphasis on institutionalization through civil society, in a way, also includes a technical suggestion for this shortcoming. Civil society organizations have the potential to reach a certain historicity, economic size, human resources and public opinion in the thematic areas they advocate. Of course, as stated, there is always the possibility that the institutional creation process will be interrupted by being affected by the cultural codes, inequalities, patronage relations, etc. of the society in which it is located. However, especially after 2000, there are examples of civil society

organizations that have managed to institutionalize by consistently following certain organizational practices.

Consequently, it is necessary to re-understand the urban common not only as a physical form but also within an economic, social and political context. The aim here is not to enrich the concept by giving it a more complex meaning than it is, but to show that simplification is not in the interest of the general public. Once the urban commons are re-discovered as the political economy of the social network of relations in the city, it will be seen that it has the potential for a multitude and diversity of means of resistance. Although the fellow countryman associations case examined above covers the subject in a versatile way, it can actually be reproduced in hundreds of different forms and contexts. When different civil society organizations are analyzed with a similar logic, similar results will definitely be achieved. This will be seen when not only certain types of associations are examined, but different types such as foundations, unions or cooperatives, and even different scales such as international civil society organizations are examined in this context. A similar relationship will be able to be deciphered when not only a numerical analysis, but also examined with different methods such as a questionnaire or an interview. In this thesis, the theoretical relationship established between urban commons and civil society organizations deserves to be embodied by examining it through different case studies. However, this part was left incomplete, since such a resource was not available in the writing of this thesis. Nevertheless, the strength of hypothesis depends on its predictive power. In this regard, possible further studies will be discussed in more detail in the next conclusion section.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

This study is an endeavor to reveal how the concept of civil society should be perceived within the urban common. Both concepts have many other aspects worth studying. However, it is not possible to cover all aspects of civil society and urban common in a single work. In a very brief manner, what this thesis aims to do is the critical analysis of organic relationship between these two concepts under the influence of global neoliberal capitalism.

Global neoliberalism advocates the free circulation of capital and labor by promoting deregulation. The capital accumulation process plays an important role in the production, reproduction and transformation of the urban space. As Lefebvre (1976) stated, capitalism reproduced itself by discovering the urban space in the 20th century. Similarly, 'globalism' is the discovery of overcoming crisis-prone nature of capitalism in the 21st century. Still, the inevitable yet intense consequences of this process have been experienced especially in urban areas. To put it in a different way, the most important actor and structure of this process are cities. When this actor-structure dialectic discussed by Giddens (1984) at the scale of urban areas translated into this work, we can grasp civil society as an actor and the urban common as a structure.

One primary effect of globalization on the other hand, according to Hardt and Negri (2009), is the creation of a common world, a world that has no "outside." Perceiving the world as this monolith manner reinvigorate the idea that all the values we have are also common. Accordingly, resources subject to common use of humanity are defined as commons. At the same time, these commons may have a tangible-physical form as well as an intangible-abstract form. By "the tangible-physical common", scholars mean the common wealth of the material world—the air, the water, the fruits of the soil, and all nature's bounty. As for the intangible-abstract form of common; they are,

more significantly, results of social production that are necessary for social interaction and further production, such as knowledge, languages, codes, information, affects, and so forth.

Here the subject we call urban commons is more related to this intangible form. Of course, there may be physical form urban commons such as roads, parks, gardens, squares at the city center, seaside beaches, bicycle trails, walking paths, picnic areas, libraries etc. However, especially according to the neo-Marxist approach, knowledge, languages, codes, information, affects, social relations, in short, cultural and intellectual commons are reproduced as they are consumed. In a sense, this is seen as an area of resistance and struggle against global neoliberal capitalism. It has the potential to create an alternative by creating collective multitude and through interactions in different ways.

The idea to be put forward in this thesis is that civil society can be promoted as an alternative urban common. Civil society organizations should also be perceived as institutional structures in which this state of resistance, the desire to create alternative, and this opposition take place. The modern city is one of the most important areas of struggle for conflicting interests. Therefore, for every social group aiming to preserve or change power relations, it is vital to establish control over urban space (Lefebvre, 1979). Urban commons, by its very nature, should also organizes the struggle to protect the surplus value it produces from the state and the market. However, since urban common has collective ownership due to its nature, it is problematic who will fight this struggle or how to organize it.

The concept of civil society offers us the key to organizing this struggle. The struggle to be waged without being organized, will render the urban middle class helpless in front of the rant-seeking capital and state. Therefore, the importance of civil society at this point is to increase the quality and quantity of the already established urban solidarity networks and to help them to confront a stronger political identity by gaining an organizational skill. Communities that can coexist in terms of their needs and resources may also be more demanding to the state or capital. Issues such as what the needs are, on which resources can be claimed can be conveyed and announced more

effectively and concretely through the skills acquired by civil society organizations through their work practices.

This importance attributed to civil society certainly brings with it a series of discussions. This strategy proposal was voiced aloud by Giddens (1998) in the UK and similarly by Tekeli (1996) in Turkey. This approach, which was called the “Third Way” by Giddens, emphasizes the inadequacy of market and state-centered solutions and argues that a solution beyond these two rationales is possible. Third Way posits civil society at the very center and promote as an actor while suggesting that reappropriate series of merits such as democracy, participation, autonomy of local communities. Since each of these virtues attributed to civil society has the feature of being politicized easily, it has brought discussions with it.

In order to create a theoretical framework for the issue of democratization, the concept of the public space, which was developed by Jürgen Habermas, was used as the axis of the debate. The public space is a place of publicity and promotes equal participation of individuals. The claim of liberalism is that the state should be weakened and civil society should be strengthened. The most important tool for this is the liberation of the public space from the domination of the state. The claim of neo-Marxists is on the other hand that the public space is actually the urban commons. It is stated that the public space becomes an urban common by being politically associated by the citizens. Therefore, the main contestation is to prevent the privatization of the public space through the commodification process. In this case, if the public space is the civil sphere, in other words, if it is civil society, and if the people who are politically associated with the public space create the urban common, then contrary to what is believed, there is a deeper correlation between civil society and the urban commons. This thesis does not only aim to decipher this relationship. This relationship also has the feature of being a response to the threat of global neoliberalism. The problems identified in the urban common literature created by global neoliberalism, namely inequality, unemployment, marginalization, exclusion, increasing pressure on the poor, can be avoided by preventing the commodification of the urban common. Revisited through “Right to the City”, this understanding is to preserve the urban commons as a response to these clear threats within contemporary cities that are clearly

re-shaped by global capitalism and neoliberal development. One of the most important tool in the face of neoliberal challenge is civic consciousness. The carrier of this tool is civil society organizations.

