

AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF COLLABORATION: REFLECTING ON THE
ASSEMBLAGE OF PROJECTS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN TURKEY

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ASSEMBLAGE OF PROJECTS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN TURKEY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Öznur İlke İmer, certify that

- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
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ABSTRACT

An Ethnography of Collaboration: Reflecting on the Assemblages of Projects for Gender Mainstreaming in Turkey

This thesis examines the establishment and implementation of gender mainstreaming (GM) projects enabled by the collaboration between the civil society, public and private sector in Turkey and the new dynamics they create. This study, which aims to observe how gender equality is (re)framed in different contexts and how collaboration is practiced, is based on participant observation carried out in GM activities, and in-depth interviews conducted with actors who play an active role in the establishment of this terrain. First, the thesis introduces a normative framework that includes the new development paradigm, the new configuration of capitalism, and project feminism, with a focus on Turkey's interaction with this framework. In other words, while illuminating the complex, intertwined processes that contribute to the formation of gender mainstreaming, it proposes to analyze this terrain through this framework and emphasizes the specificity of the Turkish case. Then, it discusses the conflicts that have occurred in the contact zones where different actors with different agendas come together as well as the historical background of these conflicts, how they have been resolved, and the new dynamics that have emerged. Finally, the thesis examines the design phase of the projects, the construction of the trainings, and the roles of the trainers while revealing the informal processes that are not included in the public documents but ensure the formation and continuation of the projects. In sum, this thesis follows the movement of gender within the boundaries drawn by a paradigm that has become dominant today and the questions it produces.

ÖZET

İş Birliğinin Etnografisi: Türkiye’de Toplumsal Cinsiyeti Ana Akımlaştırma Projeler Üzerine Düşünmek

Bu tez Türkiye’de sivil toplum, özel sektör ve kamu iş birliğine dayanan toplumsal cinsiyeti ana-akımlaştırma projelerin kurulumunu, hayata geçirilişini ve oluşturduğu yeni dinamikleri incelemektedir. Toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin farklı bağlamlarda nasıl (yeniden) çerçevelendiğini ve iş birliğinin nasıl deneyimlendiğini gözlemlemeyi hedefleyen bu çalışma, toplumsal cinsiyeti ana-akımlaştırma etkinliklerinde gerçekleştirilen katılımcı gözleme ve bu alanın kurulmasında etkin rol oynayan aktörlerle yapılan derinlemesine görüşmelere dayanmaktadır. Tez ilk olarak, yeni kalkınma paradigmasını, kapitalizmin yeni konfigürasyonunu ve proje feminizmini içeren normatif bir çerçeve sunmakta ve Türkiye’nin bu çerçeve ile olan ilişkisine odaklanmaktadır. Bir başka deyişle, toplumsal cinsiyeti ana-akımlaştırma fenomeninin oluşumuna katkı sağlayan çetrefilli, birbirinin içine geçmiş süreçleri aydınlatırken, bu çerçeve aracılığıyla analiz yapmayı önermekte ve Türkiye’nin durumunun özgünlüğünü vurgulamaktadır. Ardından, farklı gündemlere sahip farklı aktörlerin bir araya geldiği temas bölgelerinde oluşan çatışmaları, bu çatışmaların tarihsel arka planını, nasıl çözümlendiğini ve oluşan yeni dinamikleri ele almaktadır. Son olarak tez, projelerin tasarım aşamasını, eğitimlerin kurgulanışını ve eğitmenlerin rollerini mercek altına alarak kamuya açık dokümanlarda yer almayan ancak projelerin oluşumunu ve devamını sağlayan enformel süreçleri ortaya koymaktadır. Özetle bu tez, toplumsal cinsiyetin bugün baskın hale gelmiş bir paradigmanın çizdiği sınırlar içindeki hareketini ve ürettiği soruları izlemektedir.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AÇEV	Mother-Child Education Foundation (<i>Anne Çocuk Eğitim Vakfı</i>)
AKP	Justice and Development Party (<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i>)
ANT	Actor-Network Theory
ARDE	Annual Review of Development Effectiveness
BADV	Business Against Domestic Violence (<i>İş Dünyası Aile İçi Şiddete Karşı</i>)
BIST	Borsa İstanbul
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGFT	Corporate Governance Forum of Turkey
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
ETCEP	Promoting Gender Equality in Education Project (<i>Eğitimde Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitliğinin Geliştirilmesi Projesi</i>)
EU	European Union
GAD	Gender and Development
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
İKD	Progressive Women's Association (<i>İlerici Kadınlar Derneği</i>)
KİD	Corporate Communicators Association (<i>Kurumsal İletişimciler Derneği</i>)

KİH+YÇ	Women for Women’s Human Rights-New Ways (<i>Kadının İnsan Hakları Yeni Çözümler Derneği</i>)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KADEM	The Women and Democracy Association (<i>Kadın ve Demokrasi Derneği</i>)
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual/agender +
MOCEP	Mother-Child Education Program (<i>Anne Çocuk Eğitim Programı</i>)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SU Gender	Sabancı University Gender and Women's Studies Center for Excellence
TESEV	Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (<i>Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı</i>)
TNC	Transnational Corporation
TUSİAD	Turkish Industry and Business Association (<i>Türk Sanayicileri ve İş İnsanları Derneği</i>)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNPFA	United Nations Population Fund
WEPs	Women Empowerment Principles
WID	Women in Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Fragment: Posing the Problem

A series of male clubs - usually, as Virginia Woolf points out in Three Guineas, distinguished by their own costumes and uniforms – that embrace parliament, the courts, political parties, the military and police, universities, workplaces, trade unions, public (private) schools, exclusive clubs, from all of which women are excluded or to which they are mere auxiliaries.

- Carole Pateman¹

On 20th March 2021, Turkey’s Presidential Decree announced the withdrawal from the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, better known as the Istanbul Convention. Although the emphasis on the importance of the Istanbul Convention for protecting gender rights in Turkey was made by diverse groups -including feminist circles of various sorts, LGBTQIA+ activists, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations-, the government of Turkey has decided to quit the convention. Lawyer Muharrem Balcı, who has published a book titled “Protecting People and Family from the Istanbul Convention” gave his opinion to the Anadolu Agency² and argued that the convention has a hidden aim of incorporating concepts of Western secular civilization into the contracting countries’ policies that will eventually distort the family structure of Turkish culture³. His stance against Istanbul Convention is emblematic of certain conservative circles in Turkey, including the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) and some maternalist women’s organizations⁴, which

¹ (Pateman, 1988, p. 210).

² Anadolu Agency is a state-run news agency headquartered in Ankara, Turkey.

³ <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/tartismalarin-odagindaki-istanbul-sozlesmesi/1924988>

⁴ Rather than demanding gender equality, these groups advocate the necessity of the reassurance of the feminine functions and roles of women (Sancar, 2011).

embrace the notion of culture as a closed and monolithic entity, as if Turkish culture and its family structure can have a homogeneous locality. Although representation of the West as a threat to national values traced back to the early Republican period⁵, this backlash towards gender rights can be better understood when the collaborative activities for promoting gender equality in Turkey are analyzed because, as I argue in this thesis, growing alliances between national and international, public and private establishments for gender mainstreaming (GM) undermine the Turkish government's sovereignty by challenging the ideologies that underpin the government as well as the idea of the nation-state. Furthermore, as I will show, the Turkish government's attitude toward GM combined with 'the new global order' discourse pushes gender rights advocates to collaborate more with corporations and transnational agencies, resulting in changing the geometries of power. Since collaborations gather a diverse set of actors who have different agendas and positions of power, they influence how GM is framed and carried out while creating new actors, new agendas, and new institutional structures. Nevertheless, in "public transcripts" of GM, the prolific relations, networks, practices, and sensitivities that make, implement, and negotiate those transcripts often remain invisible (Babül, 2017; Scott, 1990, p. 2). Thus, in this study, I aim to make these processes visible by asking what GM is doing and what diverse actors are doing with GM, rather than approaching it from a developmental gaze i.e., in terms of its success and failure. I argue that understanding the various responses toward GM and what GM does do necessitates thinking together about both the material-semiotic worlds that collaboration produce and their effects on the conceptualization of gender, and its performances.

⁵ The West has always been "a source of frustration" for the Turkish national identity as well as "an object of desire" (Ahiska, 2003, p. 351). For detailed information see (Ahiska, 2003; Keyder, 2021).

Gender mainstreaming (GM) first appeared at the Fourth World Conference in Beijing in 1995 as “an organizational strategy to bring a gender perspective to all aspects of institution’s policy and activities, through building gender capacity and accountability” (de Waal, 2006; Reeves & Baden, 2002; United Nations, 1996). This conference was celebrated as a success of transnational feminism by many feminists around the world (Sancar, 2011). For Serpil Sancar, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)* and the *Beijing Action Plan* forms the basis of the global women’s movement that developed and gained strength in the 1990s and contributed to defining women’s rights politics as a universal and common value (2011). According to Uçan Çubukçu, after the UN Declaration of Beijing, the Turkish Social Service, and Children Protection Institution “issued an ordinance for Women’s Shelters mandating that all counseling centers and shelters should be organized by the legislation”; and this was a “critical breaking point” for the struggle against violence when the ordinance accompanied by the law number 4320 for the Protection of the Family (2020, p. 118). For some feminists, on the other hand, GM policies instrumentalize feminist demands and ideas rather than actualizing them (Koray, 2011; Özüğurlu, 2012). These policies have been criticized for contributing to the *neo-liberalization of feminism* that is incorporating feminist ideas and values into the neo-liberal rationality (Roberts, 2015; Roberts & Soederberg, 2012; Rottenberg, 2014).

Despite these critiques, and besides the opposition politics of grassroots movements, GM appears as a widespread strategy for promoting gender equality around the globe including in Turkey. The human resources units of corporations have been working hard to communicate with gender experts to organize gender equality training programs in workplaces, to monitor and report corporation’s

concrete actions on GM; civil society organizations have been buckling down to raise awareness on gender equality through organizing seminars and workshops in institutions, to develop programs to educate the trainers and employees; the research centers of universities have been chasing funds to conduct research on gender equality, have been involving in EU projects and advocacy activities to create pressure on policymakers for building gender-sensitive legislations. In other words, diverse groups including academics, white-collar employees, and activists have been working together for institutional change and social transformation in terms of gender equality while mentioning the need for collaboration more than ever.

However, this collaboration is also besieged with a variety of criticisms. Both many human rights defenders and critical scholars specializing in gender, development, and political economy accuse collaborators of being in league with the devil known as the capitalist market-economy⁶ (Raman, 2007; Roberts, 2015; Roberts & Soederberg, 2012; Welker, 2009). Even though they contribute to their fields in a variety of ways and have an important point to make, they overlook the nuances of collaboration in the context of the glocalization⁷ (Robertson, 2014). It is unfortunate, but also true that in terms of representing collaboration and GM as given and monolithic, their approach resembles how the Turkish government represents gender and culture. In *Seeing Like a State*, James C. Scott (1998) shows how “state simplifications and utopian schemes” ignore the practices that are “carried out in spatially and temporally unique settings” which produce indeterminate and mutable ends (p. 318). In this sense, criticisms based on *abstract knowledge* that results in

⁶ For instance, Hester Eisenstein (2005) calls this collaboration a “dangerous liaison” between feminism and capitalism while for Nancy Fraser (2012) women’s participation in the labor force itself serves capitalism that essentially contradicts with feminist ideals of equality.

⁷ Glocalization is a term coined by Roland Robertson (2014) to describe the local-global nexus as opposed to global/local distinction.

simplifications adopt the state's way of seeing whereas this study is an exercise of not seeing like a state (1998). It is of course unfair to put critical scholars and the government in the same equation, I just try to highlight a way of seeing that is common in both parties that in return weakens the power of the *situated knowledge* as well as ignoring the transient, and ambiguous nature of *becoming* that may disrupt "a political project aimed at social engineering" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Latour, 2005, p. 13; Scott, 1998). Seeing like a state has political and epistemological implications. Politically speaking, it appraises homogenous gatherings while producing an "other" as an object of hatred. Epistemologically speaking, the ideological gaze precludes asking further questions and investigating the unintended consequences of collaboration and GM. In addition to situating this thesis on an opposing axis, I hope to make epistemological and political contributions to the field. By following the *situated knowledge* of actors in this terrain and portraying various parties' diverse representations of GM, I attempt to identify gaps in the *abstract knowledge* produced about GM whilst also disturbing their hegemony (Mosse, 2005; Scott, 1998). In line with this, in this thesis, I develop counterarguments regarding three distinct positions that I call, the conservative, the instrumental, and the critical⁸. The conservative position that is materialized in the arguments of the government and the maternalist women's organizations such as KADEM assumes that international agreements, projects, and regulations lead to cultural corruption by integrating foreign standards into the Turkish culture. In this study, by analyzing the

⁸ I borrow the terms 'instrumental' and 'critical' from David Mosse, who distinguishes two dominant approaches in anthropology of development (2005). Mosse employs the term 'instrumental' to describe a specific approach to development policy based on the belief that policy can solve problems and directly shape how development is carried out. He demonstrates in his comprehensive book *Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice* that development practice is not driven by policy, but rather by certain informal practices such as brokerage, mediation, and so on. On the other hand, he utilizes the term 'critical' to describe critical policy views as a hegemonic apparatus concealing hidden purposes of dominance and bureaucratic power. This approach, according to Mosse, ethnographically blind.

data coming from my fieldwork, I will show that standards are not conveyed as they are, instead, they are in constant alteration at the operational level. This research also challenges the instrumental position that is appropriated by the executives of the collaborative activities who believe that policy can solve problems and directly shapes how practice is done. My findings reveal that GM is not only driven by the policy but is enabled through practices of mediation. Lastly, I object to the critical position that reproduces meta-narratives by ignoring the *situated knowledge* embodied and produced at the operational level. The argument that GM converts political problems into technical matters is one of these narratives that should be addressed with caution because GM activities are not homogenous and require constant scrutiny.

