

TURKISH SOCIAL WORK SECTOR AFTER THE 1990s THROUGH THE
ACCOUNTS OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS

AYŞECAN KARTAL

Boğaziçi University 2008

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Ayşecan Kartal

Boğaziçi University

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This study scrutinizes the state-civil society partnerships in the Turkish Social Services Sector after the 1990s. This approach is embraced in Turkey parallel to the approaches of the international organizations such as the World Bank. In this new model, state is one of the partners rather than a regulator who provide public services. In Europe this new model of welfare meant the de-structuration of an existing welfare system. However Turkish social policy environment in general and the Turkish social services understanding in particular had a different structure than Europe. The Turkish social work sector since its early days in early Twentieth Century was considered to be within the realm of the civil society and voluntariness. This new welfare model is integrated into the existing structure of SHÇEK as a strategy to cope with the new poverty. Consequently, new social services institutions were established through protocols signed between the NGOs and SHÇEK. Society Centers which is the focus of this study is one of those institutions. . These are institutions of SHÇEK established in 1993 with an aim to ease the integration of migrants in urban areas, through projects that will be conducted jointly with NGOs. The primary source of this study is the in-depth interviews conducted with the social workers and SHÇEK administrators . The social workers interviewed were employed in Society Centers. The interviews were analyzed from two different lines. First, the ways in which the social workers perceive the bureaucratic structure of the institution is discussed. Second, the ways in which they perceive to work together with the NGOs and volunteers is discussed. The emphasis is on how Project-mode of service provision influence the ways they perceive their job. This study argues that discomfort of the social workers, manifested as the loss of institutional trust and not being able to define their role in the institution, is not resulting from a new structure within the institution, rather it is the new form of poverty they try to respond with the vaguely defined borders between the state and the civil society.

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Başlık: Sosyal Hizmet Uzmanlarının Gözünden Türkiye'de 1990 sonrası Sosyal

Hizmet Sektörü

Bu çalışma, 1990 sonrasında Türkiye'de sosyal hizmet sektöründeki sivil toplum-devlet ilişkilerini incelemektedir. Sivil toplum- devlet ortaklığı yaklaşımı Türkiye'de Dünya Bankası gibi uluslararası örgütlerin yaklaşımlarına paralel olarak benimsenmiştir. Bu yeni modelde devlet, bir düzenleyici olmaktansa kamu hizmeti sağlayan aktörlerden biri olmaktadır. Bu yeni model, Avrupa'da hali hazırdaki refah devletinin çözülmesi ile ortaya çıkmıştır. Ancak Türkiye'de genel olarak sosyal politika özel olarak da sosyal hizmetler anlayışı Avrupa'dan daha farklı bir yapıya sahiptir. Türk sosyal hizmet sektörü Yirminci Yüzyıl'ın başında ilk ortaya çıkışından bu yana sivil toplum ve gönüllülük anlayışının ağırlıklı olduğu bir alandır. Sivil toplum-devlet ortaklığını destekleyen bu yeni model, 90lı yıllarda daha görünür olan "yeni yoksulluk" olgusuna karşı, Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu'nun hali hazırdaki yapısına eklenmiştir. Bunun sonucunda sivil toplum-devlet arası protokoller ile kurulan yeni sosyal hizmet kurumları ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu tezin odağını da bu kurumlardan biri olan Toplum Merkezleri oluşturmaktadır. Bu kurumlar sivil toplum örgütleri ile ortaklaşa gerçekleştirilecek projeler yardımı ile kırdan kente göçen insanların kente uyumlarını kolaylaştırmayı amaçlamaktadırlar. Bu çalışmanın birincil kaynağını sosyal hizmet uzmanları ve SHÇEK idarecileri ile yapılan derinlemesine görüşmeler oluşturmaktadır. Görüşme yapılan sosyal hizmet uzmanları Toplum Merkezleri'nde çalışmaktadırlar. Bu görüşmeler iki yönden değerlendirilmiştir. İlk olarak sosyal hizmet uzmanlarının kurumun bürokratik yapısını nasıl algıladıkları tartışılmıştır. İkinci olarak sivil toplum örgütleri ve gönüllülerle beraber çalışma konusundaki görüşleri incelenmiştir. Burada vurgu, proje üzerinden hizmet sağlamayı nasıl algıladıkları üzerine olmuştur. Bu çalışma, sosyal hizmet uzmanlarının çalıştıkları yere olan güvenlerini yitirme, yaptıkları işi tanımlamakta zorlanma ve kurum içindeki yerlerinin belirsiz olduğunu düşünme olarak ortaya çıkan rahatsızlıklarının nedeninin, SHÇEK'de uygulanan yeni bir model olmadığını söylemektedir. Sivil toplum-devlet arasında kurulan sınırları net olmayan ortaklık ile toplumda 90 sonrasında ortaya çıkan 'yeni yoksulluk' olgusu ile baş etmek zorunda kalmanın bu rahatsızlığı ortaya çıkardığı savunulmuştur.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines how the ideological shifts that took place in the 1990s which paved the way to the blurring of boundaries between the state, civil society and the private sector were experienced in the Turkish social services sector. However as the social services sector in particular and the social policy in general in Turkey has been considered to be areas which are outside state's responsibility sphere.

Regarded from this perspective the shift that took place in the welfare system that proposes a partnership¹ of the state and the civil society does not apply to the Turkish case in the way it does to the Western examples as it is not possible to argue that there has been a welfare system to be deconstructed. Rather, the new welfare model in Turkey is appropriated as a way to cope with the challenges that emerge

¹ See World Bank, *World Bank Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World* Washington D.C: World Bank, 1997 ; World Bank, *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty*, Washington D.C: World Bank, 2001.

after the 1980s. These challenges can be This study scrutinizes how this appropriation of the new welfare system faced with the new poverty is experienced in the Turkish social services sector after the 1990s. The study mainly focuses on how the social workers, perceive the appropriation of this new welfare model.

The focus of this study is one specific institution of the Social Services and the Child Protection Agency, hereafter referred as SHÇEK, the Society Centers (*Toplum Merkezleri*)² that were established in 1993, the timing of which coincides with the discussions on the changing role of the state that were briefly summarized above.

By focusing on the Society Centers of SHÇEK the thesis aims to show how the new model of welfare which is characterized by the civil-state partnership is appropriated in the Turkish context, as a response to the new challenges in the urban areas stemming from the persistent unemployment, increasing unemployment from 1980s onwards which is referred as the “new poverty”.³ The perception and the appropriation of this new welfare model is worthy of attention as the presence of the state has never been in the How this appropriation process is experienced by the ones who are providing the services, namely the social workers will be the main focus of research.

The analysis of how the social workers position themselves, the institution and the other actors in the process of coping with new challenges that are taking place in the social services environment in Turkey in the 1990s will provide an

² Equivalent in the Anglosaxon usage is Community Centers. However the word “Toplum” in Turkish means society. During the thesis those centers will be referred as “Society Centers”.

³ For the implications of the “new poverty” in the Turkish Context see. Ayşe Buğra and Çağlar Keyder, *New Poverty and Changing Welfare Regime of Turkey*, Ankara:UNDP, 2003 pp.20-24

opportunity to understand in what ways the partnership, “flexibility” of bureaucracy is reflected in the actual practices of the social workers.

While attempting to make sense of how the global discussions on governance are reflected in the Turkish context ,it is crucial to take into account that SHÇEK (Social Services and Child Protection Agency- *Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*) became a state institution in 1983 with a law defining its duties and institutional structure.⁴ When it was established as Association for Protection of Children (*Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti*) in 1921 in Ankara it was defined as an association, not a state institution. In 1937 with a decision of the board of ministers, Child Protection Institution, hereafter referred as ÇEK (*Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*) was accepted as an institution which worked for the public benefit. The perception of the services to be provided by this institution was not regarded as among the responsibilities of the state. This study will take into account this characteristic of SHÇEK while analyzing the accounts of the social workers about their experiences in the working of the society centers.

The fact that SHÇEK initially was established as an “association” the main source of sustainability of which was volunteers and the donations and that its transformation into a state institution took place after more than 60 years of its establishment is a reflection of the Turkish social policy environment. Throughout the thesis while analyzing the accounts of the social workers whose main points are concentrated on the lack of a continuous support of the state and the dependence on the volunteers and civil society is taken into consideration. However as will be discussed further in the thesis, the complaints of the social workers about the current working of the institution do not point to a reference point. While the social workers

⁴ *Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu Kanunu* (Law for the Social Services and Child Protection Institution) Law no. 2828, Date of Adoption 24 May 1983.

made claims on how the system should work they at the same time did this without a reference point. This is a consequence of the “nature” of the institution since its early days.

The main question of the thesis being in what ways the new model of welfare which is an outcome of the de-structuration of the Western welfare regimes in which the state was the main sponsor of the public services, is appropriated as a response to the “new poverty”. The word appropriation will not refer to including a totally new structure throughout the thesis. Rather, the appropriation of the new model of welfare is the embracing a model which emerged as a de-structuration of a model which had not been existent in Turkey.

To be able to discuss the implications of this situation which is summarized above, firstly a discussion on the change of bureaucracy in the Western context with the new role of the state as a partner and catalyzer will be provided. While discussing the changes that took place in the Western context the “bureaucratic autonomy” definition of Max Weber and the conceptualization of Richard Sennett on the transformations of bureaucracy⁵ will be used.

The “vague borders” for the case of this study refer to the way interactions between these two sides, state and non-state actors took place and the consequent vague definition of the profession of the social workers. The projectized mode of approaching the social services initially had the claim to bring dynamism and save the social services from the inefficiency of the state bureaucracy in line with the general claim of the efficiency of partnership among the state and civil society.⁶

⁵ See Richard Sennett, *The Culture of the New Capitalism*, New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2007

⁶ See World Bank, *World Bank Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World* Washington D.C: World Bank, 1997 ; World Bank, *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty*, Washington D.C: World Bank, 2001 where the partnerships

However the process of providing the services (mother-child education, legal literacy for women) through projects in the society centers resulted in the creation of other series of necessities.

A project bureaucracy emerged both for the NGOs that wrote the projects to be eligible to receive funds and for SHÇEK which had to make the proposals of the NGOs pass through several steps within the institution. Within the new bureaucratic culture, the moves that were taken with the efficiency motives in responding to the local needs had consequences which are not in line with the starting motives.

In the institution, these consequences are the tension between the central and local administrations, the loss of long-termed visions of the state officers and the loss of the institutional loyalty, which is manifested as the loss of security for the job that is performed in the society centers.

Due to the projected nature of the service production while the projects were written and funded by the NGOs they were approved by the general SHÇEK directorate in Ankara, but applied locally in each center by social workers who were not in a position to decide which project to run. In other words, while the claim of the partnerships between the state and the NGOs was primarily to bring creativity and flexibility, in the application the responses to local needs were decided by the two parties who know the least about the local.

Moreover, the projectized mode of providing the services brought the discomfort of the shortsightedness of the social services policies. The increasing tendency of outsourced recruitment for the major part of the institutions of SHÇEK resulted in the discontinuity of the services and an obligation for the social workers

among the state and the civil society are demonstrated as the solutions for the alleviation of poverty.

to design the services more according to the sources available than the actual needs of the community.

The predictability for the officers meant a clear path of climbing the steps of bureaucracy, and with the constant flow of outsourced member of staff, it is possible to argue that there is a difficulty to attribute meaning to what one is performing in the office. This ambiguity in the job description can also be interpreted as the loss of agency. In the case of social workers in Turkey the agency of the officer was weakened within the new hybrid, project bureaucracy, the semi-local autonomy of the society centers. The semi autonomy was applied for the fund-raising while how to use these funds were continued to be decided centrally.

The other related consequence of the erosion of the bureaucratic cohesion was the loss of institutional knowledge and loyalty. The whole number of responses to the flexible bureaucracy created a grey area in which the social worker had to justify his work to the clients and to himself in order to prove that he was performing a useful act. The social services is important in understanding these ambiguities as it already had the concern to define itself both within the sector and to the clients.

The rationale behind choosing the social work sector in Turkey for this study was that this sector, since its establishment in the late Ottoman and early republican period had a semi-voluntary structure. Social services was an area in Turkey in which the state worked as a partner or supporter for the volunteers for a long period. But the difference of the 1990s is that this sector from then on had to cope with “new poverty” by using this model. In other words it was the problem to cope with which was changed rather than the means to cope with it.

The term *social services* used throughout the thesis will refer to the services provided by SHÇEK and when mentioning the predecessors, *ÇEK* and *Himaye-i Etfal*.

The institutions which were established with regulations allowing them to have non-state partners started to be established in 1991 with the new inclusions made to Law 2828 for SHÇEK. These new institutions include Child and Youth Centers (*Cocuk ve Genclik Merkezleri*), Women or Men Shelters (*Kadin veya Erkek Konuk Evleri*), *Toplum (or Aile Danisma) Merkezleri* (Society or Family Consultancy Centers), *Aile Danisma ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezleri* (Family Consultancy and Rehabilitation Centers).⁷ These new institutions were included as part of the changed definition of the duties of SHÇEK, which was broadened to include to care for the children and other family members of separated families. Maintaining the unity of the family was added to the SHÇEK law in addition to its previously mentioned duties.

The Society Centers that are the main focus of the research were established with a regulation in 1993.⁸ They were established with protocols between SHÇEK and an NGOs. These centers were established in 1993 with the purpose of integrating the rural migrants to urban life. They were founded in the disadvantaged parts of the urban areas. In these centers the target client groups were the women and the children as they were considered to be the most vulnerable within the migrant population. These centers by providing only daily service to their clients were

⁷ The Decree in the force of law (*Kanun Hükmünde Kararname*) No.572 cited in Ethem Çengelci, “*Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*” Ankara: Aydinlar Matbaacilik, 1998 p.66

⁸ see SHÇEK’e Bağlı Toplum Merkezi Yonetmeligi (Regulation for the Society Centers) Available [online]
http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Mevzuat/Yonetmelikler/Toplum_Merkezi.asp
[22 June 2007]

differentiated from the other institutions of SHÇEK, both by their regulation and the way that they were perceived by the social workers and the administrators. The society centers even though they were the agenda of the social services plan in 1966⁹, were established in a period when the urban space was considered to be more in need of a balancing institution. Currently there are 75 Society Centers, seven of which are located in Istanbul.¹⁰ The Society Centers in Istanbul are located in Gazi Mahallesi, Zeytinburnu, Kocamustafapasa, Yakacık, Sultanbeyli, Bağcılar and Umraniye.

The Society Centers were defined in the regulation¹¹ as institutions to serve in areas which had priority for development or the areas which were located in disadvantaged areas of the big cities populated mostly by rural migrants. The services in the Toplum Merkezleri aimed in the broadest sense to contribute to “human development”. The main principle of these centers was to make it possible for the people living in the “disadvantaged” parts of the urban areas to be able to reach the social services and resources which would help them to participate in the social life according to a gender equality principle.¹²

The Society Centers provided programs targeted to adults, adolescents and children. The programs addressed the parenting problems of the families, through

⁹Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, Sosyal Hizmetler Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu, March 1966 p.13

¹⁰ ‘Sosyal Hizmet Kuruluşları’ Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kuruluslarimiz/tablo_topmerkx.asp [22 June 2007]

¹¹ see SHÇEK’e Bağlı Toplum Merkezi Yonetmeliği (Regulation for the Society Centers) Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Mevzuat/Yonetmelikler/Toplum_Merkezi.asp [22 June 2007]

¹² “Toplum Merkezleri” (Society Centers) pp. 3-12 document Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/hizmetler/Kadin_Aile_Toplum/ [22 June 2007]

programs addressed to mothers and fathers separately¹³. There were programs in these centers which addressed to women to increase their participation in urban life. The contents of these programs aimed to teach the women their rights and encourage them to participate in urban life equally with men.¹⁴ The handcraft courses addressed to women change in content and length depending on the social worker's choices and the demands of the clients. Last, the third group of programs was addressed to children and teenagers, these included intensive pre-school education, handcrafts and music courses.¹⁵

The services at the Toplum Merkezleri were provided mainly by the appointed social worker. However, the programs that were mentioned above were provided by the NGOs, universities or other public institutions, the regulation for the Toplum Merkezleri. The collaboration with state or civil organizations was regulated through foundational protocols made between the Toplum Merkezleri and the collaborating NGOs or public institutions. The programs in the centers were provided each year depending on the availability of the resources that were provided by the NGO or the public institution that is collaborating. The places where the services were provided were maintained by the institution with whom the founding protocol was signed, the expenses of the Center were also covered by the same institution with whom the foundational protocol is signed.

This study looks at how the social workers experience to use work in an institution which is established in both very similar and very different manner of the

¹³ *Anne Cocuk Egitim Programı* (Mother Child Education Program)(ACEP), *Benim Ailem* (My Family).

¹⁴ KIHEP Kadinin Insan Haklari Egitim Programi (Women's Human Rights Program)

¹⁵ "Toplum Merkezleri" (Society Centers) pp. 3-12 Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/hizmetler/Kadin_Aile_Toplum/ [22 June 2007]

previous social services institutions. It is very similar in the sense of dependence on the non-state actors for human and material resources, but it is quite different as the emergence of this model has different roots than that of the Turkish context.

The social workers that were interviewed worked or who had worked in the Society Centers. The interviews that were conducted with the volunteers and employees of the NGOs on the other hand will provide the possibility to understand how this situation was perceived from the other side of the state-civil relationship.

The second chapter of the thesis focuses on the theoretical discussions on the new regime of governance. The pro-market approach of the 1980s was replaced, as mentioned earlier with a partner state approach. The new situation was called to be a shift from government to governance. The criticisms to the governance and the loss of bureaucratic autonomy will be discussed through the conceptualizations of Richard Sennett, Judith Tandler, Bob Jessop and Ingo Bode. The criticisms of these theoreticians will be organized around the concepts of governance and the shifts in the bureaucracy, the hybrid system that came on to scene when the state was transformed into a partner. The place of bureaucratic autonomy in the capitalist system will be discussed through the conceptualizations of Max Weber. The second part of the theoretical chapter will be constituted by discussions on civil society. The roles of civil society and the way it was transformed after its “partnership” with the state will be included in the discussion.

The third chapter is on the history of the social services sector in Turkey. Due to the scope of the thesis, the history of the social services will be narrowed down to the institutionalized period starting from the 1917. The brief history of *SHÇEK* will be followed by the foundation of the Toplum Merkezleri. After providing the

emergence of the sector from the early republican period, the focus will be shifted to the early 1990s when the Society Centers were established.

The fourth chapter of the thesis is devoted to the analysis of the primary sources, which are the interviews with the social workers. Initially the ways in which the social workers perceived themselves will be discussed to provide an introduction to the institution and the interviewees. Second, the ways in which the social workers perceived the bureaucracy and the structure of the institution will be included. Their perceptions are categorized in three subsections: Bureaucracy as a safe medium, as a constraining mechanism and an insecure structure. Third, the ways in which the social workers perceive working with the NGOs and the volunteers and the project mode of providing services will be discussed. Before the chapter on theoretical framework, in the following pages a brief summary of the sources and the methodology of the study will be provided.

Sources and Methodology

The major parts of the interviews were conducted with social workers who were working or who had worked at the Society Centers in Istanbul. The choice of Istanbul was a consequence of the time limitations of the study.

The interviews were conducted in the offices where the social workers work, which allowed for observations how of the centers work and where they are located. During July and August nearly most of the projects and programs which were conducted in collaboration with the NGOs were not running, thus there were very few clients in the centers while the interviews were conducted. While this situation

may have seemed like a disadvantage in the first instance, on the other hand it allowed the interviewees to have a calm atmosphere while answering the questions.