This can be sustained with the values attributed to civil society organizations such as not promoting profit motives, an administrative structure that will not allow a struggle for power, preventing monopoly in the field, being solidarity and value-oriented, ensuring democratization by increasing autonomy and participation. However, acting solely on the basis of this principle does not guarantee democracy. Similarly, it is also misleading *a priori* assume that the relations of patronage and protectionism, which are considered to be inherent in the state mechanism and bureaucracy, do not exist in civil society organizations. Assigning all the responsibilities of the democratization process to civil society is not a realistic expectation. This also ignores a series of different reforms and practices required by the process. Instead, it is a more realistic expectation that the state should strengthen civil society by supporting it more in the field of political-economy.

Every power struggle is also a struggle to control space (Lefebvre, 1991). This abstract proposition of Lefebvre means that every power struggle must propose a scale (Şengül, 2009). In this sense, the scale recommendation of the third way approach is local scale. Although ‘autonomy of local communities’ is a strong rhetoric, the form of struggle it implies is highly controversial. The emphasis on locality has a function of eroding the nation scale. But what will replace the eroded nation scale? It seems that while the globalization-localization thesis becomes hegemonic, it becomes increasingly difficult to protect urban common resources in the face of neoliberal capitalism. It is necessary to evaluate the capabilities of civil society in this field and the institutional structure of civil society as an urban common resource. At the stage that capitalism has reached today, this kind of formulation is both more possible and more needed than ever.

What is tried to be discussed in this thesis is that it may be useful to think of the emerging commoning movements as a beginning, rather than a result or end goal, within the two waves of global movement, urbanization and globalization. Because, as it has been repeated, commoning has the feature of being a concept that is applied

to disseminate and unify different forms and types of oppositional activities, whether its theoretical basis is neo-Marxist literature or the institutionalist approach. The main object of opposition here is to prevent the consequences of the economic system, which has reached a concerning level in the current neoliberal system, threatening the commons both at the local and global levels. However, the practice of commoning, obviously, should not be perceived as a political revolutionary strategy as we know it. At this point, it becomes very important to rethink the urban level. Because understanding the commons at a global level and turning the commoning practice into a global action involves a radicalism that proposes to challenge and change the prevailing economic rationale. Instead, it would be more realistic to offer more micro-experiences and strategies, and then transform these different experiences into networks that interact and learn from each other.

Therefore, when examining the direct relationship between organization and commoning, we must add the element of creating an oppositional political space. The opposition of the political field to be produced is not due to the necessity of reflecting an ideological point of view. In this respect, commoning practice must also focus on building an oppositional political space.

The process of fellow countrymen associations in Istanbul discussed in this thesis is basically to discuss the reasons behind the formalization trend of community-based social groups in the city. In order to set an example for the relationship between commoning and organization, or between urban commons and civil society, fellow countryman associations in Istanbul have been examined. The reason for drawing attention to this point is that the abstract urban commons that are formed are not only limited to urban needs, but also have economic, social and political consequences. These urban commons, stuck between the state and the market, found the solution in establishing an association. In other words, civil society has undertaken the function of bringing an institutional solution to this impasse. Bayraktar (2003) describes the process as the formalization of the informal solidarity network. In any case, the public space created by the capitalist urban environment by excluding the interventionist state causes the formation of urban commons. Civil society tools are needed to sustain these

urban commons. The structures we call fellow countryman associations offer us one of the most striking examples of this.

This situation is, in a way, an extension of the institutionalization of civil society in Turkey after 2000. The emphasis here on the institutionalization of civil society has a deliberate purpose. The reality that emerges in the production and reproduction of the urban commons is that the feature of resistance to neoliberalism includes locality, subjectivity and finitude. In other words, the practices that produce and protect the urban common that emerge in different geographies and cultures of the world, although they are often in communication and resonance with each other, cannot turn into a global resistance. The most important reason for this is that these practices are not social movements that build institutions. Therefore, establishing the emphasis on institutionalization through civil society, in a way, also includes a technical suggestion for this shortcoming. Civil society organizations have the potential to reach a certain historicity, economic size, human resources and public opinion in the thematic areas they advocate. Of course, as stated, there is always the possibility that the institutional creation process will be interrupted by being affected by the cultural codes, inequalities, patronage relations, etc. of the society in which it is located. In short, every organizational practice cannot necessarily be a commoning practice. Clearly, as we can observe in the example of Turkey that this does not automatically turn into a mechanism that solves state and market failures, controls them and forces them to the act of public good. When we reconsider the fellow countryman associations in this sense, it becomes blurred whether they aim to benefit from urban rent by imitating commoning practices, or whether they are jointly/organized for the purpose of protecting the material and cultural resources created apart from the state and the market. In other words, two similar associations that seem to have been established for the same purpose may want to achieve different results. For this reason, it is necessary to examine other examples that have succeeded in creating more impact in particular, taking into account what other motives reinforce this trend, as well as the impact created by the fellow countryman associations in Istanbul as a whole.

Apart from the areas that this thesis tries to cover, it is clear that there are many aspects of both concepts, civil society and urban commons, that are worth examining both



separately and in relation. The issue of strengthening civil society is already an issue that interests many stakeholders outside the urban commons domain and requires active effort. On the other hand, it is quite possible to gain a new front in the power struggle by reviving the urban commons. Primarily, urban common can be handled by examining it in different ways. What is considered as urban common determines the approach to the subject in that context. This will mostly vary depending on which object is selected as the urban common inspection object. For example, if the squares are considered as urban common, urban social movements can be examined through the struggle given here. Susser and Tonnelat (2013) states that we can observe these social movements from Tunis to Cairo to Bahrain to Tripoli to Madrid to New York, we might almost be reminded of the student movements of 1968, from New York to Paris to Prague, Mexico City, Lusaka, and elsewhere. For Turkey, the Gezi Park movement in 2013 constitutes a very good case for this. What the hypothesis of this work tries to state is that: More lasting gains could have been achieved in terms of results if the civil society knew the ability to articulate its current organizing skills to these movements. At the very least, it may be worth examining in this context as well.

Similarly, if we consider the informal networks formed by people gathered in a certain neighborhood as urban common, trying to protect this community-based city life from urban transformation, for example, leads us to the right to the city. In this regard, various examples can be given from Turkey and the world. Notice that urban common generally refers to a value that is tried to be preserved. It can be argued that advocacy capabilities become much more organized when civil society organizations are adapted to this type of struggle.

If we consider the services provided by local governments as urban common, then in this case we need to put participation, democracy, autonomy and local governance at the center of the urban common discussion. It is clear that when talking about local governance or governance in general, one of its most important stakeholders is civil society. Because it is assumed that the structure of civil society, located between the public and the market, is integrated into the resource distribution process by representing the common interest of the society.