I find GM activities based on collaboration intriguing since there is no consensus among feminism(s) on the subject and definition of feminism as well as the indicators of gender equality. Here, I am referring to the debates over whether gender is an innate or constructed⁹ category, its relationship to other forms of hierarchies, and strategies for overcoming patriarchy¹⁰ (Ahiska, 2011; Savran, 2011; Sirman, 2011). Activities that bypass questions on the ontology of feminism are worth studying to comprehend how collaboration has been sustained, what unintended consequences have emerged and what is at stake. The matter of concern

⁹ This discussion heated up after Judith Butler (2006) wrote *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* in 1990, in which Butler argued that what we define as sex has already been gendered. Because sex is constructed through language, it is not a natural phenomenon with its own truth in the same way that gender does. Nonetheless, Butler claims that by separating the two, feminism has made sex a-priori, pre-cultural, and created its own *regime of truth*.

¹⁰ This is my takeaway from discussions held by feminist circles at gatherings as well as observations of debates on social media. For instance, one of the topics we discussed recently at *Feminist Mekan*- a meeting place for the women's movement and feminists since 2008- was what we understand from patriarchy: is it solely a gender regime or a broader system with racial and capitalist components, and if so, how to combat it. Additionally, while I was writing my thesis, the debates on trans-exclusionary radical feminism were becoming increasingly heated both across the globe and in Turkey via twitter that precipitated discriminatory discourses.

becomes more urgent when the conjuncture of Turkey is considered because violence against women and violations of LGBTQIA+ rights are getting accelerated despite all these activities. The picture described by Pateman in 1988, is more or less valid for Turkey today. The *Women's Participation in High-Level Decision Making* project carried out by TESEV in partnership with Swedish Consulate General found out that in 2017, the percentage of women municipal council members and mayors was only 10,7%; in 2018, the percentage of women parliamentarians was 17% while the percentage of women in Turkey's ministries was 7,8% (Akdoğan, 2019). Besides the low rates in women's participation in decision making mechanisms, Turkey has one of the largest gender gaps in employment compared to other countries in the world (İzdeş, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2017). According to İzdeş, especially after the 2000s, structural obstacles to women's participation in the labor force were reinforced due to the conservative politics and changing market structures (2020). Neo-liberal regulations of global capitalism coupled with the "family-oriented ideology" of the ruling party resulted in a decrease of employment opportunities for women and forced them back to unpaid domestic labor or low-paid jobs (İzdeş, 2020, p. 100; Çubukçu 2020). A survey conducted in 2014 within the scope of the *Business Against Domestic Violence* project revealed that 75% of white-collar working women in Turkey have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime (Ararat, 2020). One of my interlocutors, who was in charge of carrying out this project, stated that the survey they conducted aimed to understand the barriers to women's participation in the labor force, and when it was discovered that domestic violence was one of the most significant barriers, she ensured that "domestic violence is, therefore, a business issue". Similarly, the former president of the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TÜSİAD) has denoted

that the “policies to prevent violence against women should be included in the corporate policies of the companies” (Kaslowski, 2020, p. x). These, on the one hand, illustrate that GM cannot be studied without taking companies’ new role as ‘social welfare providers’ into account; on the other hand, make us question, how come, despite such efforts, Pateman’s depiction remains unchanged.

Meltem Ahıska (1994) writes that since women’s memory, women’s language, women’s bodies, and sexuality are denied within the patriarchal tradition, “we [women] are at the risk of going back to the beginning at the point where we think we have gone the farthest as confirmation of Kristeva’s cyclical understanding of time, which she considers to be unique to women”¹¹ (p. 32). Likewise, when we look at the picture I have tried to portray, we observe this revolving. Even though there is this huge amount of effort for undoing the gender regime, the social reality more or less remains the same with different facades. In this thesis, I scrutinize the collaboration that emerged in partnership-based projects for GM within a paradigm that has become dominant today, and I contend that the questions arising from these zones may contribute to changing the ways in which we code problems (Foucault, 1984; Gilson, 2014; Pratt, 1991). I draw on the assumption that delving into the mechanisms of power can reveal how they work and any leaks that may disrupt their operation. However, far from making an ambitious suggestion, I frame this work as a novice attempt.

Throughout my research, it became clear to me that GM is inextricably linked to what I refer to as ‘the new global order’¹², which is a discourse materialized in the

¹¹ “Kristeva'nın kadınlara özgü saydığı döngüsel zaman anlayışının bir kanıtı sayılabilecek şekilde, dönüp dönüp aynı yerden başlıyoruz. En ileri gittiğimizi düşündüğümüz noktada en başa dönme riskini yaşıyoruz” (Ahıska, 1994, p.32).

¹² I employ this phrase as an analytical tool to describe an intended order manifested in reports and practices produced by intergovernmental organizations such as the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

new development paradigm and the new configuration of capitalism. However, while this discourse is feeding into GM activities in Turkey, these activities are not determined by this discourse per se, there is an excess that reflects the material and semiotic world produced by the collaborative activities for GM in Turkey. Thus, this thesis evolved as an investigation of overlapping features as well as the excesses of GM activities in Turkey compared to the normative framework of ‘the new global order’ to understand the consequences created in the light of collaboration. Since GM is an ongoing process that influences work habits, institutional structures, and conceptualization of gender by assembling projects, allocating resources, and generating encounters in Turkey, it paves the way for the emergence of new dynamics by establishing cooperation between civil society, academia, public and private sector at various scales including international and domestic ones. The hallmark of the process is not only bringing actors who have divergent motivations and interests together but also incorporating pedagogical, ethical, and political processes into the institutions as well as emanating the market rationale into the non-market forces. By conducting a multi-sited ethnography on collaboration-based activities designed for GM in institutions, I aim to analyze the new dynamics that have emerged from these processes while challenging taken for granted assumptions. Therefore, instead of building research based on a meta-critical analysis of GM, I ask how to frame GM, what GM does do, and what diverse actors do with GM¹³. By following these questions, in my thesis, I aim to shed light on the operationalization of GM activities in Turkey and their unintended consequences. Nevertheless, it is not fair to argue that this study will not benefit from the critique. However, rather than

¹³ I formulated these questions inspired by questions Sara Ahmed asked in *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (2012). At the very beginning of the book, Ahmed asks: “What does diversity do? What are we doing when we use the language of diversity?” (2012, p. 1).

using the critique as a weapon, I am willing to use it as a creation technique to “make the familiar unfamiliar” (Eriksen, 2010). In other words, I use it as a tool to illuminate things that are pretty much discussed and taken for granted. While I am engaging with certain positions through a critical lens, I think about a situation together with those positions. This makes this work collaborative in terms of producing knowledge in relation to others.

Detailed scrutiny of these collaborative activities reveals that neither an enclosed culture free from the influence of others nor a global logic capable of dominating all aspects of social life can exist. A close look at GM activities in Turkey also challenges categorical divisions between the East and the West, global and local, policy and practice, on which the ‘developmentalist fallacy’ is based (Dussel, 1997; Mosse, 2005). In fact, giving attention to collaboration itself enables us to think beyond these categorical boundaries. Showing the polyphony and multi-temporality, I believe, frees us from the dualities imposed by modernity and able us to unveil how some questions persist, and how they interact with new ones.

1.2 Theoretical and methodological affinities

To follow these new connections, another notion of social has to be devised. It has to be much wider than what is usually called by that name, yet strictly limited to the tracing of new associations and to the designing of their assemblages.

- Bruno Latour¹⁴

Long before I applied for a master’s degree, I was having trouble with clear-cut judgments and monolithic representations. Attempts to explain the “social” through a modernist and positivist lens, which reduces heterogeneous engagements and infinite possible configurations into a single formula, was irritating me tremendously. All I

¹⁴ (Latour, 2005, p. 7).

know was that this hegemonic approach determines how we perceive and live today, as well as being the primary cause of the planet's hierarchical constitution. To be honest, my main focus inevitably has been on the approach, regardless of what I will work on. Thus, I frame this thesis as a methodological experiment of a novice scholar who was curious about various forms of political action and change, especially on gender relations. In the words of John Law (2009), "theory is embedded and extended in empirical practice, and the practice itself is necessarily theoretical" (2009, p. 141). In line with this, before explaining how I study GM, in this section, I will elaborate on the theoretical and methodological accumulation that moves this thesis.

In one of her fieldworks, Anna L. Tsing (2021) inquiries about the meaning of freedom for mushroom pickers and she nicely summarizes her experience in the field as "the more I asked about, the more unfamiliar it became to me" (p. 75). Her words made me question what we know and what we do not know about gender mainstreaming. Activists, politicians, and white-collar employees are now mentioning GM more than ever, reporting some numbers, and appropriating it as an objective to be fulfilled. On the other hand, as I pointed out, these efforts are faced with a wide range of criticisms wherein they are generally represented as a smokescreen that hides the real intentions of institutions. Since those representations take GM and actors of various sorts as given and monolithic, I was having a hard time being convinced. Therefore, rather than taking GM as given, I attempted to comprehend how it is made by constant work of collaboration between diverse parties at diverse scales, how it travels, and what happens during this travel. In order to do this, I utilized post-colonial theory, actor-network theory (ANT), feminist and queer critiques which drew on "post-structuralist relationality" (Law, 2009, p. 145).

In his seminal essay “Traveling Theory”, Edward Said (1982) puts forward that ideas and theories travel as well as humans. Said conceptualizes theories as a response to a specific historical and social situation, and he argues that since the transportation of the theory involves processes of institutionalization and representation, the theory gets transformed while it is traveling. He asks, how theories travel, and what happens in that process of traveling. According to him, “misreadings”, “acceptance”, and “resistances” are part of the historical transfer of ideas, and they need to be recorded (1982, p. 196, 205). Similarly, Dipesh Chakrabarty (2008) underlines that every transfer of economic, cultural, and political theory or model involves “a problem of translation” because each context has its own thought categories and world visions shaped by its particular histories and particular power relations (p. 17).

Concepts, according to Mieke Bal (2002), are also traveling and in the same line of reasoning with Said and Chakrabarty, she highlights the difference that is produced during the process of transference. This difference, actually, is one of the things that makes concepts dynamic; throughout the travel, the meaning of concepts constantly changes and is transformed due to the contextual differences. Thus, interrogating the travel of a concept carries the potential to illuminate the historical and contextual differences as well. This is why in *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*, Bal writes, “the concept is also deployed to answer persistent questions about historical difference” (2002, p. 15). According to her, concepts’ meaning emerges from the way they are used, translated, and appropriated (2002, p. 24; Neumann & Nünning, 2012). In the words of Law, “To translate is to make two words equivalent. But since no two words are equivalent, translation also implies betrayal: *traduction, trahison*” (2009, p. 144). Thus, translation is not just

about making terms equivalent but also rearranging, linking, and modifying them (Law, 2009).

Nevertheless, according to Bal, concepts are dynamic not only because their meaning changes during their circulation, but they are already “dynamic in themselves” (2002, p. 11). To put it differently, Bal conceptualizes concepts as performative, not just descriptive because, for her, concepts create an intersubjective field by enabling dialogue between different contexts, they “construct and change the very objects they analyze” and they link a moment and a context “to earlier moments, to earlier epistemological contexts” (Neumann and Nünning, 2012, p. 3, 4). She indicates that by defining “what a particular concept may mean, we gain insight into what it can do”¹⁵ (Bal, 2002, p. 11

Furthermore, scholars I have mentioned; Said, Chakrabarty, and Bal evaluate the performance of a theory or a concept from a Foucauldian gaze that underlines the intertwined relationship between knowledge and power (Foucault, 1977). Birgit Neumann and Ansgar Nünning (2012), write “travel processes are implicated in the interaction between knowledge and power” (p. 8). Thus, they emphasize the importance of paying attention to the “role of agents and mediators involved in the process” of transportation too (Kamal, 2018, p. 135). They claim that “the social situatedness of agents is just as important as the more general academic contexts in which concepts are developed and disseminated” (2012, p. 9). Similarly, Doris Bachmann-Medick (2012) underlines the political dimension of translation by

¹⁵ I find what Bal indicates very essential in terms of recognizing the performances of concepts which was first suggested by J. L. Austin (2009). The distinction between the ‘constatives’ and ‘performatives’ he made was a distinction between a statement that indicates whether something is true or false and a statement that performs, for example through saying “I do”, getting married is how a statement can perform¹⁵ (Nuhrat, 2018). Sara Ahmed (2012) expands Austin’s analysis of speech act by inventing a term called “institutional speech acts” to denote speech acts “on behalf of an *institution*” (2012, p. 54). In *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, Ahmed (2012), thus, traces how ‘diversity’ performs as an institutional speech act. For a detailed account of Austin’s analysis of speech acts see *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (Butler, 1997).

asserting that the process involves “implicit strategies”, “claims to power and hegemony”, “manipulations and acts of violence”¹⁶ (p. 39).