Eight social workers were interviewed, five of whom were still working in a Toplum Merkezi, both as a professional and an administrator, and these centers were Gazi Mahallesi, Koca Mustafa Pasa, Zeytinburnu, Yakacik and Umraniye Toplum Merkezleri. Except for the social worker in Koca Mustafa Pasa, the social workers that were interviewed had been working in the center since its establishment which allowed them to have an overall picture of the place of Toplum Merkezleri in SHÇEK and the way this relates to the social services environment in Turkey.

For Bağcılar and Sultanbeyli the interviews took place in different contexts. The social workers who had worked nearly eight years in those centers were appointed to other institutions of SHÇEK. For these two centers the previous social workers were interviewed as they were the ones who had witnessed the changes from the foundation until recently.

Besides interviewing the social workers, making observations in the centers provided the opportunity to witness the daily habits, concerns and impacts of the otherwise abstract terms such as “shifts in bureaucracy”, “the new actors of social services” and even “governance”. Especially the obligation to have a permit from the General Directorate of SHÇEK to be able to conduct interviews while at the first instance seemed more of an obstacle, along with the time passed in the general directorate, turned into a part of the study which helped me to understand the administrative part of the institution.

Apart from social workers three administrators of SHÇEK were interviewed, two of whom were no longer working at SHÇEK. One of the interviewees was the previous Director General of SHÇEK, while the other one was the previous Director

of Istanbul Provincial Directorate, and the third administrator was currently one of the vice-directors of SHÇEK Istanbul Provincial Directorate. The interviews with these three administrators aimed to provide an overall picture of SHÇEK. While the current administrator provided the consequences of recent regulatory changes, the two previous administrators provided accounts from “outside” ,which allowed them to provide a critical stance.

The last group of interviewees consisted of three people who worked with SHÇEK as affiliates of an NGO or an international organization, during a project. Even though the scope of this study is limited to the consequences of the governance regime on the “state” part , these three interviewees were included in order to understand how the impacts of the collaboration between the state and civil society were experienced from the non-state part. Two of the interviewees were from an NGO the project of which was turned into a program (*Anne Çocuk Eğitim Vakfı*), and became continuous. The third interviewee was responsible for a two-year project of the ILO (International Labour Organization), which had been concluded recently when the interview was conducted and the chances of restarting was almost none. Thus these three interviews provided two different experiences by the non-state actors who worked together with SHÇEK in the Society Centers on temporary and permanent basis.

The interviews were semi-structured, and they were approximately one hour in length. The questions aimed to understand how the social workers and the administrators positioned themselves in SHÇEK, how do they experience the changes that are taking place in the institution since the early 1990, how they perceive their profession and how they think they are being perceived both by the outsiders and also within SHÇEK and how they evaluate working together with non-

state actors as partners. For the interviewees who were affiliated with AÇEV and ILO the questions focused on the points where the differences between them and SHÇEK emerged in approaching the clients, designing the services and how they evaluate the working together with a state institution.

In the last part of this section on sources and methodology, the experience of entering to the institution and the way interviews evolved will be provided.

How to “Enter” SHÇEK? Reflections on the Experience of an Outsider in SHÇEK

The interviews conducted with the social workers constituted the primary data of this study. Starting from April 2007 I started to choose the social workers that I want to include in accordance with their work places, namely the *Society Centers*. The interviews were conducted in July and August 2007, as stated in the introduction chapter, in the offices of the social workers. The primary data of this study consist of the in-depth interviews conducted with the social workers as mentioned above. In addition to them, employers of NGOs, former and current administrators of SHÇEK were interviewed.

Before deciding on the topic of this study I was not familiar with the social work environment in Turkey besides the readings I had done. As my motive in deciding on this topic was to make sense of how the new regime of governance which are discussed in the first and second chapters, has its reflections on the

experiences of the social workers in the *Toplum Merkezleri*, which are sites in which as mentioned earlier it is possible to observe the partnerships taking place among the state and civil society as well as the private sector.

The choice of my interviewees was initially shaped by the social workers that my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Ayse Bugra knew in person, and after this first two interviews' namely with Ms. Derya Halis from the Gazi Toplum Merkezi and Mr. Ahmet Kara from Kocamustafapasa Toplum Merkezi, I arranged the remaining interviews through the recommendations they made, and the recommendations of the other social workers that I interviewed. In other words, my familiarity circle with the social workers broadened gradually. This method of selection provided me an advantage, as my interviewees felt comfortable after I mentioned them the previous interviewees and said who had recommended them or which of their colleagues have advised me to get information on a specific issue from them.

Primarily at the stage when I was deciding on the topic and the method of studying it I planned to conduct interviews with all the social workers who are working in the Toplum Merkezleri in Istanbul. However, after the first two interviews that were mentioned beforehand I learned that in the majority of the Society Centers in Istanbul most of the social workers have been working since the establishment of the centers, which varies between 1998 and 2002. Except for the three social workers who were interviewed for this study, the remaining ones were working in the Society Centers. These three other social workers were interviewed in their current work places, which allowed me to visit two COGEMS (*Cocuk ve Genclik Egitim Merkezleri*- Child and Youth Education Centers). Even though this study focuses on only the Society Centers the observations that are made in different

institutions of SHÇEK allowed me to comprehend the at times generalized accounts of both the administrators and the social workers on the working of SHÇEK.¹⁶

During the months of July and August 2007 while I was conducting the interviews, I learned that I needed a permission from the Directorate General of SHÇEK in Ankara in order to enter the Society Centers and interview social workers.¹⁷ This process introduced me to another part of the institution: The Istanbul Provincial Directorate of SHÇEK, through which I applied for the permission. This process which took seven weeks during which time I interviewed social workers who did not ask whether I had permission.

Before writing on the observations that I made during the interviews I wanted to mention the process of obtaining permission to provide my reference point (s) on how the bureaucracy is experienced in reality. My aim is to provide the context in which the author's experience of bureaucracy took place. The challenges that are experienced will be mentioned in two steps: first the challenge in explaining oneself and the reason for asking the permission, and second the challenges of understanding the language of an institution.

Even though trying to translate the academic objectives to the people whom the researcher wants to include in the ones research is not a unique experience to the author, it is still worth mentioning. First these challenges reflect the concerns of the insiders in welcoming an outsider, which usually is a concern that reflects the involuntariness in revealing the dynamics of the institution which is closely related to the working culture of state employees in Turkey. The uncomfortableness that results

¹⁶ The use of such observations will be indicated in the following sections of this chapter.

¹⁷ Only a number of the social workers demanded this permission and among those who demanded some of them stated that the fact that I applied for the permission was enough regardless of the outcome.

from the concern of losing one's job or receiving an "official warning" from a superior administrator which would be registered in their records. Second, the perception of the research by some of the interviewees was quite skeptical. They had a prejudice against research as a means to reveal the mistakes of the institution.¹⁸

Even though all of the interviewees allowed me to use a recorder during my visits, some of them mentioned ironically that they hoped not to see with their accounts in the newspapers or in televisions and that their names should remain discrete.

Before the interviews the question that I had to answer was the reason behind the choice of my topic and why I was interested in Society Centers in particular. In the first interviews, I attempted to make a short presentation of my thesis proposal and told about my educational background briefly. After the first half of the interviews was over I acquired the vocabulary of the institution, which means I found better and shorter ways to talk about my research by providing concrete examples from within SHÇEK and Toplum Merkezleri. However this easiness brought another challenge, especially during the last interviews. The more the interviewees understood that I was familiar with the dynamics of SHÇEK and Society Centers, they tended to treat me as a person with whom they could share their problems related to their job. I even was told that it was like therapy for them to speak about SHÇEK.

However, this second perception of mine during the interviews resulted in the subjects recommending certain administrators and social workers to interview. My demonstration of the familiarity with the criticisms of the social workers about the

¹⁸ For the specific case of SHÇEK this maybe even more obvious after the child abuse case in one of the Child Shelters in Malatya in 2006. see. '0-6 Yaş Çocuk Yuvası'ndaki Dayak ve İşkence' Available [online] <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/3441525.asp> [23 July 2007]

institution resulted in the impression that all I wanted to hear was the complaints of the employees of SHÇEK. As at the end of the every interview I asked them to provide me names of potential interviewees they started to filter their colleagues through this impression. One of the sentences that I heard most was “ Let me see who I can recommend, someone that will tell you the things you like, someone radical.” Besides the contacts my interviewees provided I also conducted interviews with people who were labeled “not of much use” by some of the interviewees as I wanted to have a sense of the perception of the change of bureaucracy within the institution.

As for the second challenge, which is discussed earlier as the effort to understand the language of the institution refers to the sensitive words and issues which may trigger the uneasiness of the social workers and the administrators.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

This chapter provides an overview of the implications of the state becoming one of the actors among the civil society and the private sector, the implications of the “good governance”¹⁹. Thus the aim is to briefly discuss the welfare model that is appropriated in the Turkish context as a response to new poverty rather than as a consequence of deconstruction of an existing welfare system like in the Western Europe.

In the first section of the chapter the discussion will be on how the partnership among the state and the civil society which is portrayed by the World Bank reports of 1997 and 2001 are critically evaluated with regards to its implications in the change of the bureaucratic structure of the state institutions.

¹⁹ For a discussion of this concept see Bob Jessop , “Capitalism and its Future: Remarks on Regulation, Government and Governance”, *Review of International Political Economy*, 4:3, (1997) pp.561 –581

In the second part of the chapter the focus will be on how the civil society as a partner of the state has been transformed as a consequence of the new roles attributed to that sphere. In addition to this, a discussion on the micro-ized, project-ized provision of public services will be included in the discussion.

Dynamic and Effective or Short Sighted and Temporary?

The title of the 1997 World Development Report of the World Bank is “The State in a Changing World.” The purpose of this report is to look at “ the role of the state what the state should do how it should do it and how it can do it better in a rapidly changing world.”²⁰ The role of the state according to the report should be changed as no longer it was no longer possible for the development to work with the almighty state or with a minimal one. The common features of successful developing countries were stated to have three common properties in the report: civil society partnerships and private transactions are supported by these states, the corruption is taken under control and the state neither shrinks nor dominates.

This new system replaced the “Washington Consensus” by which the development formulas were imposed directly by the international organizations. “Good governance” became the central theme of the paradigm of the 1990s.²¹ The public-private partnerships became the ways through which good governance is realized. In other words, the shift in the understanding of development resulted in a

²⁰ World Bank, *World Bank Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World* Washington D.C: World Bank, 1997 p. V

²¹ Ayşe Buğra, “Polanyi’s Concept of Double Movement and Politics in the Contemporary Market Society” in *Reading Karl Polanyi for the 21st Century: Market Economy as a Political Project*, A. Bugra, K. Agartan (eds.) New York: Palgrave, 2007 p.2

more complex picture which increased the number of actors who “governed”.

However, the emphasis when this new paradigm was introduced was on how to make the state more efficient through these new actors as stated in the initial part of the 1997 World Development Report. In other words the key to development is to transform the state one of the actors of the new good governance system. In the report it is stated that:

‘An effective state is vital for the provision of goods and services and that allow people to have healthier and happier lives. Many said much the same thing fifty years ago but then they tended to mean that the development should be state provided. The message of experience since then is rather different: that the state is central to economic and social development not as a direct provider of growth but as a partner, catalyst and facilitator.’²²

The same call for the effectiveness is repeated in the World Development Report of 2001: “Sound governance, competition and markets - and free entry for multiple agents whether government, non-government or private are essential for effective service delivery, especially to poor people.”²³

The state to become effective should meet certain criteria which, according to the World Development Report 1997, should vary for each state. But as a principle the capabilities of the state should match its role, what will vary from state to state is the how this matching is made. The effectiveness of the state is not maintained according to the report by providing all the services by itself.²⁴ On the other hand, the state leaving the scene totally is not considered to be an efficient solution. The

²² World Bank, World Bank Development Report 1997 p.1

²³ World Bank, World Development Report 2001, p.85

²⁴ World Bank, World Development Report 1997 p.3

new governance is defined as “Bringing the State Closer to the People”²⁵ Becoming close to the people would be achieved through the partnerships with civil organizations and allowing competition for the provision of public services.

The shift that occurred in the 1990s which favored complex networks among numerous actors -one of which was the state- resulted in efforts to define this grey area, neither governed only by market forces nor calling for a fully state planned growth and development. The term governance according to Jessop started to be used in the social sciences to “...reject dichotomies that inform social sciences, including market vs hierarchy in economics; market vs plan in policy studies; private vs. public in politics and anarchy vs sovereignty in international relations.”²⁶ The networks and practices intermediate between the state and the market existed also back in the years of “Atlantic Fordism”, however, the naming of these mechanisms, actors between the state and markets became pronounced and underlined after the disenchantment with the state planning in the 1970s and markets in the 1990s.²⁷

The ideological shift in the 1990s resulted in the methods through which the public services were provided. The manifestations of the changes that were a consequence of the “good governance” can be seen in the way bureaucracy is experienced by its employees in both state and the corporate structures. In the previous bureaucratic structure, the predictability was high, both those who were providing and receiving the services were able to have a wider view span for the future. The previous bureaucratic structure, here refers to the idealized definition of bureaucracy dating back to Nineteenth Century.

²⁵ World Bank, World Development Report 1997 p.10

²⁶ Bob Jessop “The Rise of Governance and the Risks of Failure: The Case of Economic Development” *International Social Science Journal*, 50 (155). 1998 p.31

²⁷ *ibid* p.32

This understanding of the autonomous structure of bureaucracy can be traced to the writings of Max Weber who defines the characteristic features of Bismarckian bureaucratic model and delineates it from the state structure of the Middle Ages.

The main change in the definition of the officer in the Bismarckian period, according to Max Weber, compared to the Middle Ages is that his duties were fixed and the office was not a source to be exploited.²⁸ The two main characteristics of the Bismarckian bureaucracy is the loyalty to the superior, which results in a secure existence. This secure existence refers to being sure of one's place within the institution in the long-term and not having financial concerns for the future. This bureaucratic structure results in the consistency of the finances of the institution and the continuity of the services provided in the institution.

The main source of loyalty as defined by M. Weber is the one that is for the office rather than a loyalty for the people. This new form of loyalty is one of the main elements of what is named as autonomy of the bureaucracy. The idealized definition of autonomy is defined as not being dependent on individuals, but on the structure of the institution itself. The possibility of independence from individuals will not be discussed here as the main point of discussion will be on the new form of bureaucracy and the bureaucracy conceptualization of Weber will, as mentioned above be used as an idealized form.

Bureaucracy is defined by the Oxford American Dictionary as follows: "a system of government in which most of the important decisions are made by state officials rather than by elected representatives."²⁹ Max Weber conceptualizes bureaucracy as the "means of carrying community action over into rationally ordered

²⁸ Max Weber, *On Charisma and Institution Building Selected Papers*, S.N Eisenstad (ed), Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974 p. 69

²⁹ Oxford American Dictionary software version 1.0.2

societal action”³⁰ Bureaucratic autonomy, according to this definition, brought to the system a different impetus, it helped to replace the revolutions. In other words, the bureaucratic autonomy created a new form of authority which replaced the need for revolutions as the system was changing “by itself” without the need for a revolution. It is possible to argue that this new form of authority which was formed during the Bismarckian regime was characterized by its impersonal character, and long-sightedness. The abstract regularity of the execution of authority³¹ means the homogenous application of the laws to everyone and for every similar situation.

The homogenous application of the authority and the consequent predictability of the services to be provided in the office and the place of the officer in the institution made the feeling of security according to this idealized definition which allowed the making of the prediction of their prospects in the office and also the consequences of the services that are provided possible.

The long-termed decision making of the system summarized above brings a predictability and sense of secureness to employees. Richard Sennett argues that with the “fresh-page hypothesis” of the post Bretton Woods period, along with flexible production also the possibility/ability of planning was no longer possible as it had been in the Fordist period. According to Sennett, with these changes, “... institutions which enabled a life narrative thinking melted into the air.”³² The security that had been provided by the bureaucracy started to be challenged with adjustments to make the state institutions a partner, a facilitator of the civil society and the capital. As stated by Sennett, one of the basic securities of bureaucracy the

³⁰ Max Weber, *On Charisma and Institution Building Selected Papers* p. 75

³¹ *ibid.* P. 70

³² Richard Sennett, *The Culture of the New Capitalism*, p.24

predictability is hard to achieve in this new paradigm.³³ The claim of the bureaucracy in which the officer learns to think about the future reward no longer existed in this new form of bureaucracy.

The loss of continuity in bureaucracy was a consequence of short-termed contracts that were used in the new working culture, which resulted in the loss of institutional authority. Short-termed contracts also resulted in the weakening of the of institutional knowledge by the officers as the perception of work as life long disappeared in this new structure.³⁴ This loss of loyalty can be seen as a consequence of staying for a short and uncertain time in the office which dis not allow for neither a specialization nor a belonging to the institution one has for the institution. The autonomy defined by M. Weber depended on the long term plans made by the employees which aim to substitute a revolution as the “machine” would have the capacity to change itself when needed.

The continuity, predictability and long-sightedness all point to institutionalization. In the period of the 1990s which can be called “Post-Bretton Woods”,^{or} “Post Washington Consensus”,³⁵ the loss of these qualities is the result of the changes that took place to adopt the bureaucratic structure to the “good governance.” The provision of the services and responsibilities were dispersed among the NGOs, the private sector and state, resulting in difficulties of coordination among these actors. In other words, it is possible to claim that on the one hand there

³³ *ibid.* p. 32

³⁴ *ibid.* p.63

³⁵ Ayşe Buğra, and Sinem Adar, “Social Policy Change in Countries Without Mature Welfare States: The Case of Turkey” Forthcoming in *New Perspectives on Turkey*, , n.38, Spring 2008. p.2

was the experience of the change for the state bureaucracy, and on the other hand, the “civil sphere” had to adjust itself to this new form of relationship.

Additionally, the private-public partnerships were not first emerge in the 1990s, but the discourse of the necessity of such partnerships is a phenomenon of the 1990s.³⁶ Thus to put the issue as only a transformation from the public provision of social welfare to a public-private partnership would be simplistic. Within the academic debate there is an invitation to consider the new paradigm “...when addressing evolutionary logics , the crucial point is not the partnership between the state and the voluntary sector or the participation of the civil society in the social welfare sector as such, but the *transformation* of this partnership including the *form* of civic participation.”³⁷ The most consistent quality of this new welfare regime according to Bode³⁸ is the blurring of the boundaries among the sectors.

The governance which is defined as the inclusion of the non-state actors became visible especially in the provision of public services. As mentioned earlier, the emphasis of the World Development Report of 1997 and 2001 was on the significance of the partnership model as an efficient method of development. The new welfare regime shaped after the 1990s in line with this paradigm shift was marked with this new understanding. The following section will focus on the implications of this new mode of public service provision, discussing both how this new paradigm transformed the understanding of civil society and how the provision of public services through short-termed projects took place.

³⁶ See World Bank, World Bank Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World Washington D.C: World Bank, 1997

³⁷ Ingo Bode, “Disorganized Welfare Mixes: Voluntary Agencies and New Governance Regimes in Western Europe”, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16, (2006:4): p.348

³⁸ *ibid* p.347

Projectizing, (N)GOs and Volunteering

The new actors, NGOs and the volunteers had an important place in the new governance paradigm of the 1990s. As stated in the World Development Report 1997 the state was designed as a catalyzer among the civil society, charities and the private sector who became the donor and the organizer of the services that were regarded to be under the responsibility of the state in the Keynesian Era.

The discussion in this section will focus on two aspects of the new paradigm related to the increasing space civil society is given. First, the change in the role of the NGOs and the meanings attributed to the “civil” sphere will be discussed. Second, how this new form of relationship between the state and non-state actors influenced the social policy environment will be included in the discussion.