If we talk about the urban atmosphere, this time we are talking about the somewhat commercial side, with cafes, shopping malls, some prominent streets, etc., and related issues such as urban life, lifestyle from being marginalized to identity politics. We are witnessing a city life where these issues manifest themselves through civil society organizations. Women's organizations, LGBTQ+ communities, solidarity organizations and right based civil society organizations in general strive to increase their visibility in the public arena day by day and seek exposure in cities.

Finally, another point of view that converges to the commercial side may be the open access vs community ownership debate. The most common example of this is housing cooperatives. Establishing a certain community in a capitalist city design and trying to meet a very important need with community ownership in that system, corresponds to the transformation process of collective action into an urban common. By expanding this further, this example of solidarity can be increased by establishing a cooperative for almost every common need. Since there is no legal basis that prevents cooperatives from acting like companies and seeking profit, in recent years, there is a new civil society structure called social cooperative, whose main purpose is to solve a common problem without seeking profit, in order to overcome this problem.

All these different fields of study deserve to be studied in the context of the relationship between the urban common and civil society. Further investigations have the potential to produce even more striking results using different methodologies and datasets. The common feature of all of them is their ability to open new areas of power in the face of neoliberal capitalism. Since the source of this thesis study is not sufficient to examine all these dimensions, this thesis has had to content itself with the function of being a humble reminder of how important this struggle is for later studies and academic debates.

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## APPENDICES

### A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Neoliberal ideolojinin hakimiyeti altında geçen son yarım yüzyılda, tedavüldeki ekonomik ve politik sistemin alternatiflerini teorik olarak bile önermenin, oldukça sınırlılık içeren bir uğraş olarak algılandığına tanık olundu. 1970'lerin sonundan başlayarak ekonomik ve sosyal refahın devlet tarafından değil, ancak ve ancak piyasalar tarafından sağlanabileceğini savunan neoliberalizm, devleti, piyasayı ve buna bağlı toplumsal yaşamı bu ideoloji çerçevesinde adeta yeniden tanımladı. 2000'lerden itibaren ise küreselleşmenin etkisini iyice hissettirmesiyle birlikte, küresel neoliberal kapitalizm, bugün hakim politik-ekonomik sistem olarak karşımızda durmaktadır. Francis Fukuyama (1992) Soğuk Savaş'ın barışçıl sonu ve Sovyetler Birliğinin dağılmasıyla birlikte, nihayet tarihin kendisini "sonlandırırken", liberal-demokratik kapitalizmi her ne kadar kusurlu olursa olsun mümkün olan en iyi alternatif olarak tanımlamış ve insanlığın da ideolojik evrimini tamamladığını belirtmiştir. Ancak kapitalist üretim-birikim-bölüşüm rejiminin, küresel ölçekte insanlığı getirdiği yer; iklim değişikliği, kirlilik, ormansızlaşma, biyolojik çeşitliliğin hızla azalması gibi varoluşsal tehlikeler, tarihte eşi görülmemiş bir gelir eşitsizliği, hızla artan işsizlik, sosyal güvenceden yoksun kitlelerin büyümesi, toplumsal ilişkilerin giderek daha fazla metalaşması, marjinalleşme ve dışlanma gibi bir dizi sorunun olduğu bir dünyadır.

Bu süreçten elbette kentler de nasibini almıştır. Hatta denilebilir ki, modern kapitalist kent, bu sürecin hem taşıyıcısı, hem de sonuçlarının en çarpıcı biçimde yaşandığı mekânlardır. Günümüz kentleri, post-Fordizm dönemi olarak da adlandırılan 1970'ler sonrasında itibaren birçok önemli değişime uğramıştır. Söz konusu küresel neoliberalizmin etkisinden muaf olmayan bu değişimler, modern kenti üzerinde bir dizi mücadelenin verildiği alanlara dönüştürmüştür. Bu mücadelelerin çıkış noktası,

insanların kendilerini sosyal bir varlık olarak görmeleri ve daha müreffeh yaşamak için sürekli (kendini) yeniden üretmeye mecbur hissetmeleridir. Kentler ise bu dönemde modern insanın içinde yaşadığı toplumun belirleyici mekânı olma özelliğini giderek artırmıştır. Dolayısıyla kent, demokrasi, vatandaşlık, kimlik ve insan hakları konularında toplumsal mücadele için canlı ve oldukça çekişmeli bir siyasi arena haline gelmiştir (Enright ve Rossi, 2018). Kentsel mekânın da bu mücadelelere sahne olurken, bu çatışmalar ve mücadeleler içinde kendini dönüştürmek zorunda kalması kaçınılmazdır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında kentler, toplumsalın yeniden üretimine aracılık ederken, kaçınılmaz olarak 'bireysel' olanı bu değişim-dönüşüm sürecinin parçası haline getirmeyi zorunlu kılmaktadır. Bu noktada Harvey'in (2012) belirttiği gibi “o zaman nasıl bir kent istiyoruz sorusu, nasıl bir insan olmak istediğimiz, nasıl bir sosyal ilişki aradığımız sorusundan ayrı tutulamaz”.

İnsanlara ve içinde yaşadığı topluma ilişkin tartışmalar çok eski olsa da, modern kentteki toplumsal ilişkileri ele aldığımızda not edilmesi gereken şey, insanın politik bir varlık olduğudur. Yani bugünün karmaşık şekilde ayrılmış toplumsal ilişkilerini ortaya çıkaran, insanların rastlantısal olarak bir araya gelişi değildir. İnsanlar iş paylaşımını, üretimi, tüketimi ve bunların yönetimini katılımla ve rızayla birlikte yapmak zorundadırlar. İşbu küresel neoliberalizm, bu ilişkisel süreçlerin tamamının kurallarını, kapitalist birikim rejimi altında belirlemesinin politik tezahürüdür. Kapitalizm, toplumsal aktörlerin iş ve işlemlerindeki kısıtları azade ederek, şirketlerin karlarını, bireylerin de faydalarını maksimize ettiği, özel mülkiyeti kutsayarak kolektif hak ve sorumluluklardan kurtardığı, dolayısıyla sermaye-emek ilişkisini, işçi sınıfının zaten erozyona uğrayan kolektif örgütlülüğünü dağıtarak sermaye lehine yeniden tesis edildiği bir üretim-tüketim-bölüşüm sistemi sunmaktadır. Bu belirlenimcilik altında piyasa dışı toplumsal ilişkileri ifade eden; dayanışma, işbirliği, karşılıklılık, paylaşım, ortak sorumluluk, yönetime katılım ve hatta kentsel gündelik pratikler gibi ilk etapta salt iktisadi saiklere dayalı olmayan sosyalizasyon biçimleri, yeniden hatırlanmaya değer bir kavram olarak müşterekleri, politik bir alternatif olarak okumamıza olanak sağlamaktadır.