In line with these and the strong emphasis of post-colonial theory on translation, I was curious about how GM is translated into new terrains, especially how it gets rearranged, linked, modified, and materialized through its circulation. As it is emphasized, translation cannot be thought of without recognizing the power dynamics, thus, I must have had a strong affiliation with historically and geographically grounded power relations. In that sense, I utilized the post-colonial corpus which provides a striking critique of modernity by demonstrating its relationship with colonialism¹⁷. Furthermore, I drew on the feminist theory that has produced “a body of knowledge of gendering as a social process” which provides, in the words of Ahmed, “critical insight into the mechanisms of power as such and, in particular, how power can be redone at the moment it is imagined as undone” (2012, p. 13; Butler, 2009). In order to comprehend the historically specific processes of gender signification (Ahiska, 2000), I specifically utilized works by feminists of color which offer a critique of Eurocentric representations of women (Mahmood, 2011; Mohanty, 1988; Narayan, 1997) and performativity theories (Butler, 2006;

¹⁶ “Traveling theory” and “traveling concept” became influential in humanities and social sciences, they opened up a new field of research. Feminism has been studied as a traveling theory in which ‘gender’ emerges as a traveling concept in various contexts (Kamal, 2018; Millán, 2016; Olson, 2012). Cecilia M. B. Sardenberg (2007) studies the translation of ‘gender’ to planning and policy in Brazil. She argues that in Brazil “the concept of gender has been used in ways that fit the perspectives of competing institutions and individuals” and this makes women’s own experiences and demands in feminist struggles less visible (Cornwall et al., 2007, p. 7). In “The Traveling of ‘Gender’ and its Accompanying Baggage”, Margara Millán (2016) interrogates how ‘gender’ is used in the Mexican context and she finds a difference between academics and activists in terms of using the concept ‘gender’; while activists have adopted transliteration, academics had preferred to use the word ‘gender’ in English. According to her, this is reflecting the power relations between them. As the last example, Hala Kamal (2018) studies ‘gender’ as a traveling concept in Egypt and she concludes that “in the Egyptian context, the journey of ‘gender’ as a traveling concept is significant in the way it illuminates the importance of socio-cultural and political contexts in resisting, settling, and/or adopting traveling concepts” (p. 144).

¹⁷ Specifically, I have attempted to keep Gurminder K. Bhambara’s (2007) points in *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination*, James Morris Blaut’s (2000) arguments in *Eight Eurocentric Historians*, and Enrique Dussel’s (1991) accounts in *Eurocentrism* in my mind.

West & Zimmerman, 1987) that queer feminists drew on as well as queer critiques (O'Brien, 2013; Rich, 2003).

Methodologically speaking, when I was unsure how to study and frame GM, reading works of actor-network theory (ANT)¹⁸ and “new ethnography of development” significantly aided me (Latour, 2002, 2005; Mosse, 2005). I benefit from the method of ANT while focusing on how GM is assembled, how it generates certain relations and produces material effects. It assisted me in capturing “post-structuralist relationality” as one of the most prominent sources for ANT¹⁹ (Law, 2009, p. 145). Nonetheless, the importance of ANT, especially for this research, is its definition of the social, as it also clarifies how to capture it. *In Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor Network Theory*, Bruno Latour (2013) underlines the necessity of redefining the social since no social phenomenon is a stabilized state of affair which might be mobilized by an encounter with another phenomenon, but a social phenomenon itself is a product of various assemblages. Therefore, he defines social not as a domain or “a specific type of ingredient that is supposed to differ from other materials” such as biological, economical, organizational et cetera, but as “a movement during a process of assembling” (p. 1). This definition is coming from the

¹⁸ Although it is called a theory, as one of the ANT practitioners Law underlines that it is “not a theory” but an approach that is “grounded in empirical case studies”, with the purpose of telling stories about how relations assemble or do not assemble, rather than drawing a social explanation (2009, p. 141). According to John Law and Vicky Singleton (2013), there is no one form of doing ANT rather it is a “sensibility, a set of empirical interferences in the world, a worldly practice or a craft” (p. 486). Therefore, even though ANT has originally developed in a discipline called Science, Technology and Society (STS), it overlaps with other intellectual traditions, this is why Law prefers to talk about ANT as a form of material semiotics (2009, 2019). As he puts forward, the actor-network approach like other material-semiotic approaches aims to describe “the enactment of materially and discursively heterogeneous relations that produce and reshuffle all kinds of actors including objects, subjects, human beings, machines, animals, “nature”, ideas, organizations, inequalities, scale and sizes, and geographical arrangements” (2009, p. 141). Thus, ANT has some ontological and epistemological premises, however as it is seen, it is not a fixed or enclosed approach, on the contrary, it is open to collaboration, multiplicity, and change (Law, 2019).

¹⁹ According to Law, “actor networks” for example, can be viewed as “scaled-down versions of Michel Foucault's discourses or epistemes” or “an empirical version of Gilles Deleuze's nomadic philosophy” (2009, p. 145; Deleuze and Guattari, 1988 in Law, 2009). We could talk about “actant rhizomes” instead of “actor networks”, says Latour (Latour & Crawford, 1993).

Latin root *socius* which signifies “someone following someone else, a follower, an associate” (p. 108). The meaning expresses the method of sociology. When social is defined as “a type of connection between things that are not themselves social”, sociology can no longer be identified as a “science of the social” rather it becomes to refer “tracing of associations” which means following the actors themselves (p. 5).

The counterpart of this approach in development studies is the “new ethnography of development” as named by David Mosse (2005). David Lewis and David Mosse, (2006) put forward that:

The “order” of development never derives from the prior logic of policy but emerges from the enrolments and interactions of networks or actors. Following Latour (2000), development can be seen as requiring the constant work of *composition* in which heterogeneous entities (people, idea, events and things) are tied together by translation of one kind or another into the material and conceptual order of a successful project (p. 5).

Employing ANT enabled development anthropologists to unveil networks in which development is designed and maintained, indicating that “the apparent order of development is always parasitic on the other orders that it conceals” (p. 5). Rather than regarding development as an all-pervading order, new ethnographers of development insist on “the primacy of contingent practice” (Lewis & Mosse, 2006, p. 3). As a corollary, this approach contributes to the examination of new procedures, institutions, concepts, and actors that “collect and recollect the social” (Latour, 2005, p. 11).

In sum, these theoretical and methodological accumulations were highly influential in generating my gaze, research questions, approaches, and methodologies, which are shaped and reshaped throughout the field and writing process. In this thesis, following these insights, rather than accepting GM as given, I attempt to comprehend how it is assembled through constant work of collaboration between diverse parties at various scales. Now, I turn to my own research conduct.

1.3 On research conduct: How to study Gender Mainstreaming

According to Tsing, universal aspirations travel across differences and distance, and “we can take this travel as an ethnographic object” (2005, p. 7). GM, as one of these universal aspirations, is moving from one place and time to another and during its circulation, it mobilizes actors, ideals, and meanings; makes and remakes connections while probably disrupting others. In this research, I attempted to take its travel as the object of my study. However, if this travel is not concrete and empirically given, how I would be studying it ethnographically? I tailored this question from the article written by Michel-Rolph Trouillot, in which he asks how to ethnographically study state in the age of globalization (2003). Since there is no necessary geographical or institutional site of the state that can be fixed, he proposes to conceptualize the state as a set of processes rather than an apparatus. Thus, for him, studying the state is possible by interrogating its practices and effects. In her book *Friction*, Tsing (2005) poses a similar question: “How does one do an ethnography of global connections?” (p. xi). She claims that she found the answer by focusing on “zones of awkward engagement, where words mean something different across a divide even as people agree to speak” (2005, p. xi). This time, I ask, if GM has no topos at all, where should I have to go for capturing its travel?

The answer revealed itself while I was attending every GM-related event that catches my eye. In these events, the existence of a multitude of actors and institutions which were intermingled was making me very anxious about how I should place and represent them. Then, I put this object of anxiety as the subject of this thesis rather than trying to escape from it. Therefore, in the chapters that follow, I specifically write about how the functioning of institutions and identities of diverse actors are becoming intertwined and how these new organizational forms influence

the ways in which handling the issues of gender. The uneasiness of not being able to put actors into the existing categories because the contours of their professional identities, job definitions, and responsibilities had grown increasingly blurred prompted me to think of GM as a part of a bigger network including a wide range of scales and processes. Then, I decided to conceptualize this network as the topos of GM.

To capture this network, I scrutinized a multitude of projects, seminars, workshops, conferences, trainings, and policy work aimed at changing the audience's ideas about gender equality and modifying the practices of institutions as well as conducting in-depth interviews with GM practitioners who play a central role in making this network. Through participant observation, I attempted to figure out the key actors and institutions for GM in Turkey as well as to understand the heterogeneity of this network. Due to the Covid 19, all gatherings were broadcast live over the internet, and I was able to attend GM activities more than I expected. Overall, I have participated in five gender equality trainings, six webinars, and three conferences between October 2020 to February 2022. I draw on my participation in events run by the UN Global Compact, the Corporate Governance Forum of Turkey, TUSİAD, the Corporate Communicators Association (KİD), gender and women's studies research centers of Kadir Has University and Sabancı University, non-profit organizations, and consulting agencies. The social construction of gender roles, mechanisms of discrimination, participation in the workforce and mechanisms of decision-making, violence against women, masculinities, the significance of research and data for gender equality, gender in the development agenda, gender in higher education and leadership, writing and managing gender-sensitive projects and policies for institutional change were all topics covered by these events.

Participating in the realms where a different set of actors with different agendas come together, sometimes collaborating and sometimes diverging enabled me to gain insight into the scope of GM, ongoing projects, diverse parties, their relationships with one another, and their various (re)presentations of GM. However, because activities held in corporations and government institutions were closed to the public, I was unable to attend trainings within these institutions, and when I requested entry, I was met with a confidentiality barrier. I was only able to attend public events and trainings, thus participant observation was insufficient for me to fully capture the unintended consequences of collaboration. Thus, in addition to participant observation, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with GM practitioners I met at the events, such as trainers, consultants, project organizers, and coordinators. I used purposeful sampling to communicate with people I thought would be appropriate for my research, and snowball sampling to contact people whom the interviewees directed me. I was especially interested in speaking with practitioners in organizations that had GM as central to their institutional mission. Through in-depth interviews, I attempted to comprehend actors' motivations and institutions' missions for involving in such activities, their experiences of collaboration, and the social life of projects. Especially, extensive interviews with Helin, Okan, Salih, Mariel, Elsa, Serap, Kemal, and Özlem²⁰ all of whom are GM practitioners allowed me to learn more about the main contestations, compromises, and negotiations that ensued at the operational level. I learned a lot from them both about their own stories and the organizations in which they inhabit. Since I believe their situated knowledge was considerably more representative than mine, I combined my observations with their

²⁰ I changed their names to ensure their anonymity.

arguments—in fact, some of my arguments are solely based on their accounts²¹. This is to say that the two pillars of the fieldwork were participant observation and in-depth interviews, each of which served a different purpose.

As I pointed out, my aim was to capture the network of GM, how it is assembled, and the consequences of the collaboration. Hence, instead of conducting an ethnography of an institution or of a predetermined group, I tried to comprehend GM by conducting an ethnography of collaboration, by following interconnections between institutions and diverse actors assembled for GM activities. Since I followed particular relations that give GM content and power, the ethnography I have conducted necessarily became “multi-sited” (Marcus, 1995). Mark-Anthony Falzon defines the essence of multi-sited research as “to follow people, connections, associations, and relationships across space” (2009, p. 2). As time passed, I became increasingly certain of focusing on a particular place or a group would not allow me to grasp how to frame GM and what it does because it was a very broad terrain that includes a wide range of topics and actors.

1.4 Researcher’s notes on the research experience

For describing my research experience, I appeal to the comments of Nurdan Gürbilek (2015) on Walter Benjamin's (2009) work, *One-way Street*:

From the very first sentence, the essayist [*Walter Benjamin*] finds himself at a crossroads: either he will treat his subject as something singular and unique, groping at it, becoming embedded there, risking disappearing there. Or he will associate it with other things, try to give it a wide angle, a context. The first is the path of immediate impression, of sensation, of experience: the essayist walks with unhurried attention on a path where he cannot predict exactly where to go in order to make his object speak in all its singularity. The second is the path of the concept: The essayist settles at a height where

²¹ Particularly, in chapter three, I made use of their situated knowledge gained via involvement in contact zones on a daily basis.

he can look at his object from a bird's eye view, a distance that scans the whole this time. Which way to go? ²² (p. 12).

Gürbilek puts it as a conundrum in which the writer must choose between two alternatives. Nevertheless, my experience of conducting research as well as the process of writing might be described as a constant going back and forth between these two. I first attended every GM-related event - at the time, I did not even call it GM - and tried to figure out what was going on in these spaces. Because GM covers such a broad range of topics, I was unsure how to narrow it down or connect it to a larger frame, thus felt disappeared periodically. While participating in these events, I was also reading literature on terms I encountered frequently, such as corporate social responsibility (CSR), global governance, development architectures, and so on. After a while of delving into each of them, I realized that I had begun to see connections. Yet, every time I came across anything new and became lost in it, I felt the same: the travail before an idea came up, before a new connection is found. In that sense, the research process including the writing was like a patchwork.