The definition of “civil” according to the Oxford American Dictionary is: “Of relating to ordinary citizens and their concerns, as distinct from military or ecclesiastical matters.”³⁹ Thus the sphere that is defined as civil is supposed to provide a space that provides an alternative to that one of the state which protects the rights of citizens and independent from the state.

Civil society as an actor of development was defined in the post-1990s’ “good governance” paradigm as a partner to work together with the state. Civil society was attributed with the role of providing the public services which had until then been regarded to be the responsibility of the state.

³⁹ Oxford American Dictionary Soft Version for Apple

The two main discussion points that were mentioned above are intermingled with each other when these two roles of “civil society” are considered together. In close relation to the new governance paradigm the role of the civil society is transformed. Civil society for developmental concerns is attributed the role of providing the services which are defined to be in the state’s sphere of responsibility. Extensive funds are transferred from developed countries to developing ones, which can be shown as an indicator of the significance attributed to their role in development. The transfer of funds from Northern to Southern NGOs showed an increase after the 1990s, according to the UNDP’s Human Development Report 1993. In 1990, Northern NGOs provided 7.2 billion \$ which equals 13% of the net disbursement of official aid.⁴⁰ The proliferation of civil society while welcomed extensively after the 1980s and 1990s and was shown as an alternative to improve the development and improvement of social services.

The proliferation in the amount of funds made available through the NGOs and the new roles attributed to them resulted in the extensive kinds of organizations that are classified under the same category: NGO. This is the first problematic issue about the NGOs and the development of public services through them as it is not plausible to define clearly what an NGO is. William F. Fisher states that “There is little agreement about what NGOs are and perhaps even less about what they should be called.”⁴¹ The starting point of the civil society, which is to create an alternative sphere where the rights of the citizens would be defended against the state, is challenged with the new situation when state and civil society become partners.

⁴⁰ Human Development Report 1993 (New York, United Nations Development Programme and Oxford University Press) cited in Gerard Clarke “NGOs and the Politics in the Developing World”, *Political Studies* 1998, p.37

⁴¹ Neera Chandoke “Doing Good The Politics and Anti Politics of NGO Practices” *Democratization*, Vol:8 No:2 Summer 2001 p.447

Neera Chandoke states that with the new position of the non-governmental organizations towards the state the initial claim is no longer possible. The groups that are named as “civil” are left unable to perform their role as defenders of citizens rights against the state as they become partners of the state. Second, Chandoke states that the concept of civil society loses its strength as there is a broad level of consensus regarding it:

‘When concepts become consensual they become problematic. Indeed if a variety of dissimilar groups such as international funding agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and institutions of the state on the one hand and left leaning liberals , trade unions and social movements on the other subscribe equally to the validity of the concept, it is time to worry.’⁴²

The problematic situation related to the consensus is visible when the civil society organizations are attributed the role of providing or improving public services. Public services which are meant to be improved by the civil society would become vulnerable to the political and ideological biases of the members of civil society. Additionally the approach of the state to civil society for the provision or improvement of public services would be influenced by the ideological position of the government. Consequently the starting point of civil society being a third sphere independent from the state and the capital would be challenged as the selection to reach to people who would be impacted by the viewpoint of the representatives of the state.

The challenges that are mentioned above, on the other hand, can be traced to the paradoxes of civil society from the early introduction of the concept, independently from the new governance paradigm. That is to say , the

⁴² Neera Chandhoke “The ‘Civil’ and the ‘Political’ in Civil Society”
Democratization, Vol:8 No:2 Summer 2001 p.1

incompatibility between the state and civil society lies at the very heart of the constitutional dynamics of civil society. As argued by Neera Chandhoke, “The very state that civil society supposedly positions itself against, *enables* the latter in the sense that it provides the legal and the political settings for the sphere to exist and maintain itself.”⁴³

The existential contradiction between the two spheres poses a challenge for collaboration between the two which is communicated by the World Bank Development report as an alternative recipe for development. Having to collaborate with an institution which is funded by the *enabler* prepares a context in which both sides become vulnerable to each other.

The vulnerability of the civil society organizations results from the fact that their involvement in the partnerships is set by rules that the state makes. However the vulnerability which is more striking is the one of the representatives of the state to the NGOs who do not have any say in the policy making and who need funding from civil society to continue the provision of public services.

After mentioning the contradiction among the two spheres the remaining part of this section will be devoted to how the new governance paradigm, which is discussed in terms of the changes it generated in the bureaucracy impacted civil society. Following that discussion, the new mode of public service provision will be discussed.

The role of civil society as described to be defending the rights of citizens acquired a new facet which was defined as the provider of the social and public services as a partner of the state. This new role of civil society as mentioned earlier in this section, resulted in the dependence of civil society organizations on the

⁴³ *ibid*, p.8

providers of funds and the state officers such as the social workers on the volunteers and NGOs who will bring in the funds they receive from outside sources.

According to Tendler⁴⁴ the tendency of the international community to projectize and micro-ize social policy does not differ in the parties from the left or in the right of the spectrum of the donors. Rather the process of designing and funding projects became the *modus operandi* of international funders.⁴⁵ In this environment the public and private partnerships become volatile and heterogeneous, civic action becomes more sporadic.⁴⁶ However, this new welfare mix is also contradictory as this multiplicity of actors has the potential to bring creativity.⁴⁷

Second, as argued by Tendler, the projectizing and micro-izing of the social duties of the state are experienced as the abandonment of these duties as services which were provided systematically beforehand. Related to this the continuity of these services is impacted in a negative way. The NGOs, on the other hand, acquire in this system a new position which when compared to the post Second World War era, is characterized by “ a good deal of ambiguity concerning the sources of representational powers of the non-governmental actors or the rules that define the nature of their relations with the state.”⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Judith Tendler, “Why social policy is condemned to a residual category of safety nets, and what to do about it: thoughts on a research agenda.” In: *Social Policy in a Development Context*, Thandika Mkandawire (ed.), New York:Palgrave, MacMillan 2004 p.118

⁴⁵ *ibid* p.119-120

⁴⁶Ingo Bode, “Disorganised Welfare Mixes: Voluntary Agencies and New Governance Regimes in Western Europe” 2006 p.347

⁴⁷ *ibid* p.347

⁴⁸ Ayse Bugra. *Kapitalizm, Yoksulluk ve Turkiye’de Sosyal Politika* Istanbul: İletişimYayımları, 2008 p.10

The projectized mode of funding is becoming a new trend which does not consider the state as the sole party responsible for social welfare maintenance. Rather, the state in this new system needs a “helping hand from elsewhere... which is referred to a transfer from government to governance.”⁴⁹ In this new regime of welfare governance the main characteristic is the ambiguous character of the relations that are formed between the state, civil society and the public sector. To claim that these new networks have a homogenous structure would be far from the existing situation. The consistent element of this new regime of governance is this very oscillating character and the transformation that takes place is characterized by the experience of this oscillations which occurs in various ways, but creates a similar process of transformation.

⁴⁹ *ibid* p.346

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SOCIAL WORK IN TURKEY

The term social services as it is used today became part of the state vocabulary in the mid-1950s in Turkey.⁵⁰ However, the services that are now classified under the category of social services date back to the pre-republican period to the Nineteenth century. However, for the scope of this study the history of social services will be dated back to the establishment of what is known today as SHÇEK, *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti*. This chapter aims to present the stages through which the institutionalization of the social services in Turkey passed.

The periodization of these institutionalization stages in this chapter will be divided into four parts. The first part is concerned with the pre-republican period of the *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti*, which was characterized by the need to provide an immediate solution to the consequences of the Balkan Wars and The First World War. The single party era, as it did not differ in terms of the structure of the

⁵⁰ For a further discussion see Selen Göbelez, *The History of Social Services in Republican Turkey: Social Change, Professionalism and Politics*, (Bogazici University MA Thesis, 2003)

institution, will be included in the same part. The second part of the chapter will deal with the institutionalization process during the 1950s and 60s and the developments that took place until 1983, the law for SHÇEK. The developments in both SHÇEK and the institutions that impact SHÇEK directly will be included in the third part. The establishment of the Community Centers in 1993 and the law concerning these centers will constitute the fourth and the last part of this chapter.

Himaye-i Etfal and ÇEK from 1917 to 1949

There is not an exact date or place for the establishment of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti in the secondary sources. According to some,⁵¹ the predecessor of the Child Protection Society⁵² was established in Ankara in 1921 during the War of Independence. But this chapter would include the period between 1917 and 1921 as the characteristic features of the institution started to developed in those initial years. The disagreement over the date and the place of the establishment is a consequence of the efforts of the republican regime to distinguish itself from Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and having a claim to be the starting point also for the social services.⁵³

⁵¹Mustafa Şahin, “23 Nisan ve Himaye-i Etfal”, *Toplumsal Tarih*, sayı 40, Nisan 1997 pp.15-17 cited in Okay Cuneyd, *Belgelerle Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti 1917-1923* Istanbul: Sule Yayinlari 1999 p.7

⁵² Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu, will be referred as ÇEK throughout the thesis

⁵³For a discussion on this see Selen Göbelez, p.18

The exclusion of the Istanbul Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti in the book published in 1940 by Child Protection Society (Cocuk Esirgeme Kurumu) “Cocuk Esirgeme Kurumunun Kucuk Bir Tarihcesi” is another manifestation of how the six years in Istanbul is not considered as part of the social services history of the pre and early republican era..Cuneyd Okay p.64-65

Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti was established in March 1917 in Istanbul in the residence of Galatsaray with a draft document prepared by Ismail Canbulat, Celal Dervis Bey and Osman Tevfik Bey to be given to government.⁵⁴ After the permission of the government for the establishment of this society some members of the Committee of Union and Progress became members of the board.⁵⁵

This association was one of the actors of the social policy environment of the First World War and the following period in Turkey. The main actors on the social policy scene were *Sihhat ve Ictimai Muavenet Vekaleti* (Ministry of Health), *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti* (Red Crescent) and Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti.⁵⁶ The main target group of the Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti was the orphans who needed shelter especially after the Balkan Wars and the First World War. This association provided welfare services to the orphans that was more than a complementary to the state.⁵⁷

The financing of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti was dependent on individual or institutional donors. The chair of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti Fuat Umay made two visits to the United States of America to collect donations from Turkish emigrants in 1923 and after his visits plays were organized in the United States of America to collect money for Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti .⁵⁸ The name of the institution was changed to Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu (ÇEK) in 1934 along with the language reforms that took place in the 1920s and 1930s.

⁵⁴ Cunejd Okay, p.15

⁵⁵ ibid p.16

⁵⁶ Nadir Özbek. Cumhuriyet Turkiyesi'nde Sosyal Guvenlik ve Sosyal Politikalar Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayinlari 2006 p.188

⁵⁷ ibid. p.88

⁵⁸ "Tarihsel Gelişim" Available [online]
http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Tarihce/Tarihsel_Gelisim.asp [22 June 2007]

The main activities of the *Himaye-i Etfal* in that period were to care for children who do not have families. The aid included providing shelter, food, and clothing to the children in accordance with their needs. Health services, the provision of the children with a moral education and caring for the physically handicapped children were among the foundational objectives of *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti*.⁵⁹ The presence of women in *Himaye-i Etfal* was very important as affection was considered to be the core element of the institution.⁶⁰

Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti along with *Hilal-i Ahmer* (The Red Crescent) and *Türk Hava Kurumu* (Turkish Aeronautical Association) were civil initiatives of the Early Republican era the working of which was similar to the Ottoman period. These civil organizations had more than a complementary role to the social responsibilities of the state.⁶¹ However, calling them organizations separated with clear boundaries from the state would be problematic as these organizations “functioned in an ambiguous area between the realm of public and private, with “providing support to the state in the policy process” as their objective”⁶² The single party government considered the poverty issue outside its responsibilities. Bugra writes that the ‘etatism’ principle which was included in the constitution in 1937 did not overlap with the definition of the modern social state.”⁶³ *Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti* in line with that understanding was a state-supported civil initiative until the 1950s.

⁵⁹ Cunezd Okay, pp16-19

⁶⁰ *ibid* p.20

⁶¹ Nadir Özbek, p.88-89

⁶² Ayşe Buğra, “Poverty and Citizenship: An Overview of the Social Policy Environment in Republican Turkey” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 39, 2007 p.38

⁶³ Ayşe Buğra “Devletci Donemde Yoksulluga Bakis ve Sosyal Politika ‘Zenginlerimiz Nerede?’” *Toplum ve Bilim* Kış 99 p.76

The establishment of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti was the consequence of the increasing significance of children due to the Balkan Wars and the First World War as mentioned above. The aim of the association was first to provide the children with need of protection from torture and allow them to lead a life which is appropriate for their age. The second important issue for Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti was children's health. Establishing new hospitals and clinics along with controlling the health conditions in schools were among the aims of the association. The moral education of children was the third aim of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti, according to this preliminary document.⁶⁴ The age limit was thirteen in these institutions. Apart from orphans Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti aimed to educate girls for the purpose of teaching handicrafts and house related skills. The care for handicapped children was among the goals of the association.

Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti was declared a civil society organization which worked for the well being of the public on 11 August 1917.⁶⁵ The "*misafirhaneler*" (guesthouses) of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti aimed to have a circulation of the children, and from 1917 to 1922 2.027 children were hosted. This aim was realized through the encouragement of families to adopt children from the shelters.⁶⁶ Until the end of the First World War the guesthouses hosted children from all ethnic and religious backgrounds; however, after 1918 when the non-Muslim communities established guesthouses and shelters for their own children, Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti served only Turkish Muslim children.

⁶⁴ Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti Nizamnamesi cited in Cuneyd Okay p.17

⁶⁵ *ibid.* p.18

⁶⁶ The branches of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti were established soon after the government decree in 1917 in Kırklareli (Kırkkilise), Samsun, İzmit, Konya, İstanbul, Üsküdar, Beyoğlu, Haliç, Kadıköy, Bakırköy, Yeniköy, Musul, Erzurum, Eskişehir, Kastamonu and Bolu. ,Cuneyd Okay, p. 32

For the expenses of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti national and international donation campaigns were organized.⁶⁷ However the donations after the establishment of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti in Istanbul in 1921 decreased, as most of the donations were channelled to the Ankara branch. The tension among these two institutions as mentioned before was a consequence of the legitimacy concerns of the Ankara government and association of Istanbul with the Ottoman rule. Thus, without sufficient funds available, the Istanbul branch of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti closed down in 1923.

Following the closing down of the Istanbul Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti, the only administrative unit was officially Ankara. For fund raising, several different campaigns were run simultaneously, which included the printing of postcards and stamps. A decree passed by the parliament made the association exempt from the taxes.⁶⁸ Fuat Umay, the president of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti, made a five-month-long visit to the United States of America to collect donations from the Turks living there. The income of the association were based only on the donations and the contributions of the government came in with the exemption of the taxes, the provision of allowance for the visits abroad of the president of members of the executive board. Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti, also after the foundation of republic, continued to have similar state support.

⁶⁷ The campaigns for Hiamye-i Etfal Cemiyeti were organized through letters addressing the children in Egypt and India in addition to the relationships formed with the Western countries. Donations were encouraged within the country through campaigns as well, however due to the war context the amount which was aimed initially could not be reached.Okay Cuneyd ibid. pp.49-55

⁶⁸ "Cocuk Esirgeme Kurumunun Tarihsel Gelisimi" Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Tarihce/Tarihsel_Gelisim.asp [22 June 2007]

The first campaigns of Ankara, were concerned with health of and donation of food to children. The distribution of milk,⁶⁹ provision of bath facilities⁷⁰ along with the guesthouses for the children were the services provided by Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti. In addition to these, in 1928 for the support of women who had lost their spouses during the First World War and War of Independence Fuat Umay initiated the establishment of '*Himaye-i Etfal Yoksul Kadına Yardım Cemiyeti*' (The Society of Child Protection and Aid for Women).

In 1934 the name of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti was changed in line with the language policies and became Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu (Child Protection Society). In 1937 ÇEK was accepted as a civil society organization which worked for the public benefit by law. During the late 1920s and 1930s the fund raising activities continued to be supported by the state.⁷¹ In 1949 the law on the Children in Need of Protection⁷² was passed. This law changed the status of ÇEK as the protection of children became a duty of the government after this new regulation.⁷³ The law passed

⁶⁹ The first milk distribution started with the establishment of "Sut Damlası" in Izmir in 1923, and later in 1927 with the import of hygienic bottles the milk distribution started to be realized in a broader scale. "Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumunun Tarihsel Gelişimi" Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Tarihce/Tarihsel_Gelisim.asp [22 June 2007]

⁷⁰ In 1927 in Ankara the hygienic baths (sihhi banyolar) were made available for public use. "Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumunun Tarihsel Gelişimi" Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Tarihce/Tarihsel_Gelisim.asp [22 June 2007]

⁷¹ The wrestling tournament organized in Ankara in 1931, the stamps issued between 20-30 April 1932 for ÇEK are among the campaigns to receive donations for ÇEK. "Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumunun Tarihsel Gelişimi" Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Tarihce/Tarihsel_Gelisim.asp [22 June 2007]

⁷² Korunmaya Muhtac Çocuklar Hakkında Kanun (Law on the Protection of Children) No. 5387 Date of Adoption: 1949

⁷³ Nadir Özbek p.210

in 1949 is significant for the history of social services in Turkey as the protection of the children became officially the duty of the state.⁷⁴

The changes in the structure of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti took place after the Second World War especially during the 1950s. The most significant development in the 1950s was the law for the establishment of a Social Services Institute.⁷⁵ In 1965 the institute had its first graduates. During the 1950s the United Nations provided financial support for the development of the social work in Turkey, also through the exchange of advisors through the Fulbright Turkish American Cultural Exchange Commission to teach in the Social Work Academy at Hacettepe University Ankara.⁷⁶ Faculty members from the Hacettepe Social Work Institute were sent to the United States for training through scholarships provided by the UN, CENTO, Holland and Fulbright.⁷⁷

These developments later were followed by a centralization process of the social services in the 1950s and 1960s. Social work approached the area of profession rather than a set of voluntary activities supported and encouraged by the state. This new approach to social services which will be summarized in the next section was distinct from the single-party period when *etatism* was not reflected in

⁷⁴ The regulations regarding the establishment of Ministry of Health and Social Aid (*Saglik ve Sosyal Yardim Bakanligi*) in 1936 and the law passed in 1930 on the municipalities which brought social services partly under the control of municipalities in 1930 are the other developments in 1930s which resulted in the social services becoming an area not only governed by civil society. Ethem Çengelci “Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu” p.9

⁷⁵ Sosyal Hizmetler Enstitüsü Kurulması Hakkında Kanun (The Law for the Establishment of Social Services Institute) 1959

⁷⁶ Selen Göbelez, p.84

⁷⁷ *ibid* p.84

the provision of social welfare, the social services sector was run through a voluntary organization.⁷⁸

New Institutions, New Approaches: From Volunteering towards Social Planning

The two decades that followed the 1949 regulation for the protection of children were marked with institutionalization processes for the ÇEK. The developments during the 1950s and 1960s were part of the context in which the Turkish Social System was established. In other words, the blurred boundary between the state and voluntary organizations like *Hilal-i Ahmer*, *Himaye-i Etfal*, *Türk Hava Kurumu* and *Yardimsevenler Dernegi* was not a characteristic feature of the first two decades of the multi-party regime. For the relevance to this study, this section covers the establishment of the Social Services Institute, the law concerning the Institute and the place social services had in the planning discourses of the 1960s.

The shift in the place of social services in Turkey was not independent from the international context of the post-World War Era. Social services became an academic discipline in order to respond to the problems that were caused as a consequences of industrialization, urbanization and development.⁷⁹ The source of the funds that were provided for the establishment of social services in Turkey by the Rockefeller and Ford foundations were manifestations of the emphasis put on this field by the United States.