Güncel sosyal ve politik düşünce, müşterekler kavramını bu ilişkilerin önemli sonuçlarından biri olarak görmektedir. Özellikle, müşterekler, çağdaş neoliberalleşmiş

toplumlarda önde gelen kâr odaklı piyasalaştırma ve özelleştirme yapısının aksine tasavvur edilir. Hatta Silvia Federici (2004) her türlü yaşam biçimini ve bilgisini piyasa mantığına tabi kılmaya çalışan neoliberal birikim süreçlerinin, modası geçmiş gibi görünen müşterek kavramının geri çağırılmasına neden olduğunu belirtmektedir. Müşterek olanın piyasalaştırılması, bizlere yok olduğunu sandığımız ya da biz fark etmesek de var olan kolektif kullanım alanlarını ve müştereklik esasına dayanan toplumsal ilişkileri hatırlatmıştır (Fırat, 2018). Dolayısıyla müşterekler, son yılların alternatif bir siyasi parolası olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Müşterekler fikri, insanlığın doğal kaynakların yönetimini nasıl üstlenmesi gerektiğine odaklanan tartışmaların merkezinde yer almaktadır. Müşterek, piyasalaştırma ve özelleştirmenin fayda odaklı eylem biçimlerine bir muhalefet olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Elbette bu, müştereklerin neoliberal toplumlarda kapitalizme karşı korunması gereken bir alameti farikası olduğunu ima eder. Sosyal ilişkiler yoluyla elde edilen ortak çıkar veya servetin herkese ait olduğu kabul edilir. Doğrudan gerçek refah sağlayan kaynaklar (örneğin toprak, su, tohum, hava, gıda, biyolojik çeşitlilik, sosyal uygulamalar) özelleştirmeyle yüzleşmeye başladığında buna itiraz etmek, her şeyden önce politik bir etik gereğidir.

Bununla birlikte, bu niteliklerin ötesine bakmak ve müşterekleri belirli sosyal pratikler ve ilişkiler tarafından desteklenen bileşik sosyal ve politik unsurlar olarak düşünmek önemlidir. O halde, bu noktada müşterekler, aynı şekilde, müşterekleri bir araya getiren, inşa eden, koruyan ve yeniden üreten insanların sosyal bir ilişkisi olarak düşünülebilir. Müşterekler, yalnızca bir dizi sınırlı, savunmacı veya yüksek oranda yerleştirilmiş alanı yansıtmayan müşterekleştirme pratiği aracılığıyla gerçeğe dönüştürülür (Pusey ve Chatterton, 2017).

Müşterekler, başlı başına siyasi bir alternatif söylem olmanın ötesinde, kentsel süreç içerisinde yeni toplumsal ilişkiler kurma potansiyeline sahiptir. Bu açıdan müşterekler, toplumsal ilişkiler yoluyla üretilen ortak bir çıkar veya değerden oluşur (Pusey ve Chatterton, 2017). Neoliberalizmi Henri Lefebvre ve David Harvey'in çözümlmelerinden hareketle doğası gereği kentsel bir olgu olarak ele alacak olsak, ona karşı geliştirilen en önemli siyasi söylem olan müşterekleri kentsel alanda incelemek gerekir. Hardt ve Negri (aktaran Harvey, 2012) "metropol'ü müşterek olanın üretimi

için bir fabrika olarak görmemiz gerektiğini öne sürdüklerinde, bunu anti-kapitalist eleştiri için bir giriş noktası olarak öne sürmektedirler.

Kente özgünlük atfeden bu güncel tartışma, başka bir boyutu da içermektedir. Kentin sosyal olanı üretimi (ve yeniden üretimi), çoğunlukla örgütsüz ilişkilerin ve mücadelelerin kendiliğindenlik içinde gerçekleşmesi ile meydana gelen bir olgudur. Hatta kentsel müşterekleri bu karmaşık ağlardan bir şekilde ortaya çıkan pozitif bir dışsallık olarak görebiliriz. Ancak kentte yaşayan bireyin toplumsallığı, bu kendiliğindenlik halinin dışına çıktığında siyasal bir anlam kazanır. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, insanları kentsel mekanda sosyal olarak bir araya getiren şey, kolektif bir politik alan yaratabilme saikidir. İçinde ekonomi ve politikanın ayrışmadığı bu ilişkiler alanı, ekonomik anlamda bir üretim ve yeniden üretim, politik anlamda bir iktidar alanı ve bir direniş/mücadele alanı olarak da tarif edilebilir (Akçay ve Kocagöz, 2019). Löfgren (2016) bunu, farklı geçmişlere sahip insanların aynı mekânları paylaşmasını ve geçici topluluk biçimleri yaratmasını mümkün kılan görünmez normlar, rutinler ve yeterlilikler olarak tanımlamaktadır. Böylece toplumsal, aynı zamanda politik bir alan da yaratır. Bu alan mevcut akademik literatürde sivil alan olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Sivil alan, modern kentli bireyin sosyalleştiği alana tekabül etmektedir. Sivil alanı deneyimleyen bireylerin oluşturduğu topluluk aynı zamanda sivil topluma da tekabül etmektedir. Bu nedenle sivil toplum kentin özgünlüğünün önemli bir boyutunu oluşturmaktadır.

Bu tezin amacı, sivil toplum kavramı ile kentsek müşterekler arasında nasıl bir ilişki kurulabileceğini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Her iki kavramın da oldukça karmaşık olduğu ve zengin bir akademik tartışma oluşturduğu gerçeği göz önüne alındığında, böylesi bir çabanın ilk bakışta oldukça mütecasir bir görünüşte olduğunu kabul etmek gerekir. Ancak bu iki kavram arasında kurulacak olan ilişki, her ikisinin de taşıdığı antagonizma nedeniyle, küresel neoliberalizm altındaki kentlerde bitmek bilmeyen iktidar mücadelelerini anlamak için oldukça geniş bir repertuar sunma potansiyeli taşımaktadır.