Then, once I felt more confident about what I am doing, I prepared a talk for the European Sociological Association-organized conference, titled *How to make sense, conceptualize, and study corporate social responsibility (CSR): Juxtaposition of gender right politics and CSR activities in Turkey*. In my presentation, I focused on conceptual and methodological approaches to CSR and their potential implications, as well as offering an alternative by demonstrating my empirical work. This conference enabled me to discuss my work with international academics, as

²² “Daha ilk cümleden kendini bir yol ayırımında bulur denemeci: Ya konusunu tekil ve benzersiz bir şey olarak ele alacak, onu el yordamıyla kurcalayacak, oraya gömülecek, orada kaybolmayı göze alacaktır. Ya da onu başka şeylerle ilişkilendirecek, ona geniş bir açı, bir bağlam kazandırmayı deneyecektir. Birincisi yakın izlenimin, duyumun, deneyimin yoludur: Nesnesini bütün tekilliğiyle konuşurabilmek için nereye çıkacağını tam kestiremediği bir patikada dalgın, telaşsız bir dikkatle yürür denemeci. İkincisi kavramın yolu: Nesnesine kuşbakışı bakabileceği bir yüksekliğe, tümeli tarayan bir mesafeye yerleşir bu kez denemeci. Hangi yoldan gitmeli [...]” (Gürbilek, 2015, p. 12).

well as rethink my subject in response to their feedback. I utilized feedback from my interlocutors as well when conducting the research. During the interviews, I shared my opinions and observations with the participants for making sure they have the opportunity to respond and object to my analyses. To epitomize, I tried to be open to the indeterminacy of the empirical world and as a result, my research questions and categories were challenged and evolved throughout the field process.

To say a few words on positionality, I must admit that from time to time, I tried to keep my feelings at bay as a feminist researcher, but it was a vain effort. I found a field note I wrote a long time ago just a few days before submitting this thesis:

Before my research topics were fully formulated, I was attending international and domestic seminars describing European Union projects on gender and recording conference presentations so that I could review them later. When I looked back at them, I was completely bewildered. Seeing the names and abbreviations of the countless initiatives and organizations, made me appalled. Yet, this horror was not simply the result of someone in the position of a novice researcher being terrified by the mess of its research objects and not understanding how to deal with it. My horror reflected the concerns of a feminist woman. I was finding myself trying to decipher the project's language, leaving aside the issues of patriarchy, justice, and injustice in the face of abbreviations that I have no idea what they mean. I needed to learn how much was this project funded by whom, on what collaborations, in which year the project's goals will be realized, and so on. Goals, reports, finances, organizations, and audits... All of this evocate a lot of questions and make me query where I stand. What is my position?

As it is clear in the note, my thesis and I were getting closer, as if we were inseparable parts of each other's becoming. Therefore, regarding positionality, I am going to suffice to say that I drew on the assumption that "objectivism and subjectivism are symmetrical expressions of the desire for a fulness that is ultimately impossible" (Stavrakakis, 1999, p. 41).

1.5 Organization of the thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters with the goal of reflecting on the assemblage of projects for gender mainstreaming in Turkey. The following brief chapter, Chapter 2, provides a synopsis of the thesis in order to smooth the transition to the main chapters and lay out the arguments. The first main chapter, Chapter 3, offers a framework through which GM can be understood in relation to global and corporate governance, new development architecture, corporate social responsibility, and project feminism. It aims to portray different sources of GM as well as its heterogeneous nature. Here, I introduce ‘the new global order’ discourse that redefines the role of corporations and intergovernmental organizations by developing new development and governance strategies. In this chapter, I argue that the assemblage of GM, as well as reactions to it, can be better analyzed within this normative framework.

In Chapter 4, I delve into the encounters between various parties enabled by GM activities for shedding light on the contestations, negotiations, and compromises. In the first part of this chapter, I focus on conflicts that arise in collaborative projects established with governmental institutions and how they are resolved. Here, I contend that the Turkish government’s anti-gender discourses must also be interpreted as an attempt to re-establish its power vis-à-vis “the West” and its proponents in Turkey. In addition, I show that anti-gender discourses of government workers force gender rights advocates to devise new strategies that influence gender conceptualizations and performances. The second part of the chapter, on the other hand, addresses the challenges that have ensued during collaboration with business where patriarchal norms are deeply embedded in its institutional structure. I intend to demonstrate various strategies developed by GM practitioners to achieve their stated

goals in order to argue that GM activities are more than a just smokescreen and generate new working habits, institutional structures, and job definitions that raise new questions. In the last part of this chapter, I discuss how the functioning of institutions and identities of diverse actors are becoming intertwined and how these new organizational forms influence the ways in which the issues of gender are addressed. In sum, in this chapter, by elaborating on how GM is perceived and contested, I attempt to emphasize that rather than achieving standardization, GM promotes diverse and conflicting meanings and practices.

In Chapter 5, the last main chapter, by focusing on the design of GM activities, I examine what GM practitioners do in addition to what is known about what they do. I draw on the idea that giving attention to the design phase would shed light on how GM is made and assembled. Here, I dive into the worlds of trainers, their motivations, and positions within this terrain and show that they are in charge of navigating this uneven terrain. In my research, trainers appear as translators who mediate various systems of knowledge and as those who make this terrain possible. In this chapter, I demonstrate that GM practitioners already design activities according to the conflicting meanings I portray in the previous chapter. By focusing on their method of translation and tool of pedagogy, I search the extent to which they may enact politics within these boundaries.

Lastly, the conclusion offers an overview of the thesis. This brief chapter introduces areas for further research while portraying the limitations of this study. In this chapter, I end the thesis with open-ended questions.

CHAPTER 2

PROLOGUE: A GLIMPSE OF THE ARGUMENTS

In Turkey, over the issue of gender, a partnership between the private sector, academia, and civil society has emerged as a force opposing the power of the government. Insomuch that one of my interlocutors once said:

If we consider a society's democratic process to have three pillars: the state, the private sector, and civil society; *collaboration* between civil society and the private sector can be the source of strength when the state's focus on gender is withdrawn and civil society is suppressed.²³

In this context, it is difficult to read the Turkish government's attack on gender as merely about gender. Through my research, I begin to think it also appears as a symptom of other discomforts of the Turkish government. GM and its transnational connotations seem to threaten the very existence of a nation-state. It challenges the "imagined communities" as Benedict Anderson calls it because it creates "contact zones" that are built on heterogenous networks²⁴ (Anderson, 2006; Pratt, 1991).

Mary Louise Pratt (1991) defines "contact zones" as social spaces where cultures of asymmetrical power relations "meet, clash, and grapple with each other" (p. 2). In this sense, the idea of the contact zone is meant to contrast with the imagined modern nation because it forges "absolute heterogeneity of meaning" through practices of collaboration, mediation, and transculturation (Pratt, 1991, p. 5). Thus, since GM is realized through these practices and creates contact zones, it appears as a threat because it is, on the one hand, unsettling the power of the government; while, on the

²³ "Üç ayaklı düşünürsek eğer bir toplumun demokrasi sürecini, işte devlet özel sektör ve sivil toplum diye, devletin şu anda biraz bu ayağı toplumsal cinsiyet odağından söylüyorum biraz geriye çekildiği noktada ve sivil toplumun bastırıldığı bir yerde özel sektörün sivil toplumla birlikte bir güç olabilme imkânı var"

²⁴ In the "Arts of Contact Zones", Mary Louise Pratt (1991) gives reference to Benedict Anderson and his well-known book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* for denoting that the idea of contact zone contradicts with three features that imagined communities built on: a finite boundary, a sovereign status, and "a deep horizontal comradeship" (Anderson, 1991, p. 15).

other, challenging the patriarchal relations that play a central role in building and reproducing nations. Therefore, this quotation reveals that GM touches on a very historical question of who is and will be the purveyor of power, whether the state or the market. Throughout the thesis, I am going to detail this historical question and aim to show that this abstract question is not even legitimate in the context of neo-liberal governance where in practice state and market are intertwined. I aim to demonstrate that the formula which associates state with the political affairs and the market with economic affairs is doomed to fail.

Moreover, a close look at collaborative activities for GM shows that the encounters between civil society and the private sector are also not without a hitch. On the contrary, actors in this terrain are much more diverse, with interests that sometimes overlap and sometimes clash, and thus they are in the constant act of contestation, negotiation, and compromise. Here, I appeal to the concept Tania Murray Li (1999) uses to define what hegemony is. According to Li, hegemony is “a terrain of struggle” rather than achieving consensus in a Gramscian sense (1999, p. 316). In other words, since hegemony always requires compromise and collaboration, it is not something to be imposed but to be worked out (Li, 1999; Mosse, 2005). Therefore, I argue that the contact zones that GM produces are terrains of struggle because these are the spaces where diverse actors who have different positions of power coexist in various degrees of tension. In the contact zones that GM produces, it is not possible to determine who is oppressed or oppressor. The power dynamics are constantly changing due to the contexts but what does not change is the tension between multiple systems of worldviews and knowledge. If we go back to the quote above, even though in this quote the government is represented as a power to be opposed, we, including the interlocutor,

know that in practice collaboration is also made with the government for GM sometimes because they are obliged to do so, sometimes for idealistic motives such as to change the stereotypical thoughts of the government workers, sometimes for using its sources. I claim that the focus needs to be on the collaboration itself rather than who is and will be the purveyor of power in a terrain where geometries of power constantly alter. As Tsing (2005) puts forward, collaboration is more than just sharing information and there's no reason to believe that collaborators have similar objectives. The collaboration draws attention away from the never-ending standoff between opposing interest groups, not because it implies that compromise is always on the horizon but because collaborations foster new interests and identities that not everyone benefits from them (Tsing, 2005). In other words, rather than simply repeating old conflicts, collaboration generates "new cultural and political configurations that change the arena of conflict" (Tsing, 2005, p. 161).

Since GM activities threaten not only the sovereignty of the Turkish government but also masculinity in general, focusing on GM's collaborative activities reveals that collaboration with corporations is fraught with difficulty. Illuminating these difficulties contributes to understanding the challenges that gender equality advocates face and how they try to manage them. In the same line of reasoning with Tsing, I try to show that while these processes of management results sometimes in making concessions on gender equality, they also create new institutional structures, new working habits, and new identities. Thus, in this thesis, I also elaborate on contestations that ensued in the collaboration with corporations, how they are resolved, and the unintended consequences of this process.

Methodologically speaking, instead of focusing on the artificial distinction between the public sector and the private sector, the state, and industry, as Latour

suggests, I am willing to “choose assemblies of spokespersons who bring” different worlds together, “during a single meeting, around a single table” (Latour, 2002, p. 42). Thus, by giving voice to actors who have been widely criticized by a group of people who believe that collaborative activities for GM are nothing more than a means of serving the market economy or a smokescreen. Many scholarships and policies still continue to portray GM as a monolithic notion whether it is *good or evil*. However, by observing and listening to actors I learned to see differently. Through listening to their responses to those criticisms as well as their urge to collaborate, I tried to understand how their ideas resonate with larger ideologies while figuring out the material-semiotic world they produce. By presenting their polyphony, I aim to encourage readers to think beyond the binary mode of thinking including the state and market, local and global, success and failure, but in large “beyond good and evil” (Nietzsche, 1886). To put it another way, instead of evaluating what is good or bad in these activities, I recommend conceptualizing them as world-building engagements. Tsing uses the phrase “world-making projects” to describe projects that unfold from practical activities of human and non-human conjunctly making lives; projects that alter our planet in the process (2015, p. 21, 22). Inspired by this phrase, to describe the material-semiotic worlds created by the contact zones I refer to them as world-building engagements. Rather than directly sustaining life as in world-making projects, these engagements generate new materialities by constantly redefining social categories. In this sense, I define GM activities as one of those world-building engagements because the close contact between civil society, academia, public, and private sector at various scales including international and domestic creates new work habits, new institutional structures, new

professional identities, new knowledge that in return affects the conceptualization of gender as well as its performances.

CHAPTER 3
FRAMING GENDER MAINSTREAMING: DIFFERENT WINDS
NAVIGATING THE SAIL

I have been observing GM for some time now and trying to situate it in a larger framework. First, I have associated it with the growing role of the private sector in dealing with social problems and regarded it as one of the inventions of corporate social responsibility (CSR). I later noticed that it first appeared in the development agenda as a response to transnational feminist critiques²⁵. Lastly, thanks to one of my interlocutors, I have decided to discuss it as a product of contingent processes that have been simultaneously woven together, rather than drawing causal explanations between them by using a deterministic approach. Helin, an executive at the social enterprise of a well-known NGO in Turkey who organizes gender equality training programs and consults corporations on GM said to me: “Different winds are navigating our sail.” She was mentioning the winds coming from “UN institutions, corporate social responsibility, feminist methodologies, and women’s struggle in Turkey”. Her remark helped me to understand the relationship between GM and what I call ‘the new global order’ discourse²⁶. I am referring to ‘the new global order’ as a discourse of the new development paradigm and the new configuration of capitalism and argue that the diverse motivations of diverse parties in engaging with GM and disputes between them can only be understood if this normative framework is critically analyzed. Therefore, before focusing on the praxis of the collaborative

²⁵ According to Jacqui True and Michael Mintrom, women’s organizations’ network mobilization across international and domestic has elevated gender inequality to the forefront of intergovernmental organizations and national governments’ policy agenda (2001).

²⁶ I use discourse in a Foucauldian sense, which refers to ways of constituting knowledge, as well as the social practices, forms of subjectivity, and power relations that such knowledge and their relationships entail (Foucault, 1982).

activities of GM in the next chapter, I am going to delve into ‘the new global order’ discourse that has been redefining the relationship between the public and private, the role of the states, and the civil society. To do so, I begin by examining various development paradigms; then I elaborate on the new configuration of capitalism and its relationship with the current development paradigm; and finally, I consider ‘project feminism’ and its relationship with GM in the current context.