⁷⁸ Ayşe Buğra, “Devletçi Donemde Yoksulluğa Bakış ve Sosyal Politika ‘Zenginlerimiz Nerede?’” p.76

⁷⁹ Nadir Özbek p.189

During the 1950s in Turkey the first regulations on the social security system were made. Hence, the developments towards the professionalization of the social services in the 1950s should be considered within this broader context. The social services transforming into a more state regulated area rather than a voluntary, philanthropic medium was the consequence of post Second World War politics.

However, the developments in the social services environment were at a different pace than the Western counterparts of Turkey. Even though discussions on the establishment of a Social Services Institute were on the agenda of the Democrat Party, the law on the establishment of the institute was passed only in 1959.⁸⁰ This is an indication on how urban poverty was not present on the agenda of the Democrat Party government.⁸¹ The emphasis of the government policy avoided the rural population migrating to cities. The insignificance of urban poverty can be conceived from the attitudes towards the funds that were provided by the UN, Ford and the Rockefeller Foundations. The Democrat Party government to the expense of losing the funds did not make the social services institute establishment a priority.⁸² The ranking of the establishment of a social services institution foundation being low for the Democrat Party government was a reflection of their above-mentioned attitude rather than a rejection of a Western imposed formula on development.

In the 1960s following the military coup on 27 May 1960 and the new constitution in 1961, priority was given to planned development. Devlet Planlama Teskilati (The State Planning Institute) was established in 1960. The term “Social planning” was used in the State Planning Institute’s documents as a necessity for an

⁸⁰ Sosyal Hizmetler Enstitüsü Kurulması Hakkında Kanun (Law For the Establishment for the Social Services Institute) 1959

⁸¹ Ayşe Buğra, “Kapitalizm, Yoksulluk ve Türkiye’de Sosyal Politika” p. 170

⁸² *ibid* p.171

efficient development.⁸³ The planning was supported by the intelligentsia of the period as they were not in favor of the uncontrolled populism of the Democrat Party Government.⁸⁴ The efforts of the early republican era and the 1950s to avoid the dissolution of the rural left its place to an attitude which favored a planned development and create solutions for the changes in the urban context both due to urbanization and increasing rural migration.

The policies towards the urban poor which was non-existent in the Democrat Party Government (1950-1960) were transformed with the agenda of producing a more efficient urban population. In the First Five-Year Development Plan it is stated that: “The investments that would be made for the education, health and social services sectors besides providing public spending, which leads to social goals like equal income distribution also with its positive impacts on economic efficiency, would contribute to economic development.”⁸⁵

The 1949 Law on the Protection of Children as mentioned in the previous section as a turning point in the social services field of Turkey as the services were considered to be realized through decentralized volunteering until then. However after the emphasis on social planning in the First Five Year Development Plan (Birinci Bes Yillik Kalkınma Planı) in 1963 the prospects for the social services were defined in the following way: “ The aim of the social services is to prevent social

⁸³ see *Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı* (First Five Year Development Plan) by *Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı* (State Planning Agency) Ankara 1963 and *Sosyal Hizmetler Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu* (The Special Commission Report on Social Services) by *Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı* (State Planning Institute) Ankara 1966

⁸⁴ Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye’de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, İstanbul:İletişim Yayınları 2004 p. 200

⁸⁵ “Eğitim, sağlık, sosyal sigorta gibi sosyal hizmetlere yapılacak geniş kamu harcamaları adil bir gelir dağılımı ve benzeri sosyal amaçların gerçekleşmesine yardım ettiği kadar iktisadi verimliliği artırıcı etkileriyle de kalkınmanın iktisadi amaçlarına ulaşılmasına yardım edebilir.” *Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı* (First Five Year Development Plan) by *Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı* (State Planning Agency) Ankara 1963 p.48

disorders. This aim is to be realized by the state and the voluntary organizations that would cooperate with the state.”⁸⁶ The allocation for social services that were aimed to be under the state control and responsibility were still considered to belong to the volunteering activities. It is possible to infer that this attitude towards the social services and the social duties of the state is regarded as part of the volunteer practices.

In 1963 with the adoption of Law No: 225 the Social Services Directorate (*Sosyal Hizmetler Genel Mudurlugu*) under the governance of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (*Saglik ve Sosyal Yardim Bakanligi*). This Directorate was held responsible from the finances and staff recruitment of the Child Protection Units as well as the care of the elderly and handicapped.⁸⁷ The administrative work concerning the Social Services Institute was among the other duties of the Directorate. Both the Institute, as mentioned before, and the establishment of the directorate are indicators of the institutionalization of social services in Turkey after the 1960s.

The establishment of the directorate is significant as a manifestation of how the perspectives for the provision of social services changed; however the Child Protection Units remained under the control of local governance units until the Law No 2828 for the Establishment of SHÇEK. Until 1983 the shelters for children aged 0 to 6 years old (*Cocuk Yuvalari*) were under the governance of the Ministry of Health and Social Aid, and the shelters for children aged 7-18 were administrated by the Ministry of National Education (*Milli Egitim Bakanligi*) however the main income of those shelters was maintained by the local governing units such as the

⁸⁶*Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı* (First Five Year Development Plan) by *Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı* (State Planning Agency) Ankara 1963 p.423

⁸⁷ Ethem Cengelci p.33-34

municipalities and provincial special administrations,⁸⁸ which carried the high potential of provision of services in different locations through varied standards and varied available financial resources. However, this heterogeneity and absence of a standard in the provision of services in shelters continued the establishment of SHÇEK.

The Social Services Institute was established against the background summarized above and started to receive its first students in 1961. In 1965 it had its first graduates. Even though this institute can be considered to be the first step towards the professionalization of social services in Turkey, in 1929 an educational program started for child carers in Kecioren.⁸⁹ However, the Social Services Institute that was established in Ankara in 1961 aimed to provide higher education and a possibility to educate future researchers on the social services as a field of study. From 1961 until 2002 the Hacettepe University Institute for Social Services was the only place where social services education was provided.⁹⁰

The law for the establishment of the Social Services Institute was accepted in 1959, as stated earlier. The interval between the proposal of the law and the actualization is closely related with the priorities of the Democrat Party government on urban poverty. The Institute was established under the governance of the Ministry of Health (*Sihhat ve Ictimai Muhavenet Vekaleti*). The duties of the Institute were stated to be “To make studies among the poor in order to understand the reasons for poverty and decide what type of social services would be beneficial to them, to help

⁸⁸ *ibid.* p.25

⁸⁹ Çocuk Bakiciligi Okulu. “Cocuk Esirgeme Kurumunun Tarihsel Gelisimi” Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Tarihce/Tarihsel_Gelisim.asp [22 June 2007]

⁹⁰ Department of Social Services was founded in 2002 in Baskent University.

people who have difficulties in the social life and through this to help the development of the country. The children who are in need of protection and special education due to their physical disabilities were among the target groups to be reached.

As for the organizational side of the social services, the Institute was held responsible for the coordination between the public offices and voluntary organizations half of the budgets of which were maintained by the state. In addition to these the Institute in order to keep up with the updates of the developments that took place in the social services in Europe and North America sent social workers abroad for education. The social services was recognized as a profession by the United Nations and until 1959 three congresses had been held during which the model for European and Latin American countries was the United States.⁹¹

The curriculum of the Institute aimed to cover a wide range of disciplines. The curricula of the American Social Work Schools were taken as examples.⁹² The suggestions for a curriculum in the State Planning Institute's special commission report for social services proposed the examination the curriculum of the North American and Western counterparts to enhance social work education.⁹³

The decade summarized in this section, while providing an institute, and a directorate for the social services in Turkey, the sector was still not considered independent. The most obvious indicator of this is the governance of the Directorate remaining with the Ministry of Health and Social Aid, and remaining as a

⁹¹ Sosyal Hizmetler Enstitüsü Kurulması Hakkında Kanun (Law For the Establishment for the Social Services Institute) 1959

⁹² Selen Gobelez p.15

⁹³ Sosyal Hizmetler Alanı İçin Sosyal Hizmetler Eğitimi, in Sosyal Hizmetler Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu 8(Special Commission Report For Social Services) Ankara: 1963 pp.1-10

“complementary” service to the health services. Developments that took place after the enactment of the law which will be summarized in the next section are significant as the social services are regarded to be a sector which is recognized as existing within the responsibility sphere of the state, rather than floating between volunteers and the state.

The Law of SHÇEK and the 1980s

On 24 May 1983 Law No 2828, the Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu Kanunu (The Law for the Social Services and Child Protection Institution), was adopted. From 1983 until the time this thesis was written the law passed through changes. This date is still a turning point for the social services in Turkey, as the different institutions of the social services started to be governed from one center, and with the change in 1989 under the governance of Prime Ministry rather than from the Ministry of Health and Social Aid.

The regulation of the social services institutions from one center had been discussed since the early years of Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti,⁹⁴ during the single-party era,⁹⁵ and following the 1960s in the planning documents.⁹⁶ The coordinated working

⁹⁴ Cüneyd Okay p.23

⁹⁵ “Cocuk Esirgeme Kurumunun Tarihsel Gelismisi” Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/Kurumsal_Bilgi/Tarihce/Tarihsel_Gelisim.asp [22 June 2007]

⁹⁶ see *Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı* (First Five Year Development Plan) by Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı (State Planning Agency) Ankara 1963 and *Sosyal Hizmetler Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu* (The Special Commission Report on Social Services) by Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı (State Planning Institute) Ankara 1966

of social services are discussed in the 2000s⁹⁷ as the municipalities, NGOs and SHÇEK provide services with similar addressees and similar goals. This section, while examining the law no 2828, will provide a brief overview of the changes in the institutions that were brought with this law. Additionally the establishment of the Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Fonu (Social Aid and Solidarity Fund) will be briefly summarized as it is crucial to understand the changes in the social policy environment of Turkey and the reflections of those changes in the 1990s.

The Law Number 2828, first of all, unified the four institutions which had been administered separately until then, *Korunmaya Muhtac Çocukları Koruma Birlikleri* (the Child Protection Associations), *Sosyal Hizmetler Genel Müdürlüğü* the Social Services Directorate, *Sosyal Hizmetler Enstitüsü* (the Social Services Institute) and *Türkiye Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu Derneği* (the Turkish Child Protection Society). The name of the new institution became *Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu* (Social Services and Child Protection Agency), and with this law the capability to prepare its own regulations was bestowed,⁹⁸ and the budgetary regulation of the institution became independent.⁹⁹

While the enactment of the Law Number 2828 was a step towards the centralization of the social services sector, the budgetary status of this new institution reflected the fact that still the social services were not completely regarded to be under the support of the state. The budget of SHÇEK was a supplementary budget

⁹⁷ see *Sekizinci Bes Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 2001* (8th Five Year Development Plan) Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı 2001 and *Sosyal Hizmetler Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu Raporu* (The Special Commission Report on Social Services) by Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı (State Planning Institute) Ankara 1966

⁹⁸ Ethem Cengelci ,p.38

⁹⁹ *Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu Kanunu* (Law for the Social Services and Child Protection Institution) Law no. 2828, Date of Adoption 24 May 1983.

category which was considered as separate from the state budget. On the one hand, this gave an independence in terms of decisions taken on the budget, but on the other hand, the institution was supposed to have its own resources primarily to finance itself. In the case of SHÇEK, these were revolving funds, the income raised from the events organized by SHÇEK and other supporting associations, donations from international or national NGOs, foundations and associations, the income raised from the properties of SHÇEK and allocations from the donations made to Turk Hava Kurumu in the form of *fitre* and *zekat*.¹⁰⁰ Direct donations or allocations from institutions that received donations being among the sources of income support the argument made above on the perception of social services by the state.

The perception of social services was part of the ideological atmosphere of the 1980s which witnessed steps towards export-oriented production, hand in hand with the exclusion of social aid for poverty from the bureaucratic mechanism which became possible with the establishment of the *Sosyal Yardimlasma ve Dayanisma Fonu* (Social Aid and Solidarity Fund).¹⁰¹ The fund was established in 1986 with a special law.¹⁰² It was regulated through a general secretariat office in the Prime Ministry, and the fund was within the Central Bank. In 2004, the fund became a General Directorate.¹⁰³ Related to this law in 1986 Social Aid and Solidarity Foundations were established in the provinces and districts. The executive boards of these foundations were made up of the mayor, governor, religious official of the

¹⁰⁰ Law No 2828 on SHÇEK article 18

¹⁰¹ Ayşe Bugra, . *Kapitalizm, Yoksulluk ve Türkiye’de Sosyal Politika* p.206

¹⁰² Sosyal Yardimlasma ve Dayanisma Teşvik Kanunu Law No.3294 Date of Adoption 14th June 1986

¹⁰³ Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Genel Müdürlüğü Teşkilat ve Görevleri Hakkında Kanun Law No. 5263 Date of Adoption 9 December 2004

province, a representative of the police forces, district governors of the ministry of health and education and the SHÇEK provincial governor. As will be discussed in the next section with an emphasis on the Society Centers, the Social Aid and Solidarity Fund financed SHÇEK through the 1990s via the protocols signed among them.¹⁰⁴This demonstrates the impacts of the approach to poverty by excluding it from the bureaucratic mechanism of the social services environment in Turkey.

The 1990s and *Society Centers*

1990s was while being a period of shift from the pro-market approach to a “good governance”¹⁰⁵ which favored prioritizing solving the social problems and controlling the market. The suggestions for the developing countries that were provided in the 1997 World Development Report reflect this shift in which a partner, catalyzer state is favored rather than a minimal one. While the role of the state modifies into a regulator of the markets the regulating role is absent in combatting poverty and the provision of social services, while in those areas the emphasis is on volunteering and non-governmental organizations.¹⁰⁶

SHÇEK as mentioned throughout this chapter is an institution through which the approach of the governments from the single-party era to the 1990s about social

¹⁰⁴ The foundational protocols signed between SHÇEK and SYDF for Gazi Mahallesi Toplum Merkezi in 1998, Yakacik Toplum Merkezi in 2002 can be given as examples.

¹⁰⁵ For further discussion of the shift to good governance see Bob Jessop “The Rise of Governance and the Risks of Failure: The Case of Economic Development” *International Social Science Journal*, 50 (155). 1998

¹⁰⁶ Ayse Bugra. Kapitalizm, Yoksulluk ve Türkiye’de Sosyal Politika (2008)p.222

services could be traced. The 1990s, while being a period marked with the initiation of the state becoming a partner with civil society and private sector does not bring a very novel phenomena to the social services in Turkey. As stated by Bugra“...the collaborations between the state and NGOs from the single party era onwards created a familiarity with the new governance regime.”¹⁰⁷ Society Centers are significant in understanding the above-mentioned dynamics -which result in leaving the responsibility to non-state actors- as they are classified as a “preventive” in the founding regulation; for clients whose needs are not as “immediate” as the ones in shelters for children or the elderly.

However, this is not to say that the distinction between preventive and rehabilitative is considered separately in this study. That distinction is mentioned in order to demonstrate how the differentiation among the services took place within SHÇEK in the 1990s. In the remaining part of this section, a brief overview of the foundation of Society Centers and the services provided in them will be presented.

The establishment of the Society Centers took place in 1993,¹⁰⁸ following the change in the SHÇEK law in 1991 which included the unity of the family within the sphere of responsibility of the institution.¹⁰⁹ The new institutions that were to be established within the framework of this new law were addressing families, children and had a “preventive” concern different from the previous institutions of SHÇEK. The first Society Center in Turkey was founded in 1993 in Altindag, Ankara, and was followed by the Canakkale Toplum Merkezi. At present there are 76 Toplum Merkezi in Turkey.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.* p.223

¹⁰⁸ Toplum Merkezleri ile ilgili Yonetmelik (Regulation of Society Centers) Date of Adoption 11 July 2000

¹⁰⁹ SHÇEK Kanunu’nda Yapılan Değişiklik, Law number 3703 Date of Adoption 14 March 1991

According to this regulation the Society Centers were established as a response to the rapid urbanization and its consequences and aimed to enable individuals to become a part of urban life.¹¹⁰ The idea of these centers was declared in 1966 in the Special Commission Report for the Social Services.¹¹¹

The places that the Society Centers would be established in *gecekondu*¹¹² neighborhoods, places with a priority of development, and any other place which may be in need.¹¹³ It is stated in the regulation that depending on the needs of the neighborhood in which the Society Center was established, SHÇEK would make protocols with NGOs, public institutions and universities either during the foundational process of the Society Center or during the projects that were initiated by the NGOs. As the primary data of this study are constituted mainly of the in-depth interviews that were from the Society Centers in Istanbul. Therefore very briefly the foundational dynamics of those centers in Istanbul will be summarized.

The first Toplum Merkezi in Istanbul was established in 1998 in Gazi Mahallesi with a protocol signed with Social Aid and Solidarity Foundation and Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Social Services, Sultanbeyli Toplum Merkezi in 1998 was established with the same type of protocol. KocamustafaPasa, Umraniye and Yakacik Toplum Merkezleri were founded with protocols signed between SHÇEK and NGOs, respectively with *Cagdas Yasami Destekleme Dernegi* (Association for Support of Modern Life), *INSEV* (Human Health and Education

¹¹⁰ “Toplum Merkezleri” (Society Centers) pp. 3-12 Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/hizmetler/Kadin_Aile_Toplum/ [22 June 2007]

¹¹¹ Devlet Planlama Teskilati, ‘Sosyal Hizmetler Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu’ Ankara: 1966

¹¹² Squatter settlements

¹¹³ Toplum Merkezleri Hakkında Yönetmelik, Kurulacak Yer Seçimi (The Regulation of Society Centers) Date of adoption 11 July 2000

Foundation) and *Türk Kadınlar Birliği* (Association of Turkish Women) in 1998.

Bagcilar Evren Mahallesi Toplum Merkezi was founded with a protocol signed with INSEV in 2002. However, due to financial constraints, the protocol was cancelled.

The last Toplum Merkezi was founded in 2002 in Zeytinburnu with a protocol signed with the district governance of Bagcilar.

The services that were provided in these centers in line with the starting point of the Society Centers, which aimed to increase the participation and ease the integration of the rural migrants to the city. The main group of subjects were stated to be children and women in its regulation.¹¹⁴

In the regulation of the community centers their budget was allocated from the SHÇEK budget. However, as will be referred to in the next chapter, according to the social workers who were interviewed in the Society Centers do not receive an allocation from the SHÇEK budget including the building. The main expenses were maintained through local sources, or the NGO with which the protocol was signed.

In the Society Centers, one administrator with social work education, one social worker, a child development specialist, a lawyer and a member of staff for technical assistance were needed, according to the founding regulation.¹¹⁵ However, similar to the budgetary concerns apart from one social worker, the remaining staff listed above worked in the centers on a temporary basis. The social worker who was at the same time the administrator was the only state officer. The remaining members of the center were recruited through outsourcing. This employment pattern in SHÇEK in general and in Toplum Merkezleri in particular was made possible through the changes made in the law in 1991 which allowed for recruitment of staff

¹¹⁴ Toplum Merkezinin Kurulus Amaclari: Toplum Merkezleri Yonetmeligi (Regulation on Society Centers: The Aims of the Centers) Date of Adoption 11 July 2000

¹¹⁵ Toplum Merkezleri Hakkında Yönetmelik (Regulation of Society Centers) Date of Adoption 11 July 2000

through contracts rather than as state officers.¹¹⁶ The main activities, the projects and programs on family, children and women in the centers were realized by the social worker and students from high-schools or universities who require an internship for the completion of studies.