Bu tip bir girişin ardından bu çalışma ilgili kavramların kuramsal arka planını tartışmaya geçmektedir. Kentsel müştereklerin kavramsal çerçevesini tartışabilmek

için ilk olarak, müştereklerin teorik çerçevesi tartışmak gerekmektedir, çünkü kentsel müşterekler öncelikle müşterekler literatürünün yeniden ortaya çıkan biçimidir. Müşterekler tartışmasının zeminini oluşturan temel kavramlar ve güncel literatürde oturduğu yeri anlamak bu yüzden iyi bir çıkış noktasıdır. Müşterekler, orijinal olarak Garrett Hardin'in 1968'de Science'da dergisinde yayınlanan tartışmalı makalesi The Tragedy of the Commons ile başlar. Hardin'in bireyci bir bakış açısından vardığı sonuç, bugün iki farklı düşünce akışında karşılık bulur (Hardin 1968). Kavramsal terimlerle, müşterekler iki ana yaklaşımda tanımlanır: ilki Elinor Ostrom'un çığır açan çalışmasından esinlenen neo-kurumsalcı (ya da daha geniş anlamda neo-liberal) bir yaklaşım, diğeri ise müşterekleri özelleştirmeden (çitlemeden) korumayı amaçlayan bir perspektif olan neo-Marksist yaklaşım. Neo-kurumsalcı yaklaşım, müşterekleri bir kaynak yönetimi sorunu olarak ele alır ve karşılıklı yardım ve dayanışma ağları yoluyla ve bireysel fayda maksimizasyonu yerine sosyal ihtiyaçlara dayalı piyasa dışı düzenlemeler yoluyla örgütlenmeyi önerir. Neo-Marksist yaklaşım ise, hem tekrarlanan 'mülksüzleştirme yoluyla birikim' süreçlerine karşı müştereklerin savunmasına (Harvey, 2003) hem de bu haliyle kapitalizmin dışında alternatif komünal ekonomilerin üretimine odaklanmaktadır. Her iki bakış açısı da müşterekler nosyonunun yeniden canlandırılmasında önemli kavramsal katkıları vardır. Kısmen iç içe geçen ve kısmen benzer sonuçlara ulaşan bu formülasyonlar, günümüz kapitalist kentinin sosyal, ekonomik ve politik dinamiklerinin sonuçlarının müşterek bağlamda değerlendirilmesine de katkı sağlamaktadır.

Müşterekler politik ekonomik anlamda hava, su, mera, orman vb. doğal kaynaklar olarak kabul edilebilir. Müştereklerin bu maddi anlamının, birlikte paylaşılmak üzere bir bütün olarak insanlığın mirası olduğu iddia edilir (Hardt ve Negri 2009: viii). Sanayi Devrimi'nden bu yana doğal kaynaklar ve çevre, üretim faktörünün dolaylı bir parçası olarak kabul edilmişlerdir. Ancak özellikle 20. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında, dünyanın doğal kaynaklarının kıt olduğu ve kaçınılmaz olarak aşınmaya maruz kaldığı anlaşıldı. Hardin'in (1968) öne sürdüğü şey, kendi çıkarlarını maksimize etmeye çalışan bireylerin eninde sonunda bu kıt kaynakları aşırı kullanacaklarıydı. Ona göre, eğer dışardan bir müdahale olmazsa, müştereklerin böyle bir trajedi ile karşılaşmaları kaçınılmazdır. O halde bu trajediden kurtulmanın çözümleri, ortak olanın doğasına göre değişecektir. Hardin'in (1968) bu ikilemin üstesinden gelmek için önerisi ya

kaynakları özelleştirmek ya da onları kamuya mal etmektir. Böylelikle müşterekler zenginlik ya da liyakate göre veya çekiliş ile tahsis edebilirdi. Ya da duruma bağlı olarak, önce gelen hizmeti alır yöntemi uygulanabilirdi. Sonuç olarak, düşünce genellikle özel mülkiyet çözümleri veya otoriter devlet müdahalesi arasında kutuplaşmıştır (Harvey, 2012).

Müşterekler meselesini ele almak için doğru yaklaşımın hangisi olduğu, yani özel girişim sistemi ile kamu müdahalesi arasındaki ikilem, 1990'da Elinor Ostrom'un soruna alternatif bir çözüm sunan ve kamu ve özel arasındaki ikili karşıtlığa meydan okuyan *Governing the Commons* kitabının yayınlanmasına kadar devam etmiştir denilebilir (Ostrom, 1990). Ostrom'un çalışması, aktörlerin "kendilerine dayatılan kısıtlamaları değiştiremeyeceği" varsayımlarını sorguluyordu (1990:7). Ostrom, kuramlaştırmasını "doğal veya insan yapımı ortak havuz kaynak sistemi"nin (Ostrom 1990: 30) yönetiminde öz-örgütlenme ve özyönetim süreçleri üzerine odaklayarak ve bunları hem piyasaya hem de devlet müdahalesine bir alternatif olarak sunmuştur. Ostrom'un vardığı sonuç sadece teorik değildi, aynı zamanda ortak havuz kaynaklarını kullanan çeşitli vaka çalışmalarına dayanarak önerilerini ampirik olarak sistematize etmiştir (Ostrom 1990).

Ostrom'un çalışmalarının literatürde müştereklere olan ilgiyi teşvik ettiğini söylemek mümkündür. Ancak müşterekleri kentsel anlamda tartışmak, kavramın kendisinin farklı bir şekilde anlaşılmasını gerektirir. Farklılaşma, 'kentsel müşterek'in' iki yönünden kaynaklanmaktadır. Birincisi, kentsel alan çok daha karmaşıktır ve sadece ölçek açısından değil, aynı zamanda sosyal ve ekonomik olarak da karşılıklı ilişki içindedir. İkincisi, müşterekler statik doğal kaynaklarla sınırlandırılmaz. Aslında, müştereklerin modern kullanımı genellikle müştereklerin çeşitli biçimlerine atıfta bulunur. Müşterekleri daha dinamik ve soyut anlamda yeniden değerlendirmek gerektiği hususu, neo-marksist yazında kendine daha çok yer bulmuştur. Bu anlamda müşterekler literatürüne en etkili katkılardan biri Hardt ve Negri'nin (2009) '*Commonwealth*' çalışmasında bulunabilir. Bu çalışmanın müştereklerin somut olmayan biçimlerine vurgu yapmaları, tartışma için yepyeni kanallar açmıştır. İnsanlığın ortak mirası, yeryüzü ve doğal kaynaklara ek olarak, fikir, dil, bilgi ve duygulanımlar gibi toplu olarak üretilen ve kullanılan insan kaynaklarını da ifade eder



(Enright ve Rossi, 2018). Hardt ve Negri'ye göre (2009: 139), "ortak olanın bu biçimi, ilkinde olduğu gibi bir kullandıkça tükenmeye mahkum değildir". Hardt ve Negri (2009: ix), Elinor Ostrom'a benzer şekilde, müştereklerin yönetilmesinin yalnızca özel ve kamu arasında katı bir seçim yaparak uygulanmasına karşı çıkarlar çünkü bunun "kapitalizm ve sosyalizm arasındaki eşit derecede zararlı siyasi alternatif"e dönüşeceğini savunurlar.