3.1 ‘The new global order’ discourse as a normative framework

As Mosse (2005) puts forward, from the beginning of the 21st century, international development agencies have been working hard to discard “the signs of a colonial past or present-day commercial interest” (p. 1). As a response to critiques that call the global inequality and cultural dominance embedded in the concept of development itself into question, they have been appealing to theory as a key to remaining morally and politically viable (2005). In other words, to reinstate their legitimacy, they have been engaging with constant conceptual work and devoting their energy to generating the right policy models (2005). Although imagining a world without collaboration has never been a choice, development agencies have started to give specific attention to the idea of collaboration for building an alternative policy model to the former models that have been criticized because of their top-down approaches. It is not incidental that transnational corporations (TNCs), in this context, have become one of the main collaborators for international development, especially with the corporate social responsibility banner (Rajak, 2011). Corporations and international development agencies, rather than nation-states, are being recognized as new defenders and bearers of ‘the new global order’. What does it have to do with GM? How does one frame GM in this context? Could it

be portrayed as resulting from the impact of transnational feminists including feminist groups in Turkey? Can it be regarded as one of the techniques of neoliberal governance or of new development architecture? Is it a global or a domestic phenomenon? Throughout the chapter, I aim to show it is not one way or another, on the contrary, different orders at different scales coincide with one another and craft GM activities in Turkey. Therefore, in this chapter, I want to draw the normative framework in which these activities are envisioned and assembled.

3.2 Development in the age of partnership: Comprehensive Development

Framework (CDF) and its encompassing dream

The ideals of development are crystallized in the workings of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Bretton Woods Institutions²⁷, and Oxfam. They initially constituted themselves as agents who were responsible for planning, implementing, and monitoring development programs in the places regarded as ‘the Third World’ under the name of international aid (Babül, 2017). However, as Mosse (2005) and Lie (2015) draw attention, in the late 1990s, this approach started to dissolve, and consequently, the order of development is changed. As a response to the growing critics on the top-down approach of aid policies, agencies have been obliged to design a new aid architecture based on a bottom-up approach that hangs its hat on concepts such as ‘participation’ and ‘partnership’, and recipient institutions began to be represented as partners of development (Mosse, 2005; Lie, 2015). According to Lie (2015), the shift in the development order is marked by the donors’ withdrawal of direct operational activities and starting to provide technical assistance for good governance, capacity

²⁷ The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

building, and project design by funding and monitoring while recipients were becoming responsible for planning, implementing their own development projects, and reporting thereafter. This donor and recipient dualism, however, is overridden by the latest development studies that involve multiple actors and scales into account (Babül, 2017). In this sub-section, I am going to elaborate on the changing orders of development as well as its socio-economic conditions for considering GM within the scope of the new aid architecture.

The shift in the development order is linked with the new development paradigm that was set out in the *1999 Annual Review of Development Effectiveness* (ARDE) (Hanna & Agarwala, 2018). The document labeled the *government-led development* in the 1960s and 1970s as the ‘planning era of development’ which was dominated by planners and engineers as donor-placed foreign experts whereas the ‘adjustment era’ of the 1980s marked by the *market-led development* and donor-imposed policies dominated by financial experts and economists. The adjustment era is emblematic of the ‘Washington Consensus’ which was an economic strategy described as market fundamentalism or neo-liberalism that was accepted by the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and US Treasury Dept. The ‘Washington Consensus’ advocated minimal governmental spending to reduce government debts; it was a call for the privatization of government-controlled services and pressure on governments to reduce tariffs and open up their economies (Williamson, 2018). During this era, development was based on ‘Structural Adjustment Programmes’ and the principle of ‘conditionality’ which establishes a link between the implementation of a specific policy system proposed by the IGOs for development and economic growth and the financial aid to the country that needs to implement these policies (Yavuz, 2007). Therefore,

conditionality pushed many governments to develop policies in line with the principles developed by IGOs. Nevertheless, as Mosse (2005) and Lie (2015) mention, this aid architecture was highly criticized because of its top-down approach; in addition to those criticisms, the increase in world poverty during the 1980s and 1990s necessitated a new approach to the development (Hanna & Agarwala, 2018). Meanwhile, the World Bank reports of the 1990s have begun to highlight the problems of adjustment lending as well as the weak governance and drew attention to “social, ecological, and institutional issues for long-term sustained growth” (Hanna & Agarwala, 2018, p. 6). In line with these, in January 1999, the World Bank launched the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) which is the third and the current paradigm of development. This paradigm is marked by *country-led development* through partnerships among the private sector, civil society, government, and development agencies. According to Elisa van Waeyenberge (2006) and Gülin Yavuz (2007), CDF was a concrete step towards the ‘post-Washington Consensus’. When the ‘Washington Consensus’ agenda was found insufficient due to its narrow approach that focused solely on economic goals, the ‘post-Washington Consensus’ was put forward as a holistic process that involves intervening in state and society relations and encouraging “inter-sectoral cooperation” (Waeyenberge, 2006, p. 33). In the words of Mosse (2005), the new aid architecture, therefore, goes “beyond economic and financial management to ‘governance’ more generally, including aid packages for public sector management, the support of civil society, and the promotion of consultive and participatory mechanisms for development planning” (p. 3).

In line with these, rather than implementing development projects, IGOs have started to provide technical assistance and financial support to low- and middle-

income countries on issues such as good governance, capacity building, and project design. This was because adjustment failures and poor development records have been seen as a direct result of deficient governance and authoritarian rule by developmentalists (Leftwich, 1994). For them, good governance would bring, “efficient and accountable management by the public sector, and a predictable and transparent policy framework” (World Bank, 1992). In line with this, the lexicon and lucrative tools used by the private sector such as accountability, auditing, predictability, and effectiveness have started to be used to measure the level of democracies²⁸ (Babül, 2017). Hence, for IGOs, countries’ noncompliance with Western standards can be remedied by instituting good governance through capacity building and project design. Elif M. Babül (2017) defines capacity building as a “focused investment in a particular area, with the aim of enhancing skills, competence, and knowledge in the receiving agency or organization” (p. 8). It aims to increase the skills of local groups to address policy issues as well as enhance countries’ compliance with EU regulations or international objectives (Babül, 2017). For promoting good governance, EU programs also encourage designing and implementing projects through public-private collaboration.

As Babül argues (2017), Western standards of good governance have been mentioned in Turkey with the approval of Turkey’s candidacy for EU membership in 1999. Throughout the EU harmonization process, viable tools of the capacity building have been employed in governmental institutions and civil society organizations (CSOs). According to Ararat and Göcenoğlu, CSOs dependency on funding by business reduces their effectiveness in monitoring corporate behavior (2014). As they denote, European Community funded the Civil Society Development

²⁸ Strathern (2000) calls this “audit cultures”.

Program²⁹ for regulating this imbalance. After 2001, a wide range of resources became available for establishing good governance in civil society by the Pre-Accession Assistance. As interlocutors of Babül stated, the point of departure for this center was the “initial lack of ability on the part of Turkish civil society organizations to make use of Pre- Accession Assistance funds that were allocated to them” (Babül, 2017, p. 24). The center has been organizing trainings on project design and implementation since its establishment. This new trend paved the way for the emergence of private companies which specialized in writing projects as well as making civil society “the third sector” in Turkey (Babül, 2017, p. 25) According to Babül, human rights activism has begun to lose its political identity in the 1990s when Turkey’s candidacy for EU membership became official because of the transformation of the civil society’s strategy from the opposition -naming and shaming- to project making (Babül, 2017). On the other hand, for Ararat and Göcenoğlu (2014), EU accession process increased the freedom of CSOs in Turkey, especially by enabling the amendment of the Association Act in 2005. After the act, the Department of Associations became a separate department under the Ministry of Interior which was initially controlled by the Department of Police. The act also removed the limitations for civil servants to join associations while giving student associations equal standing with others. For strengthening the capacity building of the Department of Associations, 3.3 million Euros were allocated, and this made, according to Ararat and Göcenoğlu, CSOs more independent from the private sector (2014). This difference of opinion exposes that the meaning of the political and its instruments changes due to how they are framed. In other words, while for Babül

²⁹ The Program that was launched in 2002 transformed into the Civil Society Development Center in 2005 (Babül, 2017).

(2017), project making denotes a loss of political identity, for Ararat and Göcenoğlu (2014) it is a tool for political independence.

I will further discuss this controversy throughout the thesis, yet what is also essential about this controversy is the collaborative projects developed under the new development paradigm are consolidating certain values that not all parties agree on and benefit from (Tsing, 2005). For instance, since good governance is built on the traditional notion of a clear separation of powers and the rationale of the market economy, principles of good governance bear an affinity both with the logic of “western liberal democracy” and the “liberal capitalist order” that not all parties willingly accepted (Babül, 2017, p. 63; Leftwich, 1994, p. 372). In other words, because IGOs set these terms for receiving funds and political legitimacy, groups with diverse viewpoints and interests have been also involved in these projects; however, the projects do not serve everyone’s interests and do not progress smoothly, even can lead to opposite outcomes. For instance, Babül’s ethnographic account displays that contrary to the expectations, EU projects, and human rights training programs employed in governmental institutions yield “a staunch conservatism” (Babül, 2017, p. 11). Because of the discrepancy between aspired governmental standards and actual working conditions, governmental workers continue to approach laymen with paternalistic care while associating their jobs with certain characteristics that contrast with the professional depiction of good governance such as self-sacrifice, devotion, and altruism. Therefore, Babül refutes the idea that standardization in the EU accession process produces homogeneity, on the contrary, she argues, it generates “multiple-even contradictory- meanings and practices” (2017, p. 6). In the same line of reasoning, this thesis interrogates the heterogeneity of standards, meanings, and practices in GM activities. In the

following chapters, I am going to give detail on the praxis of GM activities in Turkey and will argue that while certain challenges are raised in gender equality training programs as well, these programs carry a transformative potential in terms of redefining gender roles and disrupting existing geometries of power. Before moving on to how gender equality is framed in this paradigm of development, I want to dig out what ‘global governance’ and ‘corporate governance’ refer to because they will lay the groundwork for the arguments I want to make in this chapter as well as illuminating the new configuration of capitalism. Therefore, in the following subsection, I am going to examine the notion of “global governance” to deepen the discussion on ‘the new global order’.

3.2.1 Government to governance: Redefining the role of governments and intergovernmental organizations

As Adrian Leftwich (1994) argues, neoliberalism has to be considered both as an economic and a political doctrine because it does not just simply envision economic liberalization, but also involves the re-examination of the role of the state. His argument can be elucidated by examining the terms ‘global governance’ and ‘corporate governance’ thoroughly for understanding the imagined role of the state in ‘the new global order’. I believe, they are fundamental in terms of frankly depicting the world we live in today as well as providing a better understanding of the Turkish government’s attack on GM activities.

The notion of ‘global governance’ has emerged in the post-Cold War era which was commemorated by its triumph of liberal values and economic system over ‘totalitarianism’ and state-managed economies after the collapse of communism (Rai, 2004). Since then, the state was being associated with corrupt practices,

opacity, and favoritism while the most efficient way to allocate resources in society was determined by “market based competition” (Ararat & Göcenoğlu, 2014; Rai, 2004, p 80). According to this understanding, the heavy involvement of the states in the economy leads to “two undesirable consequences”: first, it restricts economic development by inhibiting competition; second, it reproduces an unequal environment because of its corrupt practices (Ararat & Ugur, 2003, p. 64). Shirin M. Rai (2004) argues; thus, the concept of governance emerged in the post-statist period of the 1980s to delineate a “shift from ‘state/government’ to ‘multi-layered’ governance not only of states and markets but also of interstate relations and security” (p. 579). The global in the ‘global governance’ phrase, on the other hand, indicated “the scope and scale of today’s world of production, consumption, and exchange” (Rai, 2004, p. 579). In this context, the orbit of the nation-states accordingly became limited because of their national territorial boundaries (Barry, 2004). Therefore, while states were seen as incapable “of addressing the issues arising from the global reach of capitalism”, IGOs were presented as neutral players who seek “maximum economic efficiency for all through attempting to ensure fair dealing in the markets” (Rai, 2004, p. 583) Consequently, IGOs have become stronger vis a vis the state (Rai, 2004, 581).