The programs that were conducted in these centers varied according to the needs of the area. The needs were decided after a preliminary study conducted in the area before the establishment of the center, and later on was shaped according to the demand of the clients. As stated before, in the most general sense, the programs and projects aimed to provide material and nonmaterial help to especially women and children. Thus, the main activity of those centers could be summarized as the provision of education for better parenting, improving family relations, which in consequence would maintain the cohesion of the family.¹¹⁷

The main programs that were outlined by SHÇEK are ACEP (Mother-Child Education Programme/*Anne Çocuk Eğitim Programı*), Badep (Father Support Programme-*Baba Destek Programı*), *Benim Ailem* (My Family-Support Program for families with children aged 0 to 6), KIHEP (*Kadının İnsan Hakları Eğitim Programı*, Women's Human Rights Education Program). As for children the content of the programs applied change but the aim of the activities was to help the academic success of children by support, providing day-care facilities, preschool education programs, sports and cultural activities.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Ethem Çengelci p.61

¹¹⁷ Toplum Merkezleri Hakkında Yönetmelik (Regulation on Society Centers) Date of Adoption 11 July 2000

¹¹⁸ "Toplum Merkezleri" (Society Centers) pp. 3-12 Available [online] http://www.SHÇEK.gov.tr/hizmetler/Kadin_Aile_Toplum/ [22 June 2007]

Along with the programs mentioned above, one-day seminars, one-to-one consultation with the social worker on familial problems took place. The guidance services aimed to address of from the establishment of the community centers the familial problems of the clients, provide guidance on health services, and the care of the elderly and handicapped.¹¹⁹

Apart from the provision of services that were summarized above, the centers were also responsible for administrative work in which they worked as intermediaries between the citizens and the General Directorate of SHÇEK. The most recent example of this has been the evaluation of the applications for the family care pension for the handicapped since October 2006.¹²⁰

Society Centers as summarized in this section stand at the intersection of the citizens, NGOs and the state. The realization of the above-mentioned programs and projects that were on assistance to children and women for adaptation to urban life are funded by the NGOs.¹²¹ The basic expenses including the rent is covered by varying sources in each Society Center. The Centers are as mentioned before places in which the controversies of the new governance regime can be observed as on the one hand the regulations and the planning of the services are centralized and controlled by the state while the presence of the state is not present for the sustainability and the realization of the services.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.* p.11

¹²⁰ Bakıma Muhtaç Özürlülerin Tespiti ve Bakım Hizmeti Esaslarının Belirlenmesine ilişkin Yonnetmelik Adopted on 23 October 2007

¹²¹ ACEP and BADEP is funded and realized by Anne Çocuk Egitim Vakfı, KIHEP is funded and realized by Kadinin Insan Haklari Yeni Cozumler Dernegi. These three programs, in the centers are continuing since the establishment of the centers. However, projects that require a higher amount of material support like the project on the Working Children by ILO (International Labour Organization)- which took place between 2005-2007 in Gazi Toplum Merkezi Istanbul) cease with the expiration of the project unless the social workers of the center are able to find funding for the sustainability of the projects.

These latest developments in the institution are the consequence of the need to respond to the problems posed by the new form of poverty in Turkey during the 1980s and 1990s. The next chapter is on how the ways through which to cope with the new poverty is experienced from within the institution. While to cooperate with the civil society and volunteers is not a new phenomenon for SHÇEK as mentioned in this chapter, the rationale for the need of this cooperation is different in the period that is the concern of this study, namely the 1990s.

Thus the focus of the following chapter is how the appropriation of this new welfare model that has been discussed in the Second Chapter was experienced within the institution. This appropriation is considered in the following chapter not as a shift like the experiences of the European Welfare states but on the other hand an effort to embed the new model into the old structure which depended more on volunteering and civil society than having a consistent support of the state.

CHAPTER FOUR
VIEWS FROM WITHIN: HOW THE SOCIAL WORKERS PERCEIVE
THE INSTITUTION?

This chapter is based on in-depth interviews conducted with social workers who were employed or who had been employed in the Society Centers in Istanbul. The rationale behind the choice of this specific institution, as mentioned in the introduction part, is related to their establishment structure and the period in which they were founded, namely the 1990s, a decade during which partnerships between the state and the civil society increased.

The period of the 1990s is crucial for understanding the timing of the search for a new model of public service provision. The change in the SHÇEK Law that took place in 1991 is an indicator of those efforts in the Turkish Social Services Sector. This law paved the way for the establishment of new institutions which has different working patterns than the previously founded ones namely the child and the elderly shelters. These new institutions such as the Çocuk ve Gençlik Merkezleri (Child and Youth Centers) and Society Centers aim to cope with the problems in the urban areas.

The need for the appropriation of the partnership and more “flexible” structures in the social services sector is a consequence of the novel needs in the urban areas that emerged from 1980s onwards. The “new poverty” refers to the situation in which it is no longer possible to argue that the “... economic systems would with time find jobs for people and the employment opportunities would lead to social integration.”¹²² Thus the “new poor” remain socially excluded from the urban context as well as the economic relations.

As summarized by Bugra and Keyder (2005) the groups that are effected from the “new poverty” phenomenon are faced with exclusion from the urban context. They also risk to remain jobless or in informal jobs permanently, the family labor and self employment is disappearing as a consequence of globalization and the housing issue can no longer be resolved through *gecekondu* as there are no land available for the migrants.¹²³ The forced migration that took place in the early 1990s in Turkey from the Southeast Anatolia added also an ethnic dimension to the exclusive consequences of the new poverty in addition to its impact in increasing the number of the migrants in the major urban centers.

The establishment of the Society Centers along with the other new social services institutions aim to respond to the new challenges of the urban life that has been summarized above.

The transcriptions of the 14 interviews conducted will be analyzed in this chapter according to their recurring themes. In the first section the way the social workers perceived themselves and the institution will be discussed. This section acts as an “introduction” to the institution through the accounts of the social workers. The

¹²² A. Bugra and C. Keyder p.21

¹²³ *ibid.* p.21-22

second section of the chapter is on how the bureaucracy, in other words, the working of the institution (SHÇEK) is perceived by the interviewees and how they experienced the changes in their profession to cope with the new challenges. The main aim is to understand how the partnerships with non-state actors had concrete consequences for them. The third section is specifically on the experiences of both social workers, administrators with the NGOs, volunteers and the projectized mode of service provision.

(Self) Perceptions of Social Workers

The first section of this chapter is devoted to the ways in which social workers define themselves professionally. This discussion will be another aspect of how the partnerships and short-termed service provision affect the way they perceived their profession, the institution in which they worked and the larger institution SHÇEK. In other words this section is designed to provide the reflections of the consequences of the new bureaucracy on the professional lives of social workers and as a complementary section for the previous chapter on the history of the social services in Turkey through the accounts of the social workers.

First, the ways in which they thought they were perceived by the administrators and colleagues within SHÇEK will be discussed. Second, the ways in which they think they were perceived by their clients and what meanings the clients attributed to Society Center will be explained. The way in which they narrate the perceptions of others was a reflection of their self-evaluation and explained their

constant need of self-legitimization, their efforts throughout the interviews about what they accomplished in the Society Centers were very significant.

One of the most emphasized points by the social workers during the interviews as will be mentioned several times in this chapter, was that they were not taken serious by the administrators. Their role is regarded as insignificant actors of SHÇEK. The role of Society Centers is regarded to be vague and not useful; thus, they are perceived as people who just come and go to fulfill their duties to remain in the office during the day.

These self perceptions should be regarded as a sum, a consequence of the themes that will be discussed throughout this chapter on insecurity, the uncomfortable relationships with the NGOs and volunteers and with the process of finding funding. Yelda Kurt, towards the end of the interview when asked how does she placed Society Centers and herself within SHÇEK provided the following answer:

‘Within SHÇEK the Toplum Merkezleri are step-children. We are perceived as places in which nothing is done. The social workers who work there are regarded as people who only pass time there. They say, what you do? Just having literacy courses, some projects... Not only other social workers but most people who work in SHÇEK deny that we are doing a useful job here! But we reach people whom they cannot reach, we reach a much broader group of people! This has implications when the General Directorate allocates members of staff, are never given priority. If they make a research it will be obvious that fewer children or adults are in need of SHÇEK’s institutional care where there are Toplum Merkezleri.’¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Yelda Kurt ,interview by author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey August 2007
“Toplum Merkezleri SHÇEK’ in uvey cocuklari. Biz hic bir sey in yapilmadigi yerler olarak algilaniyoruz. Burada calisan sosyal hizmet uzmanlarina sadece bos vakit geciriyor gozuyle bakiliyor. Sadece diger sosyal hizmet uzmanlari degil SHÇEK’ de calisan bircok kisi bizim

When examining the perceptions of social workers by their colleagues in SHÇEK, another point should be considered. The impact of professional rivalry and the struggle to show that one's role was more superior than the other one should be kept in mind while evaluating their emphasis on the significance of their presence for the social services sector. In addition, the professional rivalry, the fact that the service that was provided in the Toplum Merkezleri had more than one type of addressee, unlike the child and women shelters, resulted in their vague perception by the other employees of SHÇEK. Selma Orkun summarized this issue in the following way:

‘The difficulty of working in a Society Center compared to another SHÇEK institution is that you cannot concretely show and/or see the results of your work. For example here in the Youth Center there are more tangible goals like rehabilitating the children living on the street. Because of this I believe that Society Centers will not be able to be appreciated fully enough within SHÇEK.’¹²⁵

The confused understandings of outsiders about Society Centers was also experienced when the author of this study is making the interviews. For all the Society Centers that were visited the address was defined in relation to either of a restaurant, a post office, a municipality building by the social workers. After getting off from the bus each time when strangers were asked where the Society Center was,

faydali bir is yaptigimizi kabul etmiyor. Ama biz onların ulastigindan çok daha fazla insana ulaşıyoruz. Bu bakış açisi SHÇEK'in personel dağıtımına da yansıyor, hiçbir zaman öncelik sahibi olamıyoruz. Oysa eğer bir araştırma yapılırsa ortaya çıkacaktır, Toplum Merkezleri'nin olduğu yerlerden diğer yerlere kıyasla çok daha az insan SHÇEK'in yatili kurumlarına başvuruyor.”

¹²⁵ Selma Orkun, ,interview by author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey August July 2007

“Toplum Merkezi'nde çalışmanın zor yani diğer SHÇEK kurumlarına kıyasla yaptığınız işi somut olarak gösterememeniz. Mesela su anda burada' Gençlik Merkezi'nde daha elle tutulur amaçlar var, sokakta yaşayan çocukları rehabilite etmek gibi. Bu nedenle bence Toplum Merkezlerinin hiçbir zaman SHÇEK içerisinde hak ettikleri kadar takdir edilmeyeceklerini düşünüyorum”

the reply was that they have never heard of the place. Yelda Kurt stated that it is they who do most of the work, but people still called the center by the name of the NGO with which they have protocol with:

‘People do not consider this place a Society Center. They always call it something else, for example here it is Insev, in Zeytinburnu Ataturk Kultur Merkezi, in Sultanbeyli Palace of Justice etc... We try to tell them that here it is Toplum Merkezi but it doesn’t work. Especially here, we do most of the work, INSEV helps by providing material help but people still call here INSEV.’¹²⁶

This issue can be explained by the fact that these centers are known only by those who participate in the project, but it triggers the question of why if these centers were established with the aim of creating cohesion within the community and help people to integrate to the urban life more easily, their name is not known by the local people. The concerns of the social workers that were mentioned several times in the earlier parts of this chapter about the insecurity and the temporariness of project-ized services is demonstrated in a very simple way by this example.

Due to the reasons that were stated above that the social workers are not regarded to be performing a very significant tasks by their colleagues and the fact that they cannot reach as much clients as they aim related to the lack of financial resources which cause the in-sustainability of the projects, throughout the interviews the most frequently encountered remark was the self justification of the social workers. In other words in an office where they are alone, performing multiple tasks such as administrating, giving counseling, finding sponsors and doing the extra

¹²⁶ Yelda Kurt ,interview by author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey August 2007
“*İnsanlar burayı Toplum Merkezi olarak görmüyorlar. Burada INSEV, Zeytinburnu’nda Ataturk Kultur Merkezi, Sultanbeyli’de Adliye Sarayı... Onlara buranın toplum merkezi olduğunu anlatmaya çalışıyoruz. İşi biz yapıyoruz, maddi yardımı İNSEV sağlıyor ama insanlar buraya hala İNSEV diyorlar.*”

paperwork of the Provincial Directorate but still not being appreciated and not provided the employees and funding as much as they need, they had the tendency throughout the interview to persuade me that they are doing a very useful and crucial job even though I had no prejudice at all.

I want to conclude this section by the own words of social workers on the significance of their duty in Toplum Merkezleri through which they try to persuade also themselves that they have a good reason to stay in the office.

“Our aim in the Society Centers is to prevent people to be in constant need of the SHÇEK institutions. We try to help families stay unified through the programs we make.”¹²⁷

“What we do here in the Society Centers is not the teaching handcrafts but to bring a consciousness to people, to organize them rather than teaching them.”¹²⁸

‘After attending the projects, some of the clients said that they would love to be social workers if they had the opportunity to study.’¹²⁹

‘We think of the social and cultural dimensions of people, we do not have an educative aim only. Our aim is to make the society be able to solve their own problems.’¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Hasan Baykal ,interview by author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey July 2007. “Bizim amacımız insanların SHÇEK Kurumlarına olan ihtiyaçlarını azaltmak. Burada yaptığımız programlarla aileli bir arada tutmaya çalışıyoruz.”

¹²⁸ Yelda Kurt, ,interview by author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey July 2007, “Toplum Merkezlerinde yaptığımız şey elişi öğretmek değil, bilinç kazandırmak.”

¹²⁹ Yelda Kurt ,interview by author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey August 2007 “Programlara katıldıktan sonra, eğer okula gitme fırsatları olsaydı sosyal hizmet uzmanı olmak istediklerini söylediler”

¹³⁰ Hulki Bayburt ,interview by author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey July 2007 “Biz insanları sosyal ve kültürel açılardan değerlendiriyoruz. Onları kendi sorunlarını kendileri çözebilir hale getirmek amacındayız eğitim vermekten çok.”

The Perceptions of Bureaucracy by Social Workers: Safe, Disappearing and Constraining

Max Weber defines the term *bureaucracy* as a system which works autonomously and provides the same path for the bureaucrats to climb the career ladder. In his terms the Bismarckian model is a recipe for predictability and long sightedness as well as equality. In an environment where the job descriptions are not clearly defined and the institutional knowledge and loyalty are lower than before due to the “flexibility” of the state involvement, where the state becomes a partner of civil society, defining what SHÇEK does and where the social workers stand become challenging questions. This study is an attempt to understand how in an institution which was from the beginning defined as a state controlled volunteer experienced the flexibility in the 1950s.

The term bureaucracy for the concerns of this study has references to three different meanings attributed to the working of SHÇEK. Bureaucracy throughout the interviews was defined as a big system in which they perform their professions. At times it was defined by the social workers as an ambiguous, intangible entity. This section provides reflections of this intangible entity through the interviews and the observations of the author throughout her permission seeking process.

However, before discussing the three different aspects of bureaucracy it is meaningful to mention the significance of SHÇEK as an institution for the research question of this study. As stated beforehand, the main question of this study deals with the implications of the new governance regime on the social services through

the view points of its actors on the field, the social workers and the bureaucrats working for SHÇEK.

The main changes that took place in the new governance discourse were as mentioned in the introduction part and the first chapter of the thesis are the role of the state changing towards a catalyzer, a partner among civil society and the capitalists rather than a night-watcher state of the 1980s or a regulatory state of the Keynesian era. However, if we look at the Turkish case for the social services, the role of the state has never been placed as the main actor. Rather poverty issues have been regarded as in the sphere of volunteers. The changes that were experienced in the working of SHÇEK cannot be claimed to be a transition from a state supported services to a more “flexible” way of organizing the services among the state, civil society and the private sector. Even during the early republican era during the establishment years of the *Cocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*(The Child Protection Society), the institution was defined by the law as a civil society association which works for the public good.

The transition that the institution underwent can be described as a new form of relationship the state formed with civil society and private sector rather than the creation of a relationship that did not exist before.¹³¹

In the following subsections the three aspects of bureaucracy as inferred from the interviews will be discussed considering the concepts of shortsightedness, projectization and micro-ization of the social services. These three aspects respectively are safe, constraining and insecure bureaucracy as perceived by the social workers and the administrators.

¹³¹ See Ayse Bugra “Poverty and Citizenship: An Overview of the Social Policy Environment In Republican Turkey”, *IJMES*, 39 (2007)

Bureaucracy as an Equivalent of Safety: Longings of Social Workers

The state throughout the interviews, which was represented by the general directorate of SHÇEK in Ankara for the interviewees (the social workers) was perceived as an entity which carried a potential to be an important support for their professions but which moved further away from this position with the changing regulations. In this first part of the bureaucracy section the longing for a more safe bureaucratic structure for the social services on the part of the social workers and administrators will be examined, through the interviews.

By the word *safety* what is referred here is the ways through which the social workers described the ideal working of SHÇEK according to them. The ideals changed from their early years in the profession onwards. One of the most clear remarks was made by Selma Orkun:

‘Turkey is not ready yet to leave the social services completely to NGOs, even now these partnerships experience difficulties as the criteria for the provision of services are not set in Turkey, thus the services to be provided by the municipalities and NGOs will not be same everywhere. I don’t know why I think like this probably it has to do with my age, with not being a student anymore and becoming more *ulusalci* [a term which used to refer to a secularist nationalist standing], the state leaving the social services does not sound very secure to me anymore.’¹³²

¹³² Selma Orkun, interview by author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey July 2007 Yeldegirmeni Çocuk ve Gençlik Merkezi, Istanbul, Turkey
“*Türkiye’de sosyal hizmetlerin tamamen belediyeye ya da sivil toplum örgütlerine bırakılması için hazır bir altyapı yok su anda. Neden böyle düşünüyorum bilmiyorum, öğrenci modunda değilim artık sanırım bu nedenle, kamu dışında sosyal hizmetin yürütmesi iyi bir fikir gibi gelmiyor kaynakların kullanılması açısından.*”

The shift in the opinion of Selma Orkun is significant for this study as the Society Center was her first working place in the social services sector, and her perceptions of the social services and how they should work evolved during the eight years she had worked there. In other words the demand for a higher regulation of state became an ideal solution because of coming across challenges which resulted from the lack of standards, lack of institutionalization and the vague borders between the state and the civil society.

This approach idealized the presence of a stronger regulation which does not exist at the time, which existed since the early years of the social services sector in Turkey, but became more problematic after the pro-partnership approaches of the 1990s.

While the 1983 regulation created a centralized structure of the social services by the establishment of a directorate, this regulation placed the social services in an even less safe position as this sector still regarded to be dealt with the contribution of volunteers who would be regulated by the state.

‘We know who will be conscripted, how many children are going to be enrolled to primary school but we do not know how many handicapped people are in need of wheelchairs, or how many people are in need of social aid schemes.’¹³³ Says Ahmet Kara and adds:

¹³³ Ahmet Kara Interview by the author, tape recording. July 2007, Istanbul Turkey
“Kac kisinin askere alinacagini, kac cocugun okula baslayacagini takip edebiliyor devlet, ama kac ozurlu var kac tanesinin tekerlekli sandalyeye ihtiyaci var bilmiyoruz, bu da bizim isimizi nasil yapacagimizla ilgili bir belirsizlikte birakiyor. Yani toplum merkezlerinin cok tanitimi yapildi, onemi belirtildi ama hakikaten neye ihtiyac var, bunun ne kadari karsilanabiliyor bilinmiyor.”

“As a consequence the services that are delivered but without any prior information on the needs of the areas.”¹³⁴

In addition to the points that were made by Selma Orkun who was emphasizing the significance of financial stability through state regulation, Ahmet Kara pointed out the significance of state regulation on information collection to be able to set objectives for the area in which they work at.