Müştereklerin iki formunun, yani hava, su, topraklar ve diğer tüm doğal kaynaklar gibi somut formunu ve bilgi, dil, kültürel kod, duygulanım ve etkiler gibi soyut formunu ayırtmak kentsel müşterekleri tanımlamaya ve problemize etmeye çalışırken oldukça önemlidir. Kısaca bahsetmek gerekirse, kentsel ortak yaşamın ortaya çıkışı, küresel neoliberal kapitalizmin artan karşılıklı bağımlılıkları ve kaynak yönetimi ihtiyacının ortaya çıkışı ile paralellik göstermektedir. Sivil toplumun, yerel yönetimlerin ve enformel aktörlerin bu ihtiyaca verdiği yanıt, kentsel müştereklere normatif bir anlam kazandırmıştır. Hardt ve Negri'nin (2009), kentsel müşterekliği oldukça heterodoks Marksist bir yaklaşımla ele almaktadır. Onlara göre, doğrudan ortak mal dediğimiz kamusal mallar, değer üretim sürecinde biyopolitik emeğin sömürülmesi yoluyla sermaye birikimine aktarılmaktadır. Bunun nedeni, ortak varlığın maddi varlık olarak algılanmasıdır. Hava, doğal kaynaklar ve çevre gibi somut kentsel ortak mallar biyopolitik emeğin sömürüsüyle karşılaşırken, fikirler, kültürler ve entelektüel birikimler gibi somut olmayan kentsel ortak mallar olumlu bir noktaya işaret etmektedir. Çünkü bu soyut kentsel müşterekler tüketildikçe yeniden üretilme özelliğine sahiptir. Bu yüzden müşterekleri (aşırı) kullanım yoluyla azalan bir kaynak olarak değil, bunun yerine kentsel müştereklerin iç içe geçen ve tüketimine bağlı olarak yeniden üretilen kaynakların bir formu olarak araştırmak gerekir (Borch ve Kornberger, 2016).

Bu çalışmanın 3. Bölümü yine kendisi oldukça karmaşık olan sivil toplum kavramı üzerinde durmuştur. Bu bölümde sivil toplum nosyonunun kavramsal çerçevesi çizilmeye çalışılmıştır. Çünkü sivil toplum kavramı sosyal bilimlerde çok eski bir tarihe sahiptir. Ancak bununla birlikte de günümüzde sadece akademik bir çalışma alanı olmanın ötesinde, çok güçlü bir politik, ekonomik ve sosyal bir araç haline de bürünmüştür. Bu bakımdan sivil toplum kavramının doğru anlaşılması, sivil toplum

denildiğinde zihinde beliren fikir ve düşüncelerin daha açıkça değerlendirme ihtiyacı ortaya çıkmaktadır. Önce sivil toplumun aydınlanma çağından itibaren hangi akımlar tarafından şekillendiği üzerinde durulmuştur. Çok kısa özetlemek gerekirse, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau'nun temsil ettiği 'toplum sözleşmeciler' sivil toplumdaki şey temelde devlettir. Bir araya gelen ve bir topluluk oluşturan insan gruplarının, bir arada bulunmak için toplumsal bir sözleşme etrafında, bir otoritenin (güncel anlamıyla yönetici sınıf veya politikacıların) yetkilendirmesiyle ortaya çıkan devletin sivil toplumu oluşturulduğunu öne sürmektedirler.

Adam Smith ise, Rousseau'nun özel mülkiyet katkısı üzerinden sivil toplumu inşa etmekte ve konuyu ekonomik bir düzleme taşımaktadır. Adam Smith için sivil toplum, şaşırtıcı olmayan biçimde, aslında piyasadır. Ama liberal akımı temsil eden bu yaklaşıma asıl katkı Adam Ferguson'dan gelmiştir. Ferguson, klasik makalesinde, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, Smith in piyasa ilişkilendirmesine ek olarak, bazı burjuva erdemlerini sivil topluma ekleyerek, bir bakıma sivil toplum kavramına daha özgürlükçü bir anlam yüklemektedir. Öte yandan Marx, Gramsci ve elbette Hegel tarafından temsil edilen bir de sosyalist cephe de bulunmaktadır. Marx'a göre, sivil toplum ile evrensellik ilkesine ulaşma olasılığı bulunmamaktadır. Onun için, sivil toplumun analizi "sosyal koşulların materyalist bir biçimde eleştirilmesinden" başka bir şey değildir. Gramsci ise Marx'ın eleştirisini kabul etmekle birlikte, sivil toplumun araçsal olarak kullanılması gerektiğini savunmaktadır. Bununla birlikte günümüze en yakın analizi aslında Hegel yapmaktadır. Devlet ile sivil toplum arasında kesin ve keskin bir ayırım koyarak, sivil toplumun devletten ayrı kalan bir alan olarak algılamakta ve bu alanın da gelişime açık olduğunu savunmaktadır.

Bugün ise sivil toplum elbette çok farklı bir zeminde konuşulmaktadır. Sivil toplum, devlet ve özel sektör arasındaki orta yolu işgal eden bir alana tekabül etmektedir. Oy vermek veya vergi ödemek gibi devlet faaliyetlerine veya çalışmak, üretmek, alışveriş yapmak veya tüketmek gibi ticarete girmediğimizde işgal ettiğimiz bir alandır. Tanımı yapılması oldukça güç olan bir kavram olan sivil toplum, piyasa ve devlet arasında "üçüncü bir hücre", ticari davranışta bulunmayan vatandaşların ve kamu yararına çalışan ve gönüllülük faaliyetlerine verilen genel bir kavramlaştırma ile ifade edilebilir

(Bernard, 1998). Bu, esasen oldukça belirsiz ve genel kurumlara karşılık gelir. Platformlar, forumlar, (sosyal) kooperatifler, dernekler, vakıflar, odalar, sendikalar, meslek kuruluşları, topluluk temelli oluşumlar, sosyal girişimciler ve hatta bazı çevrimiçi topluluklar sivil toplum varlıkları olarak kabul edilebilir. Ayrıca, listelenen bu örgüt biçimleri sadece ulusal ölçekte tanımlananlardır. Yerel veya küresel ölçekte, sivil toplum olarak da kabul edilen çok çeşitli kurum, kuruluş ve örgütler bulunabilir. Bugünlerde herhangi bir yerel topluluk veya uluslararası kuruluşlar kendilerini sivil toplum olarak tanımlayabilmektedir. Bu nedenle, bu konseptin kurumsallaşması, kendisi son derece belirsiz bir örgüte atıfta bulunduğundan, aynı ölçüde belirsizlik yaratır.

O halde bu oldukça geniş alan nasıl somutlaştırılmalıdır/kurumsallaştırılmalıdır diye sorulduğunda, Salamon and Sokolowski (2016) belirlediği kriterler seti oldukça faydalı bir çıkış noktası sağlamaktadır. Kısacası bir örgütün sivil toplum olarak kabul edilebilmesi için; Gönüllülük esasına dayanmalı, toplum yararına çalışmalı, şeffaf, dayanışmacı, değer odaklı, özerk ve katılımcı olmalıdır. Kesinlikle belirli bir görev tanımına sahip olmalı ve diğer kuruluşlarla işbirliği içinde olmalıdır. Kurum içindeki ve dışındaki hesap verebilirlik mekanizması sorunsuz çalışmalıdır. Operasyonlar kar amacı gütmeyen yürütülmelidir (ki bu en tartışmalı kriterlerden biridir). Ayrıca kendi alanında güç mücadelesine izin vermeyecek ve tekelleşmekten kaçınmaya çaba gösterecek bir yönetim yapısına sahip olmalıdır. Bu kıstasların amacı, otoriter bir tavır ile herhangi bir örgütü sivil toplum olarak etiketlemek veya dışlamak değil, daha çok örgütsel yaşam için ortaya bir nevi ilkeler manzumesi koymaktır.