This envisaging has a strong correspondence with the narratives of the interlocutors I have been interviewing. The long conversation we had about the role of the state and the market, especially with one of my interlocutors, Elsa who is a professor of corporate governance as well as a feminist activist would be an adequate example:

One of the driving forces of economic development is competition. Everything that hinders competition is economically harmful. One way to prevent competition for societies is of course to involve the state as a player, if monopolies occur, there will be no competition [...] Of course, the bigger

companies should not abuse their power. What exactly does that imply? Supporting small and medium-sized businesses, providing them with premises, and so forth. This is one of the government's responsibilities. It should not be interpreted as the state's involvement in the economy; rather, it is the government's responsibility to create a climate that encourages and provides competition. It is critical, for example, that tax laws permit this. For instance, it is recently revealed that multinational corporations did not pay any taxes by transferring income from different countries among themselves. To prevent this, governments have agreed to levy a one-time mandatory 15% tax on international corporations, which is critical. Universal tax. This is the role of the state. And of course, the power of IGOs must be increased. Unfortunately, we currently see that they are not sufficiently representative and, as a result, cannot provide adequate sanctions. In other words, I believe that if we are to reduce the power of states, or rather, to ensure that states do not become stronger in the coming period, we must consider strengthening IGOs while also increasing their representative qualities. The EU is a powerful legislator, but the European Parliament does not provide adequate representation. As a result, they are subjected to certain criticisms.³⁰

Elsa continued her words by strongly insisting that states' intervention in the economy compulsorily lead to the misuse of the capital, especially because she associates the state with corrupt practices:

While autocratic tendencies are already prevalent in developing countries, the potential for misuse increases as states intervene more in the economy. Thus, I do not have to defend the Keynesian model or anything. I believe that globalization will continue, that it cannot be prevented, and that those who oppose it will be unable to maintain their policies for a long period of time. Of course, if you're China, things are a little bit different, you have great economic potential. Therefore, I think, taking more national interests into

³⁰ "Ekonomideki kalkınmanın itici güçlerinden biri rekabettir. Rekabeti engelleyen her şey esasında ekonomik olarak zarar verir toplumlara. Rekabeti engellemenin bir yolu tabi ki devleti işin içerisine oyuncu olarak katmaktır yani o zaman rekabet olmaz. Tabi ki büyük şirketlerin gücünü istismar etmemesi lazım. Bu da ne demektir? Küçük ve orta boy girişimlerin desteklenmesi, onlara bir alan açılması falan. Bu devletin rollerinden birisidir, rekabeti teşvik edecek rekabeti sağlayacak ortamı yaratmaktır devletin görevi. Vergi kanunlarının buna imkan vermesi çok önemli. Mesela şu anda dünyada çok önemli başka bir gelişme var o da bu uluslararası şirketlerin kendi aralarındaki değişik ülkelerdeki gelirlerini birinden birine aktararak hiç vergi vermediklerini görüyoruz hiçbir yerde. Bunu engellemek için uluslararası şirketlere bir kere zorunlu bir yüzde on beş vergi verilmesi konusunda hükümetler anlaşılabilir bu çok önemli bir şey. Evrensel vergi. Devletlerin rolü böyle. Bir de tabi uluslararası kurumların mutlaka ki güçlerinin artırılması lazım. Maalesef şu anda uluslararası kurumların yeterince temsil niteliği taşımadıklarını ve bundan dolayı da yeterince yaptırım da sağlayamadıklarını görüyoruz. Yani sanıyorum önümüzdeki dönemde devletlerin gücünün azaltılması daha doğrusu devletlerin daha güçlenmemesini sağlayacak uluslararası kurumların daha güçlenmesini ama temsil niteliklerinin de artırılması gerektiğini düşünmek zorundayız. AB çok önemli bir yasa koyucu ama AB ama Avrupa parlamentosu yeterince temsil niteliği sağlamıyor. Bu da onların birtakım kritiklere uğramasına yol açıyor."

account is a result of populist politics and autocratic inclinations, rather than an economic necessity.³¹

Crony capitalism, in her accounts, is an inevitable consequence of the state intervention in the economy. IGOs, contrary to states, are presented here as the seekers of egalitarian and democratic order. As it is obvious in the narratives of Elsa, while the state's corrupt practices are recognized, neither IGOs' colonial history and hierarchies they still produce, nor global asymmetries produced by the capitalist order itself and its doctrine of competition are up to question³². Although globalization is not experienced similarly and its costs are not distributed equally among countries, in Turkey certain groups are more prone to ignore the "power geometries of time-space" (Massey, 1999, p. 28). This appreciation for globalization demonstrates that IGOs have either succeeded in discarding their colonial origins and commercial interests or that they have never been called into question in certain contexts for certain groups, such as for Turkish cosmopolitan elites³³ who have been enculturated with the "Western norms, styles and institutions" (Bozdogan & Kasaba, 1997, p. 7).

However, by taking other interviews into account, I find that this reasoning also emerges as a response to the 'neo-conservative', 'populist', and 'patriarchal'

³¹ "Otokratik eğilimler özellikle gelişmekte olan ülkelerde kendini gösterirken bu otokratik eğilimlerin üzerine bir de devletin ekonomide daha etkin olması ajandası eklendiğinde burada önemli bir güç odağı ve istismar olanağı karşımıza çıkmış oluyor, dolayısıyla genel olarak artık yeni paradigma devlet daha fazla keynesian bir model falan bunları savunma durumunda ben asla değilim. Ben küreselleşmenin devam edeceği, engellenemez bir şey olduğu ve bu küreselleşmenin karşısında duran güçlerin ise çok uzun vadeli olarak bu politikalarını sürdürebilecekleri kanısında değilim, tabii bir Çin'seniz olay farklı. Çünkü ekonomik gücünüz çok büyük ama buna rağmen Çin bir Kuzey Kore olamaz zaten öyle bir tercihi de yok. Dolayısıyla ulusal çıkarların daha fazla dikkate alınması esasında siyasetteki popülist politikaların bir yansıması ve otokratik eğilimlerin bir sonucudur diye düşünüyorum, ekonomik bir zorunluluk olduğu kanısında değilim."

³² As Ozan Zeybek nicely puts it, "postcolonial critiques have long pointed out that geographical hierarchies are conceived as a spatial-temporal rupture between "the West" and "the Rest" (Ozan Zeybek, 2012, p. 1551).

³³ Urban elites were praised as the nascent republic's civilizing agents, and they were represented as the prototype of desired citizens of the new modern nation (Babül, 2017; Bozdogan & Kasaba, 1997; Kandiyoti, 1997).

politics of the Turkish government under AKP rule in addition to the connotations of the state in the post-Cold War era (Ayhan, 2019; Yilmaz, 2015). I find the analysis of Gülsüm who talked in one of the sessions at the gender and leadership conference very essential in this context:

We are dealing with a system that is more introverted as a result of its opposition to globalization, which we believe has long served to eliminate poverty and promote peace. We are confronted with a system constructed by the leadership of men who try to control the state through nepotism, as if it were a business, with their close relatives, dragging us into crises³⁴.

This quotation, on the one hand, indicates a continuation of presenting an “elite-driven, consensus-based, institution-building process” that drew solely from the “West” as a successful modernization model for Turkey (Bozdogan & Kasaba, 1997, p. 7). On the other hand, reveals that the appreciation for Western standards of governance appears as a response to a specific conjuncture, the rise of populist politics around the globe, but particularly in Turkey. Although putting European norms at higher status has always been producing hierarchies in Turkey³⁵, the rise of debates on governance is adding more complexities to the reactions towards GM activities. On the one hand, we might argue that there is a clash of “rivaling imaginaries” of governance when we both consider the quotations above and the governmental discourse against the Western hegemony and its purveyors in Turkey (Babül, 2017, p. 43). Ironically, these two groups are becoming more congruent in terms of defending neoliberal policies and the diminishment of the welfare state.

As Ayhan Kaya nicely puts forward, “politics in Turkey under AKP rule can be explained both as a reaction to the growing stream of neoliberal governance and

³⁴ “Yıllardır yoksulluğun azaltılması ve barışa hizmet ettiğini düşündüğümüz küreselleşmeye karşı çıkararak daha içe kapanan ve nepotizm dediğimiz, devleti şirket gibi kendi yakın akrabalarıyla yönetmeye çalışan sistemin erkek liderlerinin oluşturduğu bir sistemle, bize krizlere sürükleyen bir sistemle karşı karşıyayız”.

³⁵ For more information about ingrained hierarchies in Turkey see Babül 2017; Zeybek, 2012

as an indispensable tool of neoliberalism” (2014, p.1). In this sense “in the absence of a parental welfare state”, Turkey is an outstanding example of revitalizing the institution of family wherein gender roles must be fixed (Kaya, 2014, p. 2). Given that one of the main goals of gender equality training programs is to redefine gender roles, it is not surprising that government workers and regime supporters in Turkey attack GM activities, although they are obliged to participate in these programs in order to meet the requirements of ‘the new global order’. However, what I am trying to say here is that GM activities provoked the government not only because they aim redefining gender roles, but also because it brings transnational alliance and governance to mind. On the other hand, the cosmopolitan elites and activists with strong political orientation against all kinds of discriminatory politics in Turkey including certain feminist and queer organizations unite against the neo-conservative populist politics of the AKP rule. These diverse and complex coalitions in return form a significant part of the GM activities in Turkey as well as its heterogeneous nature. In the following chapters, I aim to dwell more on this heterogeneous nature. Now, I would like to summarize what I have been arguing so far.

As it is also manifested in the quotations, according to the dream of global governance, by reducing the disparities between nation-states, an egalitarian global culture will eventually emerge, and the world will be transformed into a global village. Because of their national territorial boundaries and corrupt practices, nation-states, and the state itself have been portrayed as inadequate and unreliable since the post-Cold War era. Therefore, IGOs contrary to nation-states are presented as neutral actors who will be the purveyor of ‘the new global order’. However, this imagined order and its material sanctions trigger conservative politics around the globe because of raising the risk of losing national identities. In other words, this all-

encompassing dream has caused many societies to resist this order by clinging to their pre-existing value and belief systems, resulting in the rise of populist politics across the globe. For certain progressive circles, on the other hand, this in return consolidates the mistrust towards the state and causes more embracement of IGOs as well as their political and economic doctrines.

Despite the power struggles between these groups, in practice, they are collaborating for various purposes, particularly in GM activities in Turkey, as a result of ‘the new global order’ discourse, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration. Since how this collaboration is experienced will be the issue of the following chapters, I will continue with contemplating the new configuration of capitalism and how it is manifested in Turkey.

3.3 The new configuration of capitalism: An ethical imperative

Today, we aim to inspire and engage business leaders, young innovators, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders from the UN government and civil society to take concrete actions to advance gender equality and break down barriers for women in the workplace, marketplace, and communities all over the world.
- Lydia Cacho³⁶

The UN Global Compact was founded in 2000 after the Comprehensive Development Framework has set. Since it was the first venture of the UN to cooperate with business, it made another mark in history (Rajak, 2011). The goal of the compact was to encourage corporations to promote ‘universal principles’ regarding human rights and sustainable development. This new partnership was maintained to be encouraged through Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs which set the 2030 development agenda made explicit calls for businesses to engage

³⁶ Cacho, the UN Global Compact Target Equality Webinar host, welcomed the audience with these words.

with the goals in collaboration with the government (Ararat, 2020). Since businesses began to take an active role in setting and implementing the development agenda, corporations became another significant actor in the global policy debate. According to Dinah Rajak (2011), corporations have begun to be presented as the “guardians of the social order and purveyors of a new global moral authority” (p. 1).

To all of my interlocutors, I asked, “why do you think corporations deal with social problems?” Answers were multifarious, ranging from it is a trend, a sales strategy for getting involved in the competitive market economy, a response given to the international pressures for investment flows to the idea that it is a need for captivating next generations, company leaders’ values, and feminist requests within the institutions. Yet, one of the answers was intriguing since it reveals the link between global and corporate governance. In the words of Elsa:

There are two forces that propel CSR forward. The first is governments’ and states’ incompetence. In the states, there is a capacity issue. You are not able to get something from the government, but you are able to get it from companies. The second, is business being a potential candidate to fill the void left by the states³⁷.

The attempt of business to ‘fill the void left by the states’ leads to “the ethicalisation of business” as Andrew Barry calls it (2004, p. 195). However, for Barry, corporate ethics are not merely abstract principles, rather they indicate a material and “heterogeneous set of techniques” that has to be interrogated (p. 195). Therefore, the concept of ‘ethical capitalism’ that he coined, refers not to a stage in the history of capitalism but to a process that shapes the conduct of business activity (2004). With the same line of reasoning, I argue that ‘corporate governance’ and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are some of the techniques of ethical capitalism and need to be

³⁷ “KSS ortaya çıkartan iki taraflı bir baskı var. Birincisi hükümetlerin ve devletlerin yetersizliği. Bir kapasite sorunu var devletlerde. Sonuçta bir şey talep ederken devletten talep ettiğinizde alamıyorsunuz ama şirketlerden alabiliyorsunuz. İkincisi de iş dünyasının ve şirketlerin, devletin bıraktığı o boşluğu doldurmaya aday olmaları var.”

emphasized in terms of comprehending the consequences it has brought forward for GM activities in Turkey. However, it is beneficial to note that the ethical imperative of business is not novel in the Turkish context although what ‘ethical’ refers to is up for questioning. In the following sub-sections, I aim to lay out Turkey’s philanthropic history and its relationship with the new configuration of capitalism as well as the notion of ‘corporate governance’ and its development in Turkey.

3.3.1 Making corporations as the main collaborators: Corporate social responsibility (CSR) or philanthropy?

In her comprehensive thesis on CSR, Eylem Mercimek puts forward that CSR was first discussed in the 1950s as a ‘social responsibility of businessmen’, it became more action-oriented in the 1970s, and from the 1990s onwards, it has gained widespread acceptance as a management strategy (Bowen, 2013; Mercimek 2019). Especially after corporate human rights violations and environmental damage have been revealed, which was followed by strong criticisms and social movements, CSR became more prominent (Dillard & Murray, 2013). However, it is known that it is interpreted and defined differently by different organizations which makes it difficult to render a common and comprehensive definition (Blowfield & Frynas, 2005). Commission of the European Communities (2001), for instance, defines CSR as “a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (p. 6). The definition itself shows that CSR is widening the role of the corporations by including socio-ethical and political dimensions in market relations. It is known that this was not always the case; ethical, and social problems have generally been regarded as external to the market; governments, and political

institutions, on the other hand, were thought as responsible for dealing with social problems as well as the distribution mechanisms (Ararat and Göcenoğlu, 2014). This rigid division between social and economic affairs though belongs to Anglo-Saxon countries according to Blowfield and Frynas and it is known that some “Continental European, Asian or African” societies do not have that division, rather business has always had social obligations to society in some regions such as in Japan (2005, p. 501). Similarly, Ayşe Buğra (1994) argues that the importance of state intervention in the economy that is prevalent in many non-Western societies blurs the distinction between the sphere of private interests and the sphere of public policy. This diversity across different cultures necessitates an elaborative cultural and historical analysis to comprehend the dynamics CSR has generated in a particular region. Therefore, I will first give a short history of the Turkish case.

According to Ayşe Buğra (1994), economic growth in Turkey has been predicated upon a strong affiliation between the state and the private sector. After the establishment of the Turkish republic, the state acquired a determining role in business for the development of the national economy, especially from the early 1930s onwards (Ararat & Göcenoğlu, 2014; Buğra, 2004). As Ararat and Göcenoğlu put forward, until 1945, the state as the major economic actor, “subsidized the development of the private sector”, and its involvement in the economy more or less continued till the pro-market policies in the 1980s (2014, p. 4).