This ambiguity besides the flexible and short-termed nature of the project-ized social services had a potential to lead to an uncertainty among the social workers about what to accomplish in the Society Centers which may have led to the loss in the institution. In the fourth section of this chapter on self perception and in the following subsection on insecure bureaucracy, this uncertainty will be elaborated in detail.

In the following part of this section the impacts of the working of SHÇEK on the social workers will be analyzed. The constraining and insecure facets of bureaucracy refer to how SHÇEK worked according to the social workers while the facet that was mentioned above refers to how they thought it should have been.

Bureaucracy as a Constraining Mechanism for Social Services

This intangible word *bureaucracy* during the interviews also referred to an obstacle which stops the social workers performing their jobs. The way SHÇEK was governed constrained them in two ways. First, the amount of paper work that the social workers and the administrators were responsible from left them a limited

¹³⁴ Ahmet Kara Interview by the author, tape recording, July 2007 , Kocamustafa Pasa Toplum Merkezi, Istanbul Turkey “*Sonuc olarak hizmet saglaniyor ancak bu onceden ihtiyaclarla ilgili bilgi almadan gercekleliyor.*”

amount of time in which to achieve their duties as social workers which included the design of the projects, providing counseling to clients. Second, the inconsistency among the different level of administrators in their demands from the social workers is another constraining aspect of the bureaucratic structure of SHÇEK, as they are loaded with responsibility from both sides.

Last, and the materially most constraining part was the lack of financial resources provided for the Society Centers. Even though in the regulation of Society Centers the budget of the centers were stated to be provided by the Directorate General of SHÇEK in the regulation. However, all the centers that were visited for this study had to find the initial resources before the official opening of the centers. The initial resources included the building of the center, the basic furniture, requirements of the office. The lack of stable financial resources left the social workers with the responsibility to search for sources of funds which is now both a reason for the instability and a limitation as the role of fund raising leaves limited time to them to work as social workers. Ahmet Kara explains the financial status of the Society Centers in the following way.

‘The approaches of administrators of SHÇEK who are responsible for deciding on the budget allocation for the Society Centers determines the amount of funds they will receive. But it is more of a structural problem rather than depending on the decisions of the administrators, the Toplum Merkezleri do not have a budget for themselves.’¹³⁵

The requirement of fund raising in certain cases is handled more easily when local sources are available, but there is no security for every Society Center for each

¹³⁵ Ahmet Kara interview by the author, tape recording July 2007 Istanbul
“*Butcenin dagilimina karar vermeden sorumlu SHÇEK idarecilerinin yaklasimi belirliyor bizim ne kadar fon alacagimizi. Ama problem idarecilerin bakis acisi degil, daha yapisal bir sey, Toplum Merkezlerinin kendilerine ait bir butceleri bulunmuyor.*”

year to be able to pay the rent and cover the basic expenses of the office. In other words, the financial situation depends not on the institutions but on the individuals that are working in the municipality, in local businesses and the very personal relationships that are formed among them and the social worker in the Society Center.

The Society Center where Yelda Kurt worked has a stable contract with the founding partner NGO that covered the daily expenses of the Society Center. She summarized the situation of the Society Center she worked for in the following way:

‘We have no funding. When we have an immediate need we receive 500 YTL from Sosyal Yardimlasma ve Dayanisma Fonu, for bigger expenses we use the funds that come from bigger institutions we have protocol with.’¹³⁶

On the other hand for the Society Center in which Sernaz Bayram worked the situation was quiet different. The founding partner NGO withdrew from the protocol and she was not able to find any support from the local resources. Funding was allocated by SHÇEK only as the very last resort:

‘SHÇEK provided us resources only when the NGO totally withdrew from the protocol and we could not take the support of the municipality there at all as the mayor believed that the Toplum Merkezleri should be closed.’¹³⁷

A similar point was mentioned by Selma Orkun in the following way:

¹³⁶ Yelda Kurt Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul Turkey July 2007 , Umarniye Toplum Merkezi, Istanbul, Turkey
“Bize ait bir fonumuz yok. Çok acil durumlarda Sosyal Yardimlasma ve Dayanisma Mudurlugunden 500 YTL avans aliyoruz. Daha abuyuk harcamalari da protokolumuz olan STK karsiliyor.”

¹³⁷ Sernaz Bayram, Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, August 2007
“SHÇEK bize ancak kurulus protokolumuzdeki STK tamamen cekildigi zaman fon sagladi. O siralarda belediyeden de hic destek alamadik cunku belediye baskani Toplum Merkezlerinin kapatilmasi gerektigine inanan bir kisiydi.”

‘Even though it seems like from the regulation that SHÇEK is responsible for covering the expenses, the only financial support comes from the institutions with whom the protocol is made, even electricity and water bills are paid by for example, for the case of Sultanbeyli, by Social Aid and Solidarity Foundation.’¹³⁸

Besides the financial challenges the communication among the Toplum Merkezleri and the Directorate General in Ankara was a very commonly emphasized topic during the interviews. This issue became more concrete for the author of this study after her own experience at the SHÇEK Provincial Directorate of Istanbul.

The first response that the author of this study received in the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of SHÇEK was that the permission to conduct interviews with social workers in the Society Centers could be received least three weeks, as all had to be sent to Ankara. The permission was issued seven weeks after the third application. The first two were rejected as the thesis project had not formatted in the way the unit of Education in SHÇEK directorate asked it to be but without providing a sample beforehand, which caused the process to go on longer than it should have.

The obligation to let Ankara know all the decisions that are taken in the centers resulting in a loss of time was one of the most frequent remarks that was made during the interviews. The amount of writing and permissions had increased in SHÇEK even more after the inclusion of non-state partners through protocols and projects.¹³⁹ The discourse of making the state a more efficient body through

¹³⁸Selma Orkun, interview by author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey July 2007
*“Her ne kadar yönetmelikte Toplum Merkezinin harcamalarından SHÇEK sorumlu olarak
gozukse de finansal destek sadece protokolümüz olan kuruluslardan geliyor. Elektrik, su
faturlari bile mesela Sultanbeyli orneginde ilce Sosyal Yardimlasma ve Dayanisma Vakfi
tarafindan karsilaniyordu.”*

¹³⁹ In 1983 acquired a centralized structure, with a directorate in Ankara. After 1991 with the change of law on SHÇEK institutions with non-state partners were introduced such as COGEM. Toplum Merkezleri, Kadin Sigirma Evleri. In the regulations regarding those institutions (provide the name of the regulations) it is stated that SHÇEK Directorate

modifying it into a partner had according to this increase contradicting reflections in the actual working of the institution. One of the social workers, Sernaz Bayram ,mentioned the process that she went through when she had to solve a problem regarding a protocol with the former partner NGO.

‘We had a problem with the protocol we signed as one of the founding partners withdrew. I demanded from the Directorate General in Ankara to find a solution, as there was a funding problem. They wrote us back answers, we wrote back to their answers and this went on and on... I don’t know what the situation is there now.’¹⁴⁰

In this case, what bureaucracy means for the social worker was a mechanism that limits the area of movement. However, through the presentation of such a remark the intention is not to support the discourse of the state being an insufficient and ineffective actor without the inclusion of a non-state partner. On the contrary, the contradiction between the central structure of SHÇEK and the claim of the same institution to create communal leaders and the cohesion of community through Society Centers who would ideally decide on their own their partners and projects is the source of the constraints that was referred to throughout the interviews.

Faik Yilmaz, an administrator of SHÇEK, points out this significant amount of time required by the paperwork related to protocols and outsourcing in the following way:

General has the authority to coordiante the relations among the non-state institutions and SHÇEK.

¹⁴⁰ Sernaz Bayram Interview by the author tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey August 2007

“Anlasmali oldugumuz STK tamamen cekilince protokolle ilgili bir sorunumuz oldu. Ankara’daki SHÇEK Genel Mudurlugu’nden bu konuda yardim istedim cunku hic mali destegimiz kalmamisti”.

‘As administrators while we are dealing with the paperwork of outsourcing, protocols etc, we hardly find time to do our real job, for example if our real job is the care of children, we never arrive at that point!’¹⁴¹

The constraints which stemmed from the lengthy process of informing the Provincial and General Directorates accompanied by the requirement of acquiring the funds locally was at times perceived by the administrators as a set of obstacles which cannot be traced. Faik Yılmaz points out this issue in the following way:

‘Everybody wants to do something together with the Society Center. The Director of SHÇEK, Istanbul Provincial Directorate, municipal mayor, me as the vice director we all want to work together but it cannot just happen. We keep writing to each other, at some step a lower rank officer objects to something and then whole process starts, too much bureaucracy in here, consequently the Toplum Merkezleri cannot work efficiently.’¹⁴²

Besides the tension among the central and local units and the partners which resulted from the lengthy process of communication between each other which resulted in the delay and cancellations of the services another point is the vague borders of the job descriptions of the social workers who worked in Society Centers. The inefficiencies which were the consequences of the lack of financial and human resources and of the reasons that were mentioned above, resulted in the perception of the Society Centers as non-working units of SHÇEK.

¹⁴¹ Faik Yılmaz Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul Turkey, July 2007
“*Idareciler olarak ihaleler, protokollerle ilgili çok fazla bürokratik isimiz oluyor. O kadar ki gerçek isimizi yapmaya vakit bulamıyoruz pek. Mesle gerçek isimiz çocuklarla ilgilenmekse ona hiç sıra gelmiyor!*”

¹⁴² Faik Yılmaz, Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul
“*Herkes Toplum Merkezleri ile ilgili beraber birşeyler yapmak istiyor. SHÇEK Genel Mudurlugu, SHÇEK Istanbul İl Mudurlugu, Belediye Baskani, mudur yardımcisi olarak ben... Hepimiz beraberce calismak istiyoruz ama olmuyor iste... Birbirimize yazilar yazip duruyoruz, bir noktada alt kademededen bir idareci itiraz ediyor, hersey sil bastan basliyor. Burada çok bürokrasi var, Toplum Merkezleri bu yuzden verimli calisamiyor.*”

Because of such a perception the social workers that are employed in Society Centers were expected to have certain administrative duties which consisted of the evaluation of the applications for benefit schemes for the handicapped. The situation of being loaded with multi tasks was summed up by Yelda Kurt, in the following way:

‘We were not only responsible from the projects in the Society Centers but also go into the field for some investigations that the Istanbul Provincial Directorate asks from us. The Directorate General in Ankara wants us to be Toplum Merkezleri and accomplish the goals that are set for projects while the Istanbul Provincial Directorate wants us to work like their district branch of them. If at least there could be 2-3 more people one could be in charge of the relationship with the NGOs, the other one can coordinate the volunteers and the other one can do the tasks that are asked from the general directorate. Working alone here limits us.’¹⁴³

The administrative and financial constraints resulted in the decrease of productivity in the Society Centers. Related to this, these institutions were perceived to be of little use and were loaded with administrative duties for which they were not responsible. This limited those institutions more and they had less time for projects, which in the end produced a vicious cycle. In the following section on the insecure bureaucracy, the discussion will focus on how the social workers perceived the short-termed provision of services, the relationships with the clients under such circumstances, in other words the reflections of the uncertainties resulting from the limitations they face on the way they perform as social workers.

¹⁴³ Yelda Kurt Interview by the author ,tape recorded Istanbul August 2007
“Biz Toplum Merkezlerinde sadece projelerden sorumlu degiliz. Istanbul Il Mudurlugu’nun bizden istedigini sosyal incelemelr icin sahaya da iniyoruz. Ankara’daki Genel Mudurluk bizim Toplum merkezi olarak calismamizi ve projeleri tamamlamamizi istiyor. Ote yandan Istanbul SHÇEK Il Mudurlugu ise bizim SHÇEK Ilce Merkezi gibi calismamizi istiyor. Eger en azindan burada iki uc kisi daha olabilseydi, en azindan biri projelerle ilgilenirdi digeri de Il Mudurlugu’nun istediklerini yapardi. Burada yalnız calismak bizi kisitliyor.”

Bureaucracy as an Insecure and Unknown Medium

In the previous two sections the two meanings that were attributed to bureaucracy were discussed from the social worker's points of views. In this last part of the section on perceptions of bureaucracy the discussion will be on the ways in which in the institution they feel insecure. The insecurity of social workers refers to not being able to assess their place within the institution, not being able to foresee the ways in which they would be performing their jobs in long-term and in what ways they were contributing to their clients.

The three most common points that emerged from the interviews that led to this perception of insecurity were the changing structure of SHÇEK through privatization, the dependence on the individuals in the policy making process and the lack of clarity on the roles attributed to the Society Centers. Before starting to discuss these three emerging themes it is crucial to mention that the circumstances that led to the insecurity was a consequence of many factors, including the ones mentioned in the previous section and the ones that will be mentioned in the next section on volunteering. However, these three elements were the ones which were directly related to insecurity by the interviewees.

During the interviews even though the main focus was on the Toplum Merkezleri the changes that the social workers experienced were conveyed from within a larger framework, the one that concerned SHÇEK. Privatization was the strongest concern among those related to SHÇEK.

The main implication of privatization according to the social workers was the loss of an institutional identity as the recruitment was done for certain posts¹⁴⁴ via private firms, and those employees as they were not state officials and tended to resign more easily. This issue is mentioned by Selma Orkun in the following way:

‘I think contracted people are controlled more easily that is the reason they are preferred. It is easier to fire them as they have fewer rights compared to state officers. The worst aspect about having contracted people is that they are not permanent. Especially when you work with children even if the person is not the best employee for that position it is wiser to improve him/her rather than hire someone else. Because when new people arrive they have difficulty in understanding the system which leads to bad performance and change of the employees. The outcome is unfortunately temporariness.’¹⁴⁵

The other very significant implication of privatization is the weaker commitment to the institution due to the short-sighted nature of employment. The employees rather than embracing their jobs with a lifelong commitment regard it as a solution until they find a better one.

¹⁴⁴ After 1991 the change of regulation which allowed recruitment through outsourced firms. Firstly the professional employees (social workers, psychologists and sociologists) were exempt from this type of recruitment. However now after 19?? regulation they can also be recruited via outsourcing.

¹⁴⁵ Selma Orkun Interview by the author, tape recording July 2007 Istanbul, Turkey
“Sozlesmeli insanlar daha rahat kontrol edilebildikleri icin tercih ediliyorlar bence. Devlet memurlarina kiyasla daha sinirli haklara sahip olduklarindan onlari kovmak da daha kolay. Sozlesmeli insanlarla beraber calismanin en kotu yani ise kalici olmamalari. Ozellikle cocuklarla calistiginiz zaman eger gorevli kisi yeterince iyi degilse, degistirip yerine yenisini almak yerine, calistiginiz kisiyi gelistirmek daha mantikli. Cunku yeni insanlar geldiklerinde sistemi anlamakta zorlaniyorlar, bu da performanslarinin dusuklugune ve sonrasinda da isten cikarilmalarina neden oluyor. Sonuc ise maalesef herseyin gecici oldugu bir kurum oluyor.”

Even though the thesis focuses on the Society Centers the interview with a former employee of Toplum Merkezi conducted in a Child and Youth Center provided insights into the repercussions of privatization. The Child and Youth Center, which was located outside the borders of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality is a pilot project for rehabilitating the children who were involved in theft and burglary. Except for the three social workers the employees, including teachers and psychologists, were employed based on contract. When asked about what their job consisted of in the center and what are their prospects a music teacher responded in the following way:

‘I am here until I find a better thing, at least it is a state office you do not need to work that hard and in the end these are children who can in no way be rehabilitated, we just somehow pass time here.’¹⁴⁶

Another teacher who was responsible for the math and science classes of the children claimed that this institution was an ideal temporary solution. He added that:

‘They are not normal children, they steal, they stab, they learn very slowly. But my wife is pregnant and I need money so for some more time I will try to resist.’¹⁴⁷

The social worker Sernaz Bayram, who had been appointed there from the Society Center, pointed out several times that the conditions both in Toplum Merkezi and her actual work place did not provide her a sense of clarity and security, as all

¹⁴⁶ Gulden Ozdemir, Interview by the author, tape recording İstanbul Turkey August 2007
“Daha iyi bir is bulana kadar buradayim. En azından burasi devlet dairesi çok fazla calismam gerekmiyor, hem zaten buradaki cocukların rehabilite falan olacakları da yok, oyle zaman geciriyoruz iste burada.”

¹⁴⁷ Ali Demir Math Teacher, Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul Turkey August 2007
“Bunlar normal cocuklar degiller, birilerini yaralamislar, hirsizlik yapmislar, çok zor ogreniyorlar. Ama esim hamile, paraya ihtiyacim var bir sure daha burada kalmam lazim.”

the employees except her were recruited through outsourced firms on the basis of contract.

‘In Society Center there were not enough members of staff to help me with the projects, paperwork, and the ones that were there were with contract; in other words, not very stable. Here is even more difficult, the children require a very big responsibility and except the social workers who are all at the same time administrators, the teachers are based on contract. Sometimes I cannot make sense of what we are doing here, if it has any use or not with all this temporariness.’¹⁴⁸

Before concluding the remarks by the social workers on the privatization of the institution, it is worth mentioning that there was a strong tendency of the social workers to justify their con-privatization standings. While on the one hand they asserted that this new mode of half-outsourced recruitment brought a short-sighted ways of providing services, as mentioned above, on the other hand, they emphasized the change in their views on the structure of SHÇEK from the early years of their careers onwards such as Yelda Kurt:

‘SHÇEK as an institution is not ready for privatization. Some things should still be done exclusively by the state, because of this I am very statist. I guess this is something very personal for me... There will be unjust things happening in

¹⁴⁸ Sernaz Bayram Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey August 2007

“Toplum Merkezinde bana projelerle, evrak isleriyle ilgili yardımcı olacak yeterli sayıda eleman yok. Burada olanların da hepsi sözleşmeli, kalıcı degiller yani. Burada yani COGEM’de durum daha da zor. Çocuklar sorumluluk gerektiriyor. Burada aynı zamanda idarecilik yapan sosyal hizmet uzmanlarından başka herkes, öğretmenler sözleşmeli olarak çalışıyor. Bazen burada neler yaptığımızı anlamlandıramıyorum. Bu kadar gecici gunubirlik bir şekilde nasıl ise yarayabiliriz ki?”

privatization I strongly believe. It has already started in SHÇEK, the state should be doing this.’¹⁴⁹

The position of supporting exclusive state support for the social services was mentioned by emphasizing that it was a personal view and they had started to think in this way only after they had worked in the field.

The second most commonly emphasized factor that led to insecurity among the employees of the SHÇEK was the dependence of the continuation of services on individuals rather than long-term effective policies. This factor even though may not seem quiet different from the shortsightedness that stemmed from the project-ized provision of services it required to be mentioned on its own as the making and abolition of certain policies, the appointment of administrators, the protocols that were signed with the non-state institutions as inferred from the interviews depend highly on the individual choices of the administrators. Thus the permanence of those services depended on the time the administrators remain in their offices. Ahmet Kara described this issue in the following way:

‘Every politician has sensitivities on certain issues. For example, for Hasan Gemici the development of Sosyal Yardimlasma ve Dayanisma Vakfi and the aid they provided, the COGEMs(Child and Youth Centers) were very important. However, nowadays the emphasis is on the child shelters, the alternative child

¹⁴⁹ Yelda Kurt Interview by the author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey, August 2007

“SHÇEK kurum olarak özellestirmeye hic hazir degil. Bazi seyler halen sadece devlet tarafından yapilmali. Boyle soyledigim icin cok devletci gibi gorunebilirim ama bu benim sahsi fikrim tamamen. Ozellestirmeyle beraber cok fazla adaletsizlik olacagina inaniyorum ben. Zaten bu coktan basladi SHÇEK’de. Bazi seyleri sadece devlet yapmali.”

centers established by foundations. In other words the priorities of the institution change according to the personal interests of the administrators.’¹⁵⁰

Apart from the lack of permanence of the policy and institutional approach related to the dependence on individual choices the services that are provided in the Society Centers were depending on the approach of the administrators, the people who are controlling the local resources and the social worker who was employed in the Society Center. One of the questions that was directed to the social workers during the interviews was how the choice of partner NGO with whom they had a foundational protocol was chosen.