Bu çalışmada 3. Bölümün devamında Türkiye'deki sivil toplum örgütlerini sınıflandırmak da aynı şekilde kavramın kurumsallaştırılması amacıyla girilmiş bir çabadır. Buradaki temel amaç, bir sonraki bölümde Türkiye örneğini incelerken, sivil toplum kavramı üzerinden Türkiye'nin sosyo-politik resmini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çünkü daha sonra kentsel müşterekler ile ilişkilendirilecek olan sivil toplum kavramı, mutlaka sosyo-politik bağlam içinde anlaşılması gereken bir kavramdır.

Çalışmanın 4. Bölümü ise, bu iki kavram arasındaki, sivil toplum ile kentsel müşterekler arasındaki söz konusu ilişki incelenerek hipotezin ortaya konulduğu

bölümdür. Bu ilişkinin kuramsal altyapısı hazırlanırken, kent düzeyinde sivil toplumun önemini yükselten Üçüncü Yol yaklaşımı dikkate almak gerekliliğinden yola çıkarak, önce 3. Yol yaklaşımının kente bakışı üzerinde durulmuştur. 3. Yolun sunduğu politika önerisinin iki önemli sonucu bulunmaktadır. Birincisi bu politika önerisi, hem devletin hem de piyasanın çözüm bulmakta güçlük çektiği konular üzerinden gerçekleştirilerek, sivil toplumun çözüm olarak ortaya çıkmasına hem temel hazırlamış, hem de var olan sivil toplum savunuculuğunu daha da yukarı çekmiştir. Bu politika önerisinin ikinci sonucu ise, kamusal alan tartışmasını yeniden gündeme getirerek, kentsel müştereklerin yeniden hatırlanması için gereken aralığı sağlamıştır. Bu analizi burada tekrar etmek özetlemek gerekirse; öncelikle Üçüncü Yol yaklaşımının in iddiası şudur ki, devlet zayıflatılmalı, sivil toplum güçlendirilmelidir. Bunun en önemli aracı da kamusal alanın devletin tahakkümünden kurtulmasıdır. Yani Üçüncü Yol yaklaşımı ile temsil edilen liberal anlayış sivil toplumu teşvik ederken, bunun için teorik bir çerçeve oluşturmak adına kamusal alanın sivilleşmesini önermektedir. Buradaki amaç, iktidarın devletten (veya bir başka deyişle kamusal otoriteden) sivil topluma devredilmesini savunmaktır. Sosyal ilişkileri çoğulculuk sağlayarak demokratikleştirmek için, kamusal alanda devlet tarafından kurulan hakimiyet olabildiğince azaltılmadır.

Harvey (2012)'ye ve genel olarak diğer Neo-marksist yazına (ör. Hardt ve Negri, 2009; Blomley, 2008; Parker ve Johansson, 2012; Susser ve Tonnelat, 2013; Parr, 2014) göre ise, kamusal alan aslında kent müşteregidir. Kamusal alan kentliler tarafından politik olarak ilişkilendirilerek, kentsel müşteriğe dönüşürler. Bu anlayışın temel itirazı, kamusal alanın giderek market ekonomisine tabi hale getirilmesidir. Kamusal alanın özelleştirilmesinin/çitlenmesinin, kent müştereginin ortaklık yapısını ortadan kaldırdığı iddiasındadırlar. Yani kentsel müşteri, bu yolla müşteri olmaktan çıkıp metalaşmaktadır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, örneğin bir ev kooperatifi, her ne kadar iyi niyetli, adil bölüşüm içeren ve kar amacı gütmeyen bir yapıda inşa edilmeye çalışılırsa çalışılsın, tek başına kentsel müşteri özelliği gösteremez. Mutlaka çevresindeki ev piyasasından ve kamunun konut politikalarından etkilenecektir. Dolayısıyla kentsel müşteri, politik olarak kamusal alanla ilişkilenen kentlilerin varlığı ile bir kent müşteriğine dönüşebilir ancak. Bu noktada kentsel müşteri aslında, fiziki bir yapı çevre, şehirdeki bir kaynak, ya da kamu hizmetlerinden daha

fazlasını ifade etmektedir. İlk bölümde tartışılan soyut ve somut kentsel müşterekler temelde bu sürece işaret etmektedir.

O halde eğer kamusal alana sivil alanı yaratma fonksiyonu eklenebilirse, bir başka deyişle sivil toplum örgütlü politik bir kamusal alan yaratma becerisine sahip ise, kamusal alanla politik olarak ilişkilenen insanlar da kentsel müşterekleri üretip (yeniden üretiyorsa), sivil toplum kuruluşları ile soyut kentsel müşterekler arasında sanılandan çok daha güçlü bir ilişki var demektir. Bu tez yalnızca bu ilişkiyi deşifre etme amacı taşımamaktadır. Bu ilişki aynı zamanda küresel neoliberalizm tehdidine karşı bir cevap olma niteliği de taşımaktadır. Kapitalist birikim rejiminin ortaya çıkardığı sorunlara karşı, ortak iyiyi piyasa dışı mekanizmaları da içerecek şekilde ortaklaşa kurmaya çalışmak, müşterekleştirmeyi bir direniş biçimi olarak yeniden hatırlamak, iyi bir başlangıç olabilir. Bruun'a (2016) göre, kentsel müştereklerin özü sadece parklara veya diğer kamusal alanlara erişim sağlamak değil, aynı zamanda insanlara şehirde adil bir yaşam sunmaktır ve müşterekler ekonomik kaynaklar veya gayrimenkul ile aynı şey değildir. Kentsel müşterekleri daha geniş bir bakış açısıyla kavramak için yurttaş bilincini tanımak önemlidir. İnsanları ortak hareket etmeye itecek toplumsal süreci oluşturmak, korumak ve sürdürmek için en etkili araç ne olabilir sorusunun yanıtı ise “sivil toplum” dur. Sadece kamusal alanı ele geçirmek yeterli değildir; organize bir şekilde yönetmek de gereklidir. Bu perspektiften bakıldığında, kentsel müşterekleri yaratan ve dönüştüren sivil toplum ve örgütlenme becerisi olmalıdır.