In the 1960s, family-owned conglomerates have become the most essential actors in the economy by establishing foundations and building educational institutions, hospitals, and art centers (Mercimek, 2019; Topal & Gurdağ, 2009). For gaining social acceptance and legitimacy, they have allocated a percentage of their profits for their foundation as a re-distribution to social causes because they had a

strong conviction that “the rich have a responsibility to help the poor (Ararat & Göcenoğlu, 2014, p. 6; Mercimek, 2019). Thus, Buğra argues that the entrepreneurs in Turkey “have always been apologetic about their wealth and felt unconfident about the legitimacy of their ventures” (Buğra, 1994, p. 15). Still, although its strong emphasis on corporate philanthropy, Turkey had an under-performance until the mid-1990s in terms of receiving capital flows due to its governance framework (Ararat & Göcenoğlu, 2014). In 2001, the PricewaterhouseCoopers’ report ranked Turkey as “the fourth-least transparent country in the world” (Ararat & Göcenoğlu, 2014, p. 31). This points out the distinction between the notion of philanthropy and the notion of CSR. While philanthropic activities of corporations are dealing with problems that are not directly linked with the operations of the company itself, CSR activities focus on the problems, which the company might affect (Mercimek, 2019). It is known that although Turkey has a rich philanthropic history, it is deprived of CSR culture (Ararat & Göcenoğlu, 2014).

In the mid-1980s liberalization reforms held in Turkey for the achievement of full EU membership changed the role of the state and business in Turkey (Ararat & Göcenoğlu, 2014). EU harmonization process along with the OECD membership also resulted in the institutionalization of CSR practices (Ararat and Göcenoğlu, 2014). In 2003, the Capital Markets Board of Turkey published the Corporate Governance Guidelines where corporations are called to perform within this framework and to announce their activities in annual reports. Ararat and Göcenoğlu (2014) claim that the reforms helped Turkey to improve in transparency rankings by “achieving macroeconomic stability through restructuring and monitoring the financial industry, establishing the independence of the Central Bank, implementing a tight fiscal policy, dramatically reducing inflation, deregulation of monopolized

sectors, and generally reducing the role of the state in the economy” (2006, p. 4). According to this understanding, integrating into the global market economy and adopting its governance framework would bring ethical and sustainable economic growth. I am going to elaborate on multiple connotations of ‘the ethical’ under the section of corporate governance in the following pages.

Overall, today, many GM activities in Turkey take place in corporations under the name of CSR. These corporations are generally secular-rooted family-owned conglomerates and transnational corporations, both have voluntarily signed international agreements such as the UN Global Compact and Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs). It can also be argued that there is a trend transitioning from philanthropy to CSR. Most of these corporations began to create projects for directly transforming the social life within corporations by creating more gender-sensitive environments and developing policies. As I have mentioned before, how these projects are worked out at the operational level will be the focus of the following chapters. For situating my approach, now, I will elaborate on how CSR is framed and studied in the literature.

As I observe, there are four dominant perspectives and two hegemonic representations in CSR literature. The first perspective approaches CSR as a matter of corporate citizenship as such corporations are “citizens” who have responsibilities for stakeholders and society in general. Ararat and Göcenoğlu claim it is an “ethically driven behavior based on moral obligation” (2014, p. 2). The driving force of the second perspective, on the other hand, is the organizational benefit, CSR is thought necessary for “protecting corporate reputation” (2006, p. 2). According to Ararat and Göcenoğlu (2014), CSR practices are generally driven by both perspectives. Borrowing from David Mosse (2005), I call these perspectives

‘instrumental’, and they correspond to what I have referred to as the first system of representation. Mosse uses the term instrumental to explain a particular approach to a development policy that is based on the belief that policy can solve problems and directly shapes how development is realized³⁸. This belief is also shared by many actors who are involved in CSR activities including feminist academicians, trainers, CSR consultants, and gender experts in Turkey. They have an assumption that CSR policies on gender equality in institutions can directly shape practices in the corporation. However, my findings show that this is not always the case. Rather than policies shaping the practice, the target groups’ sensitivities are shaping the content of the trainings and policies and thus, they are quite vague and arbitrary.

Mosse (2005) puts another view called ‘critical’ opposing to the ‘instrumental’. According to him, critical views approach policy as a hegemonic apparatus that conceals hidden purposes of dominance and bureaucratic power. Just as in the development literature, there are critical views in CSR literature and these views can be categorized into two dominant perspectives. The first perspective conceptualizes CSR as a myth depending on the idea that corporate capital is only interested in accumulation (Raman, 2007). The second perspective, on the other hand, conceptualizes CSR as an apparatus or a discourse that produces a certain reality by concealing harmful operations of corporations, thus, creating legitimization. Research that is built on this perspective scrutinizes what companies hide behind their brand image. Researchers are dedicated to revealing the environmental or social destructions the corporations cause, despite their engagement in CSR activities. I find what they do very significant and valuable, but at the same time ethnographically blind because of their total rejection of other possible

³⁸ Mosse demonstrates that development practice is not driven by policy, but the policy is driven by certain informal practices such as brokerage, mediation etc. (2005, p. 125).

implications of CSR activities. My research for instance shows that CSR plays a determining role in terms of framing gender equality, changing institutional structures, and navigating contestations between diverse groups.

However, it is not coincidental that these representations also figure in gender and development literature. In its instrumental representation, GM was presented as a strategy involving a “gender perspective in all aspects of development” for making sure both parties benefit equally (de Waal, 2006, p. 209). In its critical representation, GM policies are portrayed as an apparatus that instrumentalizes feminist demands and ideas rather than actualizing them. Development projects’ and corporations’ gender mainstreaming and related CSR activities are scrutinized by various feminist scholars. Most studies derive the conclusion that development policies and philanthropic activities of corporations contribute to the instrumentalization of women. However, this claim works as a consolidation of a well-known fact that restricts conducting research to envision the complexities of development partnership. Therefore, this claim should be either the starting point of an anthropological inquiry or a point of concern but not ought to be an endpoint.

In the same line of reasoning, John Sharp (2006) evaluates current debates about CSR and argues that a new approach is necessary for studying CSR. According to him, the anthropological question should be on what CSR does besides contributing to concealing corporations’ exploitative activities -or I might say besides instrumentalization of women-. Sharp has two important conceptual contributions to CSR studies; first in terms of framing it as a business case of development and second conceptualizing it as a fragmented “complex system” wherein a diverse set of actors has different interests and follows ambiguous agendas (2006, p. 215, 218). This conceptualization necessitates interrogating actors who

have just emerged, the different interests and motivations of diverse actors, the ways in which they translate into each other, and strategies to navigate conflicts.

Therefore, because these CSR activities for GM in Turkey are established in collaboration with other parties, I will detail whose values are being consolidated and whose are withering away in the following chapters. Now, I will detail the concept of corporate governance and how it is envisioned and manifested in Turkey.

3.3.2 Corporate Governance: What is ethical and how it is measured?

In collaboration with the states, IGOs, and the private sector, the OECD Council established the Corporate Governance Principles in 1998 (Gürgey, 2020). Corporate governance refers to a set of institutions, rules, and practices to minimize the divergence between private and social return on corporate activity and the agency cost (Ararat & Ugur, 2003). Procedures of democracy which was portrayed by Tocqueville (2000) [1830] including that of separation of powers, enfranchisement, and representation began to constitute the structure of modern corporate governance (Ararat & Göcenoğlu, 2014). According to the corporate governance framework, corporations must adhere to standards, compliance mechanisms, and transparency requirements while monitoring and reporting them. This framework was assumed to lead to the standardization of management practices and equity of markets which is associated with “higher rates of economic growth” (Ararat & Ugur, 2003, p. 71; House et al., 1997). However, Ararat and Göcenoğlu (2014) argue that when laws and regulations are not enforced by social pressure and by the state, compliance with standards is reduced to “a matter of cost and benefit analysis” (p. 17). Nonetheless, since the corporate governance framework made corporate transparency one of the most important factors influencing investment flows, it has encouraged corporations

to behave ethically. However, what is meant by “ethical” is up for questioning.

While in philanthropic projects ethical means doing good, in CSR it is being responsible. According to Elsa:

There is an information asymmetry. Companies learn the effects of their practice way more quickly than the rest of society. This is where responsibility comes in. The responsibility of companies is not to do positive things, but not to cause negative consequences. Thus, the first step is ‘do not harm’. In order to do this, you need to know and report where you create harm. This is what lies behind CSR's disclosure and transparency principles³⁹.

Similarly, for her, creating an equal environment for the employees is the other main responsibility of companies. In a context where CSR is commonly associated with charity work, Elsa’s account reverses the equation by arguing that companies’ responsibility is to be transparent rather than to do good. However, when we take a look at the ethnographic research on how transparency is conducted, we infer that there might be no correspondence between its theory and practice. For instance, in *Material Politics: Disputes along the Pipeline*, Andrew Barry (2013) asks why, despite oil companies’ transparency and CSR exercises, disputes have erupted over the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. He finds out that transparency practices are very much connected with what was made public and what was kept confidential (Hamlin, 2016). Although affected populations, community investment, and compensation were included in the public documentation, disagreements over compensation for local villagers as well as the working conditions and pay of construction employees were kept private. In this regard, he concluded that transparency practices, contrary to its promise, help to

³⁹ “Burada enformasyon asimetrisi var. Şirketler kendi etkilerini herkesten daha çabuk ve daha ince olarak görebiliyor. İşte sorumluluk esasında burada olmak zorunda. Şirketlerin sorumluluğu olumlu şeyler yapmak değil, olumsuz sonuçlara yol açmamak, zarar vermemek. Sorumluluğun birinci adımı “do not harm” değil mi? Do not harm dediğiniz zaman bir kere nerelerde harm yarattığınızı anlamamız lazım ve bunu da açıklamamız lazım. Disclosure ve transparency ilkelerinin arkasında da bu var.”

obscure more. This demonstrates the importance of investigating how these normative frameworks are practiced at the operational level. In the following chapters, particularly Chapter 5, I will delve into GM's 'hidden transcripts' that are not involved in public documents (Scott, 1998).

In order to bring the lens towards Turkey, it could be beneficial to focus on the Corporate Governance Forum of Turkey (CGFT) that is an initiative hosted by the Sabancı University's School of Management. Elsa who is also the director of CGFT narrated to me a detailed history of the forum. According to her accounts, the initiative was founded in 2003 in response to her suggestion as a lecturer at Sabancı University and a World Bank employee specializing in issues of corporate governance. The forum was initially founded as a research and advocacy center that aims to protect the rights of investors for attracting investment to Turkey and taking measures to prevent the companies from pursuing their resources for their own interests. Since the main focus of universities is not advocacy activities, as she underlines, TUSİAD admits supporting the forum financially. In the following years, when the climate crisis became more prominent and sustainability began to affect the financial sector, the forum began to focus on sustainable investments. Therefore, in the report published by the forum in 2010, it was suggested that the sustainability index should be established in the stock market, and thus companies that do more sustainable activities in the stock market should be encouraged to take a larger share in the finance allocation. Regarding the framework of these recommendations, BIST Sustainability Index was launched by Borsa Istanbul⁴⁰. Meanwhile, the forum started to work on the representation of women on the boards of directors when, in her words, "gender equality also became on the agenda of IGOs as an important

⁴⁰ <https://www.borsaistanbul.com/en/sayfa/2227/sustainability-index>

economic issue”⁴¹. As Elsa argues despite their efforts, no progress has been made in this regard. Thus, they decided to conduct a survey to understand the barriers behind women’s participation in the boards of directors. When they found out that violence against women was the main barrier behind their participation, they published a report arguing that businesses need to take care of this issue. Afterward, they received a positive reaction from both United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA) and TUSIAD. Following that, they initiated a project called Business Against Domestic Violence (BADV) in which TUSIAD serves as a strategic partner and the UNPFA funds the project. As Elsa denotes, meanwhile, the mission of the forum has largely changed from research to mobilizing business on issues about sustainability and gender equality. Since the forum has established partnerships with a variety of parties, I am going to elaborate on the operations of the projects initiated by the forum in the next chapter, for demonstrating various contestations between diverse interest groups and negotiations held at GM activities. Now, I am moving on with situating gender equality within this framework.

3.4 Thinking about gender equality within the new order

Just like good governance, after the 1990s promoting gender equality was also considered a necessity for sustainable development and economic growth (United Nations Development Programme, 2012; World Bank, 2012). The report prepared for the Department for International Development (DFID) on GM notes that the 1970s strategies of constituting separate women’s programmes and units within development institutions and states to integrate women into development “had made

⁴¹ Many feminists at this point claim that it is the instrumentalization of feminism, but it is essential to note that not all GM projects are derived from this reasoning, as will be discussed in the following subsection.

slow progress by the mid-1980s” (Reeves & Baden, 2002, p. 12). Thus, major development agencies and governments have started to embrace GM as a new strategy to respond to the identified need “for institutional change” (Reeves & Baden, 2000, p. 12). Rather than concentrating in a small unit, GM meant diffusing gender policy across the organizational structure by bringing gender concerns into all existing programmes and policies. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which set the 2030 development agenda also prioritized gender equality by claiming that other goals cannot be realized without ensuring gender equality (Ararat, 2020). In UN General Secretary’s High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment, it is stated that:

Women’s economic empowerment is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. We will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals if there is no accelerated action to empower women economically. We know that women’s participation in all spheres of life, including the economy, is essential to sustainable and durable peace and to the realization of human rights (2017; quote from Ararat, 2020).