The regulation stated that: “If needed related to the establishment and working of Society Centers protocols can be made with public institutions, NGOs, local governance units and universities.”¹⁵¹ According to this structure of Society Centers, one of the questions that was directed to the social workers was the method of choosing the partner institution to work with. The responses received lead to the conclusion that these choices were made according to the availability of the resources rather than suitability and depended on the individual relationships administrators have with those organizations. In some cases ,however, the lack of such relationship resulted in the absence of a stable partner.

In the Society Center where Yelda Kurt was working the foundation of the center was done through a protocol between SHÇEK and an NGO. The choice of that specific NGO took place in the following way:

¹⁵⁰ Ahmet Kara Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey July 2007
“Her politikacinin duyarli olduđu alan farklı. Orneğin Hasan Gemici için Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Vakfı’nın , Çocuk ve Gençlik Merkezleri’nin önemi çok büyüktü. Ancak su günlerde idarecilerc vakıflar tarafından yaptırılan çocuk yuvalarına önem veriyorlar. Bir başka deyişle kurumun öncelikleri bastaki idarecilerin kişisel önceliklerine göre değişiyor.”

¹⁵¹ Toplum Merkezleri Hakkında Yönetmelik article 6 c

‘The Provincial Director of the time Kahraman Eroglu was supporting the protocols with NGOs. During the period he was in the office protocols with Cagdas Yasami Destekleme Dernegi and Insan Sagligi Egitim Vakfi took place. I think he had some acquaintances with INSEV that is the reason our protocol took place with them.’¹⁵²

The dependence of the protocols and funding on the relationships of individuals had also the potential to result negatively; in other words, not receiving any fund. Sernaz Bayram, who had been employed as a social worker since the establishment for eight years told about how she experienced the lack of local support:

‘For example, I went to speak with the Municipal Mayor [Belediye Baskani] when I first started to work at the Society Center, he did not accept to see me. Later he came to the Society Center because the women of the area were participating highly in our projects. When he came here he said that he did not want any Society Center at all, and that all should be closed down. Someone who has an opinion like this of course did not help us at all. It was the same municipal mayor during the eight years that I was there. He had a very consistent negative view for the Society Center and that did not change.’¹⁵³

¹⁵² Yelda Kurt Social Worker Interview tape recording August 2007 Istanbul
“O zamanki Istanbul SHÇEK İl Muduru Kahraman Eroglu STKlar ile yapılacak olan protokollari çok destekliyordu. O görevde olduğu surece Cagdas Yasami Destekleme Dernegi ve Insan Sagligi Egitim Vakfi ile protokoller yapıldı. INSEV’de arkadaşları vardı sanırım, bizim bu nedenle onlarla protokolumuz var.”

¹⁵³ Sernaz Bayram, Interview by the author, tape recording, August 2007
“Orneğin ben ilk göreve başladığımda gittim Belediye Bşkani ile görüşmek istedim, beni kabul etmedi. Sonra kendisi Toplum Merkezine gelmek zorunda kaldı çünkü bölgedeki kadınlar projelere çok talep gösteriyorlardı. Buraya geldiğinde Toplum Merkezi istemediğini ve hepsinin kapanması gerektiğine inandığını söyledi. Bu fikirdeki birisi tabii ki bize hiçbir yardımda bulunmadı. Benim orada bulunduğum sekiz yıl boyunca hep aynı belediye bşkani görevdeydi. Tutarlı bir şekilde bu olumsuz tavrını sürdürdü Toplum Merkezine karşı ve hiç değişmedi.”

The lack of consistent funding or a standardized budgetary scheme was the reason behind the dependence on the individuals in both finding partners to have protocols with and funding. In other words, the working of the institution was made possible through personal efforts. One of the main concerns of the social workers that were interviewed was the possible transfer of the social services to the municipalities which was mentioned in the draft of new law for SHÇEK. The funding issue being already a problem that each social worker had to solve on their own they asserted that transfer of the social services to municipalities would increase the disparities in terms of the quality of the services:

‘I know what it means not to get the support of the municipality for five years and how hard it was for me. I always had to go to other municipalities and explain why I needed their resources instead of the municipality where the Society Center is in. I had no answer to give. For example, if they transfer the social services to municipality I guess the mayor might even kill me.’¹⁵⁴

Besides the dependence on the choices and approaches of local governors and the administrators of SHÇEK for the working of the Society Center, the approach of social workers was also a factor that created difference in the quality of service provision. In other words, the continuity of the services depend on the individual efforts of social workers. Yelda Kurt, who said that there were resources only if she sought for them emphasized this point in the following way:

¹⁵⁴ Sernaz Bayram, Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul Turkey August 2007

“Belediyeden yardım alamamanın ne demek olduğunu, bunu zorluğunu çok iyi biliyorum. Sekiz yıl yaşadım bunu. Hep başka belediyelere gidip onlardan kaynak istemek durumunda kaldım. Neden kendi belediyemden değil de onlardan kaynak istediğimi açıklamak durumunda kaldım. Mesela bir gün sosyal hizmetler belediyeler geçirirse o belediye başkanı öldürür beni herhalde.”

‘This year I did not search for extra resources, it was a personal choice, I wanted to work less. I said it was enough I will work less. Normally when we look for extra resources we can make summer school for around 250-300 kids but this year we do for a smaller group.’¹⁵⁵

The dependance on resources and decisions which were not stable and permanent lead to the loss of trust in the institution and the reason for being in the office for the social workers. In a context where the provision of resources working of projects depended on their initiatives this brought the situation to a deadlock.

The feeling of loneliness in the “locality” due to the necessity to arrange the resources provide the attendance of the clients led to insecurity, as mentioned above. Besides this, the vague definition of the Society Centers from the early establishment years onwards was a factor that led to insecurity among the social workers. Even though the main question of the study is focusing on the ways in which the governance was experienced in the Turkish social services sector, this indirect reflection of it could not be left out as it was emphasized quiet often by the interviewees.

The vagueness of definition first, stemmed from the naming of those institutions as mentioned earlier. While the similar institutions in North America and Western Europe were named community center in Turkey, the name means Society Center. While SHÇEK defines the goal of the Society Center as “... making people capable of solving their own problems and using the local resources,”¹⁵⁶ the name had references to a more centralized structure.

¹⁵⁵Yelda Kurt Interview by the author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey August 2007
“*Bu sene fazladan kaynak arayışına girmedim, kişisel bir tercih bu, daha az çalışmak istedim. Normalde ek kaynak arayınca, yaz okulunu 250-300 çocuk için yapabiliyoruz ama bu sene daha küçük bir gruba yaptık.*”

¹⁵⁶“Toplum Merkezleri” downloaded from www.SHÇEK.gov.tr

This paradox of local and central administration demonstrates the confusion of the goal for establishing such an institution. The problems related to continuity of the provision of services was explained by this uncertain establishment by social worker Ahmet Kara:

‘The Society Centers are established in line with the potential resources that could be allocated to them rather than responding to the needs of the area. First of all there is not a very clear criteria in deciding what makes an area in need of a Society Center. For example, here there are so many problems in this area, but because of the lack of definition of the mission of this institution it is hard to set goals and take action.’¹⁵⁷

This unclear situation led to the perception of those institutions were of insignificant use within SHÇEK, and the social workers there, were expected to perform excess administrative duties as mentioned in the previous sections. The argument of the colleagues of social workers who were employed in Society Centers that they were not performing any tangible task was caused by the lack of a clear definition of the duties of the social workers. After explaining the insecurity to conclude this section on bureaucracy with the following statement of Ahmet Kara is meaningful as it summarizes the main issue that causes the constraints, insecurity and a need for a secure bureaucracy.

‘The biggest problematic of Society Centers is the lack of the answer to this question: Why do the Society Centers exist? What is their function? Will these institutions be always there or they have a temporary function? The relationship of

¹⁵⁷ Ahmet Kara Interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul Turkey July 2007
“*Toplum Merkezleri ihtiyac olan yerden ziyade kurulmasi mumkun olan, kaynak olan yerlerde kuruldu. Oncelikle bir bolgenin Toplum Merkezi’ne ihtiyac duymasi nasil kriterlere bagli oldugu belirlenmemis. Mesela burada o kadar cok problem var ama kurumun amaci net olarak belirlenmediginden kesin hedefler koyup harekete gecmek mumkun olamiyor.*”

the society with those institutions is not discussed, especially the answers of those questions are not in the agenda of the people who are in the administrative positions in SHÇEK.’¹⁵⁸

Projects and Volunteering

The last subsection about the perceptions of the social workers on bureaucracy was on the consequences of what is taking place in the institution. In this section devoted to the projects and volunteering within SHÇEK; however, the aim is to understand the way that leads towards those consequences mentioned in the previous part of this chapter. The NGOs and what is attributed to the practice of volunteering by the social workers will be discussed in this section.

Understanding Projects

The mainstream understanding of projects as cited by Tendler is that they provide a dynamic and innovative approach to public services.¹⁵⁹ The major

¹⁵⁸ Ahmet Kara, Interview by the author, Tape Recorded, July 2007
“Toplum Merkezlerinin en büyük problemi su sorunun cevabının olmaması: Toplum Merkezleri neden var? Görevleri neler? Bu kurumlar hep olacaklar mı yoksa gecici bir süre için mi acıldılar? Toplum Merkezlerinin toplumla olan ilişkisi de hiç tartışılmıyor. Özellikle de idari görevde olan insanlar bu soruların cevaplarını gündemlerine almıyorlar.”

¹⁵⁹ Judith Tendler , “Why social policy is condemned to a residual category of safety nets, and what to do about it: thoughts on a research agenda.” In: *Social Policy in a*

criticism of the “projectized” provision of services is that they create short-sighted and temporary solutions for long-termed problems. In this part of the subsection on projects and volunteering firstly a brief information on what the projects consisted of and how they were implemented in the Society Center will be mentioned.

Here projects refer to services provided with human and financial resources which are available for a limited time. The projects that were implemented in Society Centers were realized through partnerships that were established among SHÇEK and NGOs or other public institutions.

The projects that were implemented in the Society Centers continue for three to 24 months. They are funded through the means that the NGO that proposed to them. One of the most important criteria for a project to receive European Union funds is to be able to guarantee its sustainability after the project ends. Thus a partnership with a state institution is crucial to be able to receive funding from European Union Funds. Hence having SHÇEK as a partner is fulfills the sustainability criteria for the funding.

The most emphasized point about the projectization of the services in the Society Centers during the interviews was that the social workers after the project were left alone. They remained with the responsibility to find the funding and to explain to clients that they could not continue due to lack of financial resources when they were not able to find necessary financial resources. Hasan Baykal explained the challenge for in-sustainability in the following way:

‘It is in the nature of the projects that they last only for a limited time. As a state institution what is important for us is the sustainability. People get used to the

Development Context, edited by Thandika Mkandawire, Palgrave, MacMillan:NewYork, 2004 p.115

things that are done during the projects. They want them to continue, but as the financial resources do not allow us, we cannot continue after the projects which disturbs the institutionalization of the Toplum Merkezleri.’¹⁶⁰

The main tension arose from the permanency of the institution and the temporariness of the projects. As already mentioned in the previous part on bureaucracy, and will again be mentioned in the following section on NGOs and volunteering, the two actors state and civil society perceived each other as obstacles. One of the most frequent remarks by the social workers was that SHÇEK becomes a tool for receiving grant from the projects as mentioned in the previous quote. As for the NGOs even though for this study only a limited number of interviews were conducted, there was an emphasis on the responsibility of the SHÇEK employees to find funding and sustain the project afterwards. An employee of ACEV who worked in the father education program with Society Centers emphasizes this point in the following way:

‘When a project finishes the most crucial thing for sustainability is whether the institution embraces the project or not. It is crucial if the institution is even with a small budget to be motivated to sustain the project. If they embrace they will be able to find solution to sustain.’¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Hasan Baykal Interview by the author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey July 2007
“Projeler yapıları itibariyle bir zaman kisitlamasına tabi oluyorlar. Bir devlet kurumu olduğumuz için sürdürülebilirlik bizim için çok önemli. İnsanlar proje süresince yapılan şeylere alışıyorlar ve bunun devam etmesini istiyorlar, ancak mali kaynakların darlığı bizim projeleri sürdürebilmemizi engelliyor, bu da Toplum Merkezinin kurumsallasamamasına neden oluyor.”

¹⁶¹ Cem Erman Interview by the author, tape recording, İstanbul, Turkey July 2007
“Bir proje bittiği zaman sürdürülebilirliği sağlayan en önemli şey kurumun projeyi sahiplenip sahiplenmediğidir. Kurumun küçük bir bütçeyle de olsa projeyi devam ettirmek için motivasyonunun olması çok önemli. Eğer projeyi sahiplenirlerse sürdürülebilirliğin de bir yolunu bulabilirler.”

On the other hand, the social workers approached their relationship to the projects different from the NGOs. As mentioned earlier in this chapter social workers' concerns stemmed from the fact that they were left with the responsibility to sustain the projects but without the guarantee of financial resources. A former employee of a Society Center Hulki Bayburt stated that:

'Some NGOs want to be visible in media, but leave the whole burden on the social workers. They want to receive only the applause. I think the populist approach of some politicians towards NGOs is the cause.'¹⁶²

Leaving aside the individual problems that the social workers experienced with the NGOs the project by itself contradicts permanency concern of the social workers as a state officer. Hasan Baykal told about his concerns on project-ized work in the following way:

'We ever had the similar problems with the projects. Project is only for a limited period, at most it lasts for 24 months. After the project ends for the sustainability we did not have the financial resources. During the projects as well we had a problem, I was the only one who had the training for the project but I also had responsibilities as the administrator of Society Center.'¹⁶³

The finances and lack of employees were emphasized as the most visible challenges of sustainability by the social workers. However, the sudden change of

¹⁶² Hulki Bayburt Interview by the author, Tape recorded August 2007
"Bazi STKlar medyada gorunur olmak istiyorlar ama islerin yukunu tamamen sosyal hizmet uzmanlarına birakıyorlar. Onlar sadece alkislari toplamak istiyorlar. Bunun nedeni de bence STKlara populist sekillerde yaklasan destek veren politikacilar."

¹⁶³ Hasan Baykal Interview by the author, tape recording, İstanbul Turkey August 2007
"Projelerle ilgili hep ayni sorunla karsi karsiya kaliyoruz. Proje belli bir sure icin olan bir sey, en fazla 24 ay suruyor. Projeler bittikten sonra surdurulebilirliđi saglamamiz icin finansal kaynakimiz yok. Projeler devam ederken de ayni problem var, ben proje egitiminden gecip uygulayabilecek olan tek kisiyim Toplum Merkezi'nde ama ayni zamanda Toplum Merkezi'nin idarecisi olarak da sorumluluklarim var."

bureaucrats and social workers that were appointed to a Society Center when intertwined with the short-termed nature of projectized mode of providing services the shortsightedness gained a new dimension which was summarized by Selma Orkun in the following way:

‘Financing is not the only short-termed thing about the projects in Turkey. Everything is short-termed. Sometimes you have the funding, you have clients who want to participate, but suddenly the administrator or the social worker is appointed to somewhere else’¹⁶⁴

The other challenge about the projects was the assessment difficulty of the needs of the area. As stated earlier in this chapter the social workers emphasized that the Toplum Merkezleri rather than according to the needs of the area were established in line with the available resources. Thus the lack of a specific knowledge on what was needed in the area may lead to situations where the project was not relevant to the clients of that specific area.

‘The sustainability in the projects depend on the clients and the social worker. But there are some projects for example the clients do not really regard it as a need and as there is no demand, we cannot continue the project.’¹⁶⁵

After discussing the concerns of the social workers on working with projects it is possible to claim that the main tension arose from a very essential difference between the project as a limited, temporary solution while the office where the social

¹⁶⁴ Selma Orkun Interview by the author, Tape Recording, Istanbul Turkey July 2007
”Turkiye’deki projelerde tek gecici olan sey finansman degil. Hersey gecici. Bazen fonunuz oluyor muracaatcilariniz oluyor ama aniden Toplum Merkezi’nin idarecisi baska bir yere tayin ediliyor.”

¹⁶⁵ Yelda Kurt Interview by the author, Tape Recording, Istanbul Turkey, August 2007
”Projelerin surdurulevilirligi muracaatcilara ve sosyal hizmet uzmanlarına bagli. Ama mesela bazı projelerde muracaatcilar bunu gercek bir ihtiyac olarak algilamiyorlar, talep olmayınca da projeyo devam ettiremiyoruz biz de.”

worker was in is always there and had to find or create other shortsighted solutions when the current one expires. This contradiction will be elaborated further in the next subsection on NGOs and volunteering. To emphasize this very contradiction between two modes of providing services, it is meaningful to conclude this subsection on projects with a quote from social worker Hasan Baykal.

‘When a project proposal arrives we immediately start thinking about the aftermath, the sustainability. But unfortunately we only can think. After 18 months people get used to this project and keep coming to the Society Center and after that for us it is very hard to say it is over, because we are an institution and permanent here, I just cannot say, my money is over, the project is over the World Bank is not giving money anymore...’¹⁶⁶

NGOs, Volunteering, and SHÇEK

The last subsection on the projects had the intention to show how the social workers perceive the projects as a mode of working. In this subsection the focus is on

¹⁶⁶ Hasan Baykal Interview by the author, Tape Recorded July 2007
“Bir proje onerisi geldiginde ilk dusundugumuz sey devami, surdurulebilirliigi oluyor. Ama maalesef sadece dusunuyoruz. 18 ay sonra insanlar projeye alisiyorlar ve proje bittikten sonra da Toplum Merkezine gelmeye devam ediyorlar, onlara bitti artik yok demek zor oluyor. Cunku biz bir kurumuz ve surekli buradayiz, proje bitti, dunya bankasindan artik para gelmeyecek nasil diyeyim...”

how the social workers perceived NGOs and working with NGOs. However before the discussion it is useful to provide on what basis the discussion will take place, hence the way in which the interviewees presented the NGOs. This note is provided intentionally here rather than in the previous section, as the previous part focused on how the social workers perceived the project as a “mode” as a temporary status without problematizing the absence of certain pieces of information within their answers.

The most interesting part of the interviewing process for me was the answers that I received on the projects and NGOs. While the majority of the social workers whom I interviewed complained about the projectized mode of service provision, like providing training or health services for women, for limited periods of time, when asked about the specific name of projects, they hesitated and did not specifically tell about a project which could not be sustained. Besides this, when asked about specific experiences with NGOs and the way they work together the answers that were received were generalizations rather than specifically chosen cases.

Even though the main concern of this study is how the short-termed social work had an impact on the way social workers performed their jobs and the way they positioned themselves for clients rather than having a list of unsustainable projects and the NGOs that proposed them, it is still crucial to point out this gap of information. It creates a vagueness in their discourses as even though the main themes around which the interviews evolved were about the projects and NGOs they remained invisible.

First, among the social workers, as will be mentioned in the coming section, on self perception there was a constant need for self legitimization and the need to

persuade the interviewer of the fact that their presence is important for the area where the Society Center was located. Thus, making broad generalizations and complaints was a strategy to narrate the story in the way they want. Second, as mentioned earlier in this chapter about entering SHÇEK, the fact that social workers were state officers made them hesitant to provide names and names of institutions during the interview with the concern of receiving a warning from administrators; in other words the hierarchical structure of SHÇEK was a barrier to them to express their opinions openly. The remaining part of this section will be devoted to the ways in which social workers perceive NGOs and volunteering for the social services sector.