Özetle, bu tezde savunulmaya çalışılan, iki küresel etki altında, kentleşme ve küreselleşme, ortaya çıkan müşterekleştirme hareketlerini, bir sonuç ya da hedef değil, bir başlangıç olarak düşünmenin faydalı olabileceğidir. Çünkü tekrar edildiği üzere, müşterekleştirme kuramsal dayanağı ister neo-marksist yazın olsun, ister kurumsalcı yaklaşım olsun, farklı biçim ve türlerde muhalif etkinlikleri yaygınlaştırmak ve birleştirmek için başvurulan bir kavram olma özelliğine sahiptir. Burada muhalefet edilen temel unsur, mevcut neoliberal sistemin içinde kaygı yaratacak düzeye ulaşan iktisadi sistemin, hem yerel düzeydeki hem de küresel düzeydeki müşterekleri daha fazla tehdit etmesinin sonuçlarının önüne geçmektir. Ancak müşterekleştirme pratiğini, açık olduğu üzere, bildiğimiz anlamda politik bir devrimci strateji gibi

algılamamak gerekir. Bu noktada kentsel düzeyi yeniden düşünmek oldukça önemli hale gelmektedir. Çünkü müşterekleri küresel düzeyde anlayıp, müşterekleştirme pratiğini de küresel bir eylem haline getirmek, hakim iktisadi mantığa bir meydan okumayı, onu değiştirmeyi teklif eden bir radikallik içermektedir. Onun yerine daha mikro deneyimler ve stratejiler sunmak, daha sonra da bu farklı deneyimlerin birbiriyle temas kuran, birbirinden öğrenen ağlara dönüştürmek daha gerçekçi olacaktır.

Bu yüzden örgütlenme ile müşterekleştirme arasında doğrudan kurulan ilişkiyi incelerken, mutlaka muhalif bir siyasal alan yaratma unsurunu da eklememiz gerekmektedir. Üretilen siyasal alanın muhalif olması, ideolojik bir bakış açısını yansıtmaya zorunluluğundan ötürü değildir. Eşyanın tabiatı gereği devlet, en büyük mülkleştiricidir, siyasal alanların bütününe el koymakla kalmaz, toplulukların siyasal alanlarını da büyük oranda sınırlandırıp şekillendirir (Akçay ve Kocagöz, 2019).

Bu tezde elen alınan İstanbul'daki hemşehri derneklerinin süreci, temelde kentteki topluluk temelli sosyal grupların formelleşme eğiliminin arkasındaki sebepleri de tartışmaktadır. Sözü edilen müşterekleştirme ile örgütlenme arasındaki veya kentsel müşterekler ile sivil toplum arasında kurulan ilişkiye bir örnek oluşturması açısından, İstanbul'daki hemşehri dernekleri mercek altına alınmıştır. Bu noktaya dikkat çekilmesinin nedeni, oluşan soyut kentsel müştereklerin sadece kentsel ihtiyaçlarla sınırlı olmayıp ekonomik, sosyal ve politik sonuçlarının da olmasıdır. Devlet ile piyasa arasına sıkışmış bu kentsel müşterekler, çözümü dernek kurmakta bulmuştur. Diğer bir deyişle sivil toplum, bu açmazda kurumsal bir çözüm getirme işlevini üstlenmiştir. Bayraktar (2003), süreci enformel dayanışma ağının formelleşmesi olarak nitelendirmektedir. Her halükarda kapitalist kentsel çevrenin müdahaleci devleti dışlayarak yarattığı kamusal alan, kentsel müştereklerin oluşmasına neden olur. Bu kentsel müştereklerin sürdürülebilmesi için sivil toplum araçlarına ihtiyaç vardır. Hemşehri dernekleri dediğimiz yapılar bunun en çarpıcı örneklerinden birini bize sunmaktadır.

Bu durum, 2000 sonrası Türkiye'deki sivil toplumun kurumsallaşmasının bir bakıma bir uzantısıdır. Burada sivil toplumun kurumsallaşmasına yapılan vurgunun kasıtlı bir amacı vardır. Kentsel müştereklerin üretimi ve yeniden üretimi sürecinde karşımıza

çıkan gerçek, neoliberalizm karşısındaki direniş özelliğinin yerellik, öznellik ve sonluluk içerdiğidir. Yani dünyanın farklı coğrafya ve kültürlerinde ortaya çıkan kentsel müşteregi üretim koruyan pratikler, her ne kadar birbirleriyle çoğu zaman bir iletişim ve rezonans içinde olsa da, küresel çapta sürekliliği olan bir direnişe dönüşmemektedir. Bunun en önemli sebebi de bu pratiklerin kurumlar inşa eden toplumsal hareketler olmamasıdır. Dolayısıyla kurumsallaşma vurgusunu sivil toplum üzerinden kurmak, bir bakıma bu eksikliğe yönelik teknik bir öneri de içermektedir. Sivil toplum örgütleri, savundukları tematik alanlarda, belirli bir tarihselliğe, ekonomik büyüklüğe, insan kaynağına ve kamuoyu gücüne ulaşabilme potansiyeline sahiptir. Elbette belirtildiği üzere, içinde bulunduğu toplumun kültürel kodlarından, eşitsizliklerinden, patronaj ilişkilerinden vs etkilenerek, kurumsallık yaratım sürecinin sekteye uğrama ihtimali her zaman vardır. Müşterek örgütlenmeler, içinde buldukları geniş toplumdaki sınıf temelli eşitsizlik, cinsiyete dayalı adaletsizlik ve etnisite, yaş gibi kültürel temelli farklardan doğan dezavantajlar gibi yapısal eşitsizlik eksenlerinden azade olamazlar (Akçay ve Kocagöz, 2019). Kısacası, her örgütlenme pratiği, mutlaka bir müşterekleştirme pratiği olamaz. Yani bunun otomatik olarak devlet ve piyasa başarısızlığını çözen, onları denetleyen ve ortak iyiye zorlayan bir mekanizmaya dönüşmediğini Türkiye örneğinde görebiliriz. Hemşehri derneklerini bu anlamda yeniden düşündüğümüzde, müşterekleştirme pratiklerini taklit ederek kentsel ranttan faydalanma amacıyla mı bulunduğu, yoksa sahip olunan maddi ve kültürel kaynakları devletten ve piyasadan koruma amacıyla mı ortaklaştığı/örgütlendiği bulanıklaşmaktadır. Yani aynı amaçla kurulmuş gibi görünen iki benzer dernek, birbirinden farklı sonuçlara ulaşmak istiyor olabilir. Bu yüzden de İstanbul'daki hemşehri derneklerinin bir bütün olarak yarattığı etkiye bakmak kadar, daha özelde başka hangi saiklerin bu eğilimi pekiştirdiğini göz önünde bulundurarak, özelde daha çok etki yaratmayı başarmış diğer örnekleri de incelemek gerekir.

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