According to Jacqui True (2015), in this framework, gender equality is used as a tool to solve “global governance problems” and to ensure financial stability, sustainable economic development, and eradication of poverty (p. 329). Therefore, for True, the GM strategy of the 1990s made “gender balance” in decision-making and economic participation the “new mantra” for integrating into the competitive market economy and good governance (Mercimek, 2019, p. 29; True, 2015, p. 330). Like True, for many feminists, it raises the question of whether this causes the instrumentalization of feminism or not. This is not a novel question, but rather one about how gender equality has been framed since the idea of development was first introduced. Since there is a wealthy corpus on how women are envisioned in various development architectures including Turkey, I bypass this question and elaborate on how ‘the new global order’ discourse might affect feminisms around the globe including Turkey

and close this chapter by giving a voice to actors who have been widely criticized by a group of people who believe that collaborative activities for GM are nothing more than smokescreen or a means of serving the market economy.

3.4.1 Women's Struggle: From grassroots movement to 'project feminism'

*We would not be able to do these things right now if Turkey did not have a strong feminist movement with a long-standing history.*⁴²

- Helin, the GM practitioner

As Helin points out, GM is difficult to imagine without considering the feminist demands for equal participation in every sphere of social life including the workforce, civil society, and decision-making. However, whether this participation resulted in the triumph of feminism, or a victory of capitalism is continuing to be discussed among feminist circles (Aslan & Gambetti, 2011; Eisenstein, 2005; Fraser, 2012). Rather than delving into this discussion, in this section, I examine the effects of 'the new global order' discourse on women's struggle and its relationship with GM.

In feminist history, the 1980s commemorated the institutionalization of the global women's movement that was enabled through the gathering of diverse feminist groups around the world, building coalitions, and demanding recognition of women's human rights as a universal and common value (Koray, 2011; Naples & Desai, 2004; Sancar, 2011). International agreements such as the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Types of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) were the embodiments of the recognition of transnational feminists' demands. According to

⁴² "Türkiye'de bu kadar yıla dayanan bir feminist hareket bir kadın hareketi olmasaydı şu an bu işleri yapamazdık".

Sancar (2011), although the convention brought practical solutions to the discrimination against women while taking local differences into account, being under the UN umbrella allowed women's organizations to have the opportunity of representation and voice only within certain limits. Furthermore, this process contributed to the acceleration of 'NGOization' of feminist organizations as well as the emergence of 'project feminism' by situating project making and professionalization as a new strategy for the social action (Alvarez, 1999; Sancar, 2011).

In the post-statist period of the 1980s, the collapse of public statism coupled with the decline of social welfare policies also led feminist organizations to take over the public services (Alvarez, 1999; Sancar, 2011). This made feminist organizations more like a social assistance service rather than a collective of the grassroots movement that fights against male domination by pushing them into designing projects for making gender-sensitive policies (Alvarez, 1999). In the words of Sonia E. Alvarez (1999), "the 1990s witnessed a veritable 'boom' in NGOs specializing in gender policy assessment, project execution, and social services delivery, propelling them into newfound public prominence while increasingly pushing many away from earlier, more movement-oriented activities" (p. 182). Hence, according to Nighat (2002), 'project feminism' resulted in the hegemony of well-educated, white, and middle-class women organizations in the global women's movement. Moreover, it is widely argued that the liberal framework that hangs its hat on concepts such as 'gender mainstreaming' and 'empowerment' was not suitable enough to criticize patriarchal power relations (Sancar, 2011). While taking this into consideration, rather than making clear-cut judgments, in this thesis, I tried to lend an ear to the questions that have been raised by feminists who find this path as a convenient

strategy for social action. It is worth noting that this trend toward ‘project feminism’ is also evident in Turkey, but also as a response to an oppressive rule under the AKP government. Before dwelling on this argument, I want to highlight the particularity of feminist evolution in Turkey.

According to the mainstream narratives, the development of the women’s movement in Turkey was shaped by modern nation-state building rather than industrialization (Sancar, 2011; Arat, 2001). During the modernization period, women were expected to establish modern families and educate the nation whereas men were made responsible for building the nation-state (Arat, 2001; Sirman, 1989). According to Yeşim Arat (2001), for its modernizing goals, the state extended women’s opportunities by undertaking reforms and this has resulted in the collaboration between women and the state. In 1926, the Islamic legal code was dismantled, and a civil code was introduced (Arat, 2001). The new code established equal rights in marriage by abolishing polygamy, unequal inheritance rights, and unilateral divorce (Arat, 2001). In 1930, women gained the right to partake in municipal elections; in 1934, the right to elect and be elected to the national assembly was added (Arat, 2001). During this period, which can be labeled as *state feminism*, women also benefited from other opportunities the Republic had offered including in the areas of employment and education⁴³ (Arat, 2001, Kandiyoti, 1987). However, Arat states, many other indicators disclosed that “women remained second-class citizens in the Republic” (2001, p. 396). Until the early 1980s, feminism in Turkey was restricted to a small number of women’s organizations founded by educated and privileged women, and it fell short to acknowledge the

⁴³ Women’s literacy rate increased regularly and by the 1970s, “about one-third of scientific workers and professionals were women” (Arat, 2001, p. 395). However, according to Arat, the first generation of educated women consolidated the roles the Republic has envisioned for them (Arat, 2001).

diversity of women's experiences (Kandiyoti, 1987). According to Deniz A. Kandiyoti (1987), due to the lack of an autonomous women's movement with awareness-raising outreach initiatives, women's status was emancipated but not liberated. The most fundamental aspects of gender relations "such as double standard of sexuality and a primarily domestic definition of the female role virtually untouched" up until the 1980s (1987, p. 324). Also, as Arat puts forward, until the early 1980s, women did not protest the "state discourse and practice" (Arat, 2001, p. 396).

The second generation of women started to criticize the state through leftist political activism and organized around İlerici Kadınlar Derneği (Progressive Women's Associations, İKD) in 1975 (Arat, 2001). According to Arat, since they assumed that the class struggle is the main cause of women's deprivation, they did not engage with feminist ideology (2001). When the military coup of 1980 shut down both rightist and leftist organizations including the İKD, feminists began to organize independently (Arat, 2001; Sancar, 2011). They began to develop new forms of resisting against the patriarchal oppression, as well as new ways to communicate about what it meant to be a woman (Çakır, 2011). Although women began to gather through consciousness raising groups in 1981, following the 1980 coup d'état, a notable event stands out as a pivotal landmark in the post-coup period: "the 1987 solidarity march against the battering of women" (Akdemir, 2021, p. 27; Ozan, 2015). It was followed by organizing campaigns, such as "solidarity against battering", "our bodies belong to us, no to sexual abuse" known as the Purple Needle Campaign, and publishing periodicals, such as *Uçan Süpürge*, *Kaktüs*, *Amargi*, *Pazartesi*, *Eksik Etek*, *Cımbızı Jin û Jiyan*, *Feminist Politika* (Karakuş, 2019; Ozan, 2015).

On 8th March 1989, demonstrations manifested in Sultanahmet and Bağlarbaşı brought women together from various backgrounds (Akdemir, 2021). For the first time, diverse feminist magazines, feminist organizations, women students, women politicians, and individual women came together (Akdemir, 2021; Amargi, 2012; Kaktüs, 1989). The main aim of this new feminist organizing, in the words of Arat, “was to foster acceptance of women as individuals in control of their lives, not as mere members of communal groups in which men had higher status and more rights” (2001, p. 397). In the following years, the feminist movement in Turkey diversified (Arat, 2001; Sancar, 2011). Muslim feminists protested the headscarf ban in government institutions and demanded wider religious freedom (Göle, 2004; Sancar, 2011). Kurdish women have criticized the dominant Turkish feminist movement for treating them as second-class citizens and disregarding issues relating to the Kurdish conflict (Arat, 2000; Mojab et al., 2005; Sancar, 2011). LGBTQIA+ individuals have criticized some feminisms for being heterosexist and trans-exclusionary and they have demanded to be more represented within the movement (Aydın, 2020). All in all, various sort of feminists’ political agendas clashed at times and collaborated at others, and still continue to do so. Clearly, Turkey’s feminist history is far richer and more complex than I have portrayed here; I simply wanted to underline how multifaceted it is. Now, I turn to another incident that influenced the course of feminism(s) in Turkey.

In 1985, Turkey signed CEDAW after feminist groups have organized a petition campaign, thus, both Turkey’s EU accession process and CEDAW framework accelerated the state’s response to women’s demands (Arat, 2001). This was another mark in the history of women’s struggle in Turkey. As Arat puts forward, when Turkey became a candidate country for EU membership in 1999, “the

Turkish state committed itself to improve women's status in the National Plan and prepared to meet European accession" goals (2001, p. 401). In the 1990s, women's studies centers and academic programs were established in universities, therefore, feminist research and findings have proliferated. Additionally, during this period, feminist organizations and research centers acquired funds from abroad. According to Sancar, after 2005 the era of 'project feminism' started in Turkey and brought a depoliticization process since feminist organizations began to change their organizational structures, strategies, and critical positions in order to receive funds, thus losing their autonomy (2011, p. 68). With keeping all these in mind, I want to close this section by quoting words of Alvarez about this trend of NGOization:

I would submit, by way of conclusion, that feminist NGOs are hardly doomed to become a part of what some critics have dubbed the 'anti-politics machine' of development (Ferguson 1994) or the 'community face of neoliberalism' (Petras 1997). Blanket assessments of feminist NGOs as handmaidens of neoliberal planetary patriarchy, as the *autónomas* would have it, fail to capture the ambiguities and variations in both the local implementation of the New Gender Policy Agenda and in and among NGOs themselves (Alvarez, 1999, p. 200).

I strongly agree with Alvarez's assertion, and in this thesis, aim to shed light on the ambiguities GM has created in a specific context. Now, I am turning my lens on the accounts of my interlocutors who have been working on projects in collaboration with a variety of parties.

3.4.2 An urge to fill the gap: GM as a response to particular conjuncture

In the literature, 'project feminism' in Turkey is generally presented as an adaption of the Western one. It is fair to argue that it cannot be understood without its underpinnings of 'the new global order' discourse, i.e., global governance, corporate governance, and the diminishment of the state. However, additionally, my findings reveal that GM activities in Turkey came forward also as a result of positioning

against the existing political power and its politics as well as an urge to prevent reproduction of sexism. Helin, who has been a part of civil society for as long as she can remember, explains it in the following way:

Apart from winds coming from the UN institutions, the conjuncture of Turkey has a serious impact on these activities. We are currently subject to the rule of an oppressive regime. Turkey is now ruled by a hybrid democracy rather than a full democracy. On the one hand, the Istanbul Convention is being repealed, while violence against women continues to rise. Civil society and feminist organizations, on the other hand, are speaking out against it. The private sector, you know, is attempting to align itself with this conjuncture, thinking that they should say and do something.⁴⁴

It is well-known that the AKP government, since coming to power has successfully navigated neoliberal transformation processes while also serving as a prominent “defender of a conservative, religion-inspired and essentially patriarchal value system” (Acar & Altunok, 2013, p. 16). The neo-conservative stance of the government has been manifesting a discourse that weakens gender equality by emphasizing the centrality of family institutions and glorifying fixed gender roles (Acar & Altunok, 2013; Arat, 2010; Coşar & Yeğenoğlu, 2011). In response to this, as Helin denotes, multifarious coalitions have been established against it. The private sector is becoming more involved in GM projects. However, since they are not specialized in gender and feminist literature, they are either developing projects that reproduce sexism or collaborating with various feminist organizations, universities, and CSOs. Collaboration, in this context, is presented as a source of power as well as a tool to prevent “the waste of resources” as Helin calls it:

I was always wondering whether two parties [private sector and civil society] could be a power together. Because believe me, a lot of resources are wasted when not working together, when the problem is not analyzed correctly, the

⁴⁴ BM kurumlarından gelen rüzgâr dışında Türkiye'nin mevcut konjonktürünün çok ciddi bir etkisi olduğunu görüyoruz. Türkiye’de şu anda baskıcı bir rejimin içindeyiz yarı hibrit demokrasiyiz artık hani tam bir demokrasi değiliz. Bir yandan İstanbul Sözleşmesi yürürlükten kaldırılıyor, diğer yandan kadına yönelik şiddet artmaya devam ediyor. Sivil toplum ve feminist örgütler ise buna karşı seslerini yükseltiyorlar. O baskıyla birlikte hani özel sektör de biliyorsunuz kendini konumlanmaya çalışıyor hani orada bir çözüm rolüm olsun diyor.

projects developed can be ineffective and reproduce sexism even if it is well-intentioned. In the private sector, there is an ingrained structure that views women as worthless and constantly tries to support them. Additional support mechanisms for women's advancement, work-life balance, and childcare responsibility of women have never been taken into account; transformation is impossible if you can't see these structural obstacles⁴⁵.

For Helin, it is also necessary to integrate feminist theory into everyday life and disseminate what CSOs discuss within themselves. She asks:

There is an action taking place, the private sector is moving in one direction, and there is a strong women's movement on the other, and what will happen in the meantime? My main concern was who would fill this gap, who would carry the appropriate discourse to the other side?⁴⁶

In the same line of reasoning Mariel, an academic and a director of Kadir Has

University Gender and Women's Studies Research Center said:

The majority of people work in the private sector, how can we reach them if we don't go there? Nobody reads our academic articles.⁴⁷

Almost for all my interlocutors, every context in which people try to maintain their lives, including business, is a subject of feminist theory and there is no single way or place to enact it. In the words of Helin:

Social change must occur through various channels, that is, there must be a group shouting at the street, a group lobbying, and a