During the section on the projects the main paradox between Toplum Merkezi as an institution of SHÇEK and the project mode of service provision was stated to be the temporariness of the former and the by definition permanency of the latter. Keeping this contradictory positioning of the two institutional structures in mind, in this part the manner in which the social workers evaluated the NGO's standing in the social services sector will be discussed.

First, as emphasized in the earlier part of this chapter, on the bureaucracy as a safe medium the majority of the social workers while criticizing the project-ized service provision to social services pointed out that they had become statist after starting to work in the field after they experienced the relationship between the two different institutions. The answers they provided to the question on what they thought of the remark on the Eighth Five-Year Development Plan on the Social Services Sector about the necessity to leave the social services completely to municipalities, NGOs and private institutions as soon as the conditions are ready¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ Devlet Planlama Teskilati Sekizinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı Sosyal Hizmetler Özel İhtisas Komisyonu Raporu, 2001

was against the view point of the report. This question aimed to assess the extent to which the social workers trusted the NGOs and how they place them in their sector. The majority of the answers emphasized their concern about injustice in the case of such a transfer. This concern is an indicator of the lack of trust they had in the ways in which NGOs got involved in the social services sector. Yelda Kurt's statement summarizes those concerns in the following way:

'SHÇEK can collaborate with the NGOs on certain areas but the main duties should be fulfilled by only SHÇEK especially in the area of child protection. For example, now, there are many collaborations with private foundations and NGOs to open child shelters, we don't know who they are, what they do...'¹⁶⁸

Additionally Yelda Kurt also pointed out that her main concern about this transfer was the justice issue: 'We will have many problems because of nepotism, we need to develop objectivity and justice first.'¹⁶⁹

The explanation of the mistrust of the social workers for the NGOs can be found by remembering their insecure perception of bureaucracy in the early parts of this chapter. The ambiguous division of the roles between the state and the civil society is not a recent discussion. According to Ahmet Kara this division is one of the main problems of SHÇEK as the borders between these two institutions:

'The Law No. 2828 of SHÇEK defines the social services as an area which is governed by the state; however, it is still kept available to the provision of services

¹⁶⁸ Yelda Kurt Interview by the author, Tape Recording, Istanbul, Turkey August 2007

"SHÇEK cesitli alanlarda STKlarla isbirliği yapabilir ancak temel gorevler SHÇEK tarafından yerine getirilmeli, ozellikle de cocuklarla ilgili olanlar. Mesela su anda cocuk yuvasi acilmasi icin bircok STK ve vakif ile isbirliği yapiliyor, onlar kimdir nedir bilemiyoruz..."

¹⁶⁹ Yelda Kurt Interview by the author, Tape Recording, Istanbul, Turkey, August 2007

"Adam kayirma ve adaletsizlik yuzunden cok sorun yasayacagimizi dusunuyorum. Boyle birsey olacaksa once objektivite saglanmeli."

by civil society and private sector possible. After 1983 until the 1990s there was no discussion going on about the sharing of the duties among the state and the civil society. However, after the 1999 earthquake, with the expanding number of NGOs, the discussion of whether to leave the services totally to NGOs would be a good solution started to be considered.¹⁷⁰

The blurred line between civil society and SHÇEK was not the only concern social workers had. The problems related to NGOs according to the social workers stem from the lack of institutionalization. Second, the social workers pointed out that the lack of a collaboration habit between the civil society and state was another reason which made the relation between the two a challenge.

While the civil society had never been involved in the social services sector, the increase after the 1990s with the establishment of new types of institutions which encouraged collaboration more than before, and consequently in a very short time, the visibility of the NGOs increased. Ahmet Kara explains this situation in the following way:

‘After the 1999 earthquake there was an enormous increase in the number of NGOs in Turkey, nearly everyone became a part of an NGO and they even claimed that they are supported by the state. As a consequence the discussion of whether the state should leave the social services to the NGOs has started, and the number of protocols made between SHÇEK and NGOs increased. But as this process was very fast the NGOs couldn’t institutionalize. If we leave out certain exceptions like TEGEV and ACEV - who do not have any financial problems-they became

¹⁷⁰ Ahmet Kara Interview by the author, Tape Recording July 2007
“2828 nolu kanun sosyal hizmetleri devlet tarafından düzenlenen bir alan olarak tanımlıyor. Ancak bazı hizmetlerin sağlanması için sivil toplumun önü açık bırakılıyor. 1983 yılından 1990a kadar devletin görevlerini sivil toplumla paylaşması tartışılmıyordu. Ancak 1999 depreminden sonra, STKların sayılarının artmasıyla, sosyal hizmetleri tamamen STKlara bırakmanın iyi bir çözüm olup olmayacağı tartışılmaya başlandı.”

institutions whose priority is to sustain their own financial stability rather than providing services.’¹⁷¹

Besides the institutionalizing issues of the NGOs the lack of the habit of working together was another emphasized issue for the NGOs. While mentioning the projects and the way social workers thought about them the main stress was on the “natural difference” between the two modes of service provision. Here when we look at the accounts of social workers on the institutional relationships between SHÇEK and the NGOs, it can be observed that the main tension arose from the fact that there is a power struggle between the two and the main challenges arise from the fact that both sides rather than collaborate tried to dominate each other. Derya Halis, a social worker at a Society Center in Istanbul since its establishment told her opinions about the protocols with NGOs and institutional identities in the following way:

‘There is no habit of collaboration in this country. Everybody sticks to their institutional identities. When you are member of an NGO that identity comes before everything, or when you are an officer of SHÇEK, that is the dominant identity. However, when you start to collaborate the priority should be given to this collaboration but people are too conservative to overcome this. Protocols are not taken seriously here in Turkey. Both of sides do not act according to the contract.

¹⁷¹ Ahmet Kara Interview by the author, Tape Recording, July 2007
“1999 depreminden sonra Türkiye’de STKların sayısında büyük bir artış oldu. Neredyse herkes bir STK ile çalışır hale geldi ve devlet tarafından desteklendiğini söyledi. Bunun sonucu olarak devletin sosyal hizmet görevlerini STKlara bırakıp bırakmaması konusu tartışılmaya başlandı. SHÇEK ve STKlar arasındaki protokoller arttı. Ancak bu çok hızlı bir süreçti ve bu nedenle STKlar kurumsallaşamadılar. TEGEV ve AÇEV gibi birkaç istisnayı bir kenara bırakırsak diğer STKların öncelikleri hizmet sağlamaktan çok kendi mali güvencelerini sağlamlaştırmak oldu.”

People sign the contracts thinking that once they have it signed they can do whatever they want.’¹⁷²

Before concluding this section on NGOs and volunteering, last, the way volunteers and donors affect the professional practices of social workers will be discussed. Different from what was mentioned in the previous part on NGOs the relationships between the volunteers and donors developed. Volunteers refer to the people who allocate time to the Society Center without any legal binding protocol and without any expectation of a material benefit. Donors, on the other hand, refer to people who contribute materially to Society Centers.

The views of social workers on volunteering and donation show similar points as they did for the projects. The material donations and the time the volunteers allocated for social services were regarded as temporary and inconsistent. In other words, like the statements made for the projects, they found volunteering problematic as it was a temporary discontinuity as opposed to the permanence of the institution and permanency of its needs. Second, different from the ways in which they were uncomfortable with the projects, they regarded both the time and material allocations of the volunteers arbitrary and that by definition the relationship that was formed between the donors and them was hierarchical.

This hierarchical relationship between the giver and the taker created one of the main tensions between the social workers and the donors. The social workers being the representatives of the “takers” first, because of discontinuity, and second,

¹⁷² Derya Halis Interview by the author, Tape Recorded April 2007
“Bu ülkede beraber çalışma alışkanlığı yok. Herkes kendi kurumsal kimliğine tutunuyor. Bir STK üyesi olduğunuz zaman o kimlik herşeyden önemli oluyor. Ya da SHÇEK çalışması iseniz, o kimlik öne geçiyor. Ancak beraber çalışmaya başladığında esas önem verilmesi gereken bir arada yapılan iş. Ancak insanlar bu konuda çok tutucular Türkiye’de. Kimse protokolleri ciddiye almıyor. İki taraf da protokole göre hareket etmiyor. Protokol imzalandıktan sonra istediklerini yapabileceklerini sanıyorlar.”

because of the lack of information the donors had on the real needs of the institution and their clients.

The discomfort of the social workers who were involved stemmed not from the presence of the donors or the volunteers, but their dependence on them as they were not provided with a stable budget or necessary number of employees. Yelda Kurt, when asked how they compensated the lack of a stable budget, explained in the following way:

‘During Ramadan or other Bayrams they bring some gifts to SHÇEK institutions. It is to satisfy themselves or to fulfill their religious duties. But social services is much beyond those concerns.’¹⁷³

As for hierarchical issues Faik Yılmaz pointed out that because they were the ones who gave, donors do not consider the needs of the institution, but rather brought what they thought was necessary and useful for the institution:

‘They bring chocolate all the time, for example, to children’s shelters and want to give it themselves. I try to tell them that they cannot decide the time when to give it, they accuse of not letting them help the children. Just because they are the ones who give they think they can give whatever they want whenever they think is appropriate!’¹⁷⁴

Besides the arbitrariness that was mentioned above and the fact that the social workers perceived donors as people who were there more to satisfy themselves rather

¹⁷³ Yelda Kurt Interview by the author, Tape Recorded August 2007
‘Ramazan’da ya da diğer bayramlarda SHÇEK kurumlarına hediyeler getiriyorlar. Bu daha çok kendilerini, dini duygularını tatmin etmek için yapılan bir şey. Oysa sosyal hizmetler bunun çok ötesinde bir şey.’

¹⁷⁴ Faik Yılmaz Interview Interview by the author, Tape Recorded July 2007
‘Sürekli çikolata getiriyorlar. Çocuk yuvalarında bunu kendileri vermek istiyorlar. Onlara çikolatayı ne zaman vereceklerine kendi başlarına karar veremeyeceklerini söylüyorum. Beni çocuklara yardım etmelerini önlemekle suçluyorlar. Veren kendileri olduğu için istedikleri zaman istedikleri kadar şeyi verme hakkını buluyorlar kendilerinde.’

than to contribute to the institution there is one more aspect that made the relationship between the two sides problematic. The volunteers that came to Society Centers did not have a binding relationship with the Society Centers, which meant they could cease to come anytime without any explanation and the social worker would again be left alone to solve the problem of not having enough people in the center to sustain the project. Sernaz Bayram, who worked as a social worker in a Society Center in Istanbul for eight years, tells her experience about the volunteers which exemplifies what is stated above:

‘As the Society Center I used to work for was far away from the city center and there was not very much public transport after a few times the volunteer university students did not show up. I cannot say anything. They are right. It was not very secure on the way back home when it was dark. They are volunteers. They come one day and when they do not come you cannot say anything’¹⁷⁵

The intention of mentioning the perceptions of the social workers on volunteering and donating is to be able to demonstrate how the dependence on the human and material resources outside the state influence the professional experiences of social workers.

One of the aims of the Society Centers as stated in the online-booklet is, “The Centers according to the services they provide coordinate the NGOs, municipalities, other public institutions in the area to use the resources in an efficient way and to create new resources.”¹⁷⁶ However the creation of those resources depended on the

¹⁷⁵ Sernaz Bayram Interview Interview by the author, Tape Recorded August 2007 ‘Benim çalıştığım toplum Merkezi şehir merkezinden çok uzaktaydı ve fazla toplu taşıma aracı yoktu. Bu nedenle gönüllüler birkaç gez gelip bırakıyorlardı daha sonra.Haklılar hiçbir şey söyleyemem.Eve dönüş yolu karanlıkta güvenli olmuyordu.Onlar gönüllü bir gün gelip diğer gün gelmeyebilirler ve hiçbir şey söylemeye hakkımız olmaz.’

¹⁷⁶ “Toplum Merkezleri” Online Booklet downloaded from www.SHÇEK.gov.tr

personal relationships among the administrations of those institutions, the differences among their political standings, the priorities they had, the location of the Society Center and many other factors that were beyond the control of the social worker who was supposed to “coordinate”.

To sum up, the major problem was not the presence of those new or “recently more visible” actors, but the new relationship that the state formed with its citizens by leaving the responsibilities to be handled by inconsistent and unstable solutions, which was not new but more visible.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This thesis analyzed how the partnerships between the state and the civil society was perceived by the social workers who work in Society Centers in Istanbul. Those centers established in the early 1990s with the aim of integrating the migrants to the urban life. The social services in Turkey had a hybrid character since its establishment in the early 20th Century. The partnership structure to the social services sector in other words is not a new phenomenon for the social services.

However, the backgrounds of the clients that applied to the social services differed, the persistent unemployment and the deprivation from the urban resources which can be classified as “new poverty” resulted in the need of a different strategy to cope with the new situation.

The establishment of the Society Centers depending on the protocols signed with non-state bodies like municipalities, civil society organizations and depending on those institutions for the funding matters can be considered to be a new form of the already existing voluntary based structure of the social services institution in

Turkey. Hence, rather than the de-structuring of an existing state sponsored social services system to cope with the challenges that were the consequence of the new form of poverty resulting from the less employment possibilities which deprive the people from economic and social life the like the Western European countries, the partnerships, flexible funding models, providing services in the forms of projects were embedded in the existing system in the Turkish case.

The main goal while doing this was to use the social services sector as an example to understand how the strategies that are appropriated to respond to the new urban poverty. Even though the voluntariness and hybrid structure of the social services in Turkey is not a new phenomenon, the stronger emphasis of this mode of service provision worths attention. The perceptions of the social workers were analyzed in order to make sense of this appropriation process. As the model that is tried to be embedded in the existing institution is an outcome of the de-struction of the Western state funded public services provision the model is placed within the Turkish social services sector as there has not been a model to dismantle as such of the Western counterparts.

This new outlook for governing that was appropriated in Turkey has a discourse of having a network of actors rather than having one governing state changed the relationship between the state and the citizens as well as the state and civil society. The theoretical discussion was included to understand the evolution of the bureaucracy and the consequences of the new governance of welfare related to this evolution. The discussion provided the possibility to understand the new model of welfare that was appropriated in the Turkish social services sector after the 1990s.

The theoretical discussions of this thesis included the discussions over the concept of governance and what it has changed in the bureaucratic structure

especially after the 1990s . The second axe of theoretical discussion is on the changing civil society with the new roles attributed to it.

Civil society was regarded a sphere through which the rights of citizens were defended against the state. However the new role that was attributed to civil society by making it a partner with the state not only contradicted the definition of civil society but made state and the civil society vulnerable to each other. When the civil society was attributed the role of providing and improving social services it left the position of being a critical actor faced with state, on the contrary it had to have a consensual relationship. On the other hand the state officials who have no say in the policy making process become vulnerable to the civil society organizations as they provide human and financial sources for their institution.

Besides the problematic relationship between the civil and state spheres, the new form of providing public services, in the case of this study, social services impacted the relationship between the state and the citizens. The major characteristic of the service provision in this model was the temporary funds that were provided to state institutions the civil society organizations or by corporations. These funds were provided in relation to a project that is proposed by an NGO who would realize this project in collaboration with a state institution. As a consequence, the social services including literacy courses for women, rehabilitation for the children working and living on the streets were realized through those funds. The major implication of such a projectized mode of service provision is that it was short-termed in terms of goals and it does not have the potential to be “institutionalize” as it depended on the allocations of the funds.

The case that is chosen for this study is examined under the light of those discussions on the new governance and the impacts the micro-sized provision of

social services. The Society Centers, which are institutions that provide services in the areas of big cities where there is a intense flow of migrants work through the principle of partnership between the state and civil society organizations. The thesis looked at the implications of the new governance system in the Turkish social services sector through the accounts of social workers who were employed in those centers.

The significance of the case of this thesis is that in contrast to the critical literature on the governance, which tells a transition from a Bismarckian bureaucracy to a more fluid, blurred boundaries between the state and the civil society, the Turkish Social Services Institution (SHÇEK) can not be easily classified as a state institution with a clear definition of its budget and employment structure. When SHÇEK was first founded in 1921 it was defined as a civil society organization that worked for the public benefit. The main source of the finances of the institution was the donations and one of the first main decisions taken by the executive committee being to send the chair of the institution to the US to collect donations from the Turkish migrants is an indicator of the charity character of the institution from its early days onwards. This study while aimed to understand the impacts of governance through the partnerships in Toplum Merkezleri considered the specific historical background of the institution.

The way the institution is formed since its establishment with the dependence on the volunteering the remarks that are made by the social workers on the changing mode of relationships with the volunteers and the NGOs did not surface as a demand to return to a more structured bureaucracy. The law that was made on 1983 which made SHÇEK a state institution did not erase the foundational characteristics of the institution. The increasing partnerships and project mode of service provision

likewise found themselves place in the existing dynamics of the institution. In other words the ambiguity of the remarks and the complaints which in the first instance seem to be not having a reference point is stemming from this foundational characteristic of the institution. As mentioned earlier it is not possible to argue that there is a shift in the bureaucracy, rather there is an appropriation of the partnership mode of service provision in order to respond to the problems in the urban areas that were not encountered before.

This study aimed to understand the implication of this appropriation through the interviews conducted with the social workers who were employed in Society Centers in Istanbul. As most of the interviewees were working in the institutions since the beginning of the 1990s and since the establishment of Society Centers their accounts helped to understand the ways in which the new forms of relationships between the state and the non-state actors on the institution.

The interviews were analyzed according to two main theoretical axis. The ways in which social workers perceived the new bureaucratic model and second, how they perceive and experience the increasing involvement of the non-governmental organizations and volunteering in the social services sector. Besides the discussion of the interviews in relation to these two conceptual frameworks, the ways in which the social workers perceive themselves were also mentioned in a separate section of the thesis.

The perception of bureaucracy by the social workers revealed their vulnerabilities both to the NGOs with which they engaged in partnerships and with the local politicians. The bureaucracy referred to the ways in which the institution is worked and the framework within which they performed their professions. The social workers were reluctant throughout the interviews about provide the names of the

NGOs or volunteer organizations with whom their relationship was problematic. The lack of information proved to be a data in itself demonstrating the vulnerability that was caused by the new system.

The other aspect of the vulnerability of the social workers is a consequence of the dependence on the local politicians. In other words, the appropriation of a model in which the state is a catalyzer among the civil society and the private sector caused the work place to be perceived insecure medium where the changes that took place were realized for the sake of having less formality, but resulted in a structure where there was power without authority.

The partnership with NGOs and other public institutions in the Turkish context acquired another dimension as the social services sector in Turkey was, since the late Ottoman and Early Republican era considered to be in the realm of volunteers including the single-party period, which is regarded as the most statist era of the republic. The inclusion of the project mode of service provision, the establishment of institutions without a constant flow from the budget intertwined with the continuing regulation and control of the General Directorate during and after the 1990s. Despite the discourse of decreasing the bureaucratic load of the institution this new situation created new constraints to the social workers and discontinuity of the services as the services that were provided were limited with the time of the projects and the finances of the Toplum Merkezleri depended on the ability of each social worker to find donors from the local sources.

The ideological shift from government to governance in the 1990s resulted in the state becoming a partner with civil society. This study through the accounts of the social workers aimed to understand the reflections of appropriation of this new

model in the social services sector in Turkey which had been since its establishment regarded as in the realm of the volunteers and donors.

While the perceptions of the clients of those institutions are missing in this study, it is possible to conclude that within the new bureaucratic structure the efficiency and dynamism claims are experienced as short-sighted and insecure. The constraints and the vulnerabilities on the other hand can be claimed to be a consequence of the partnership structure in which the power relationships limit the employees and clients of bureaucracy from multiple sources.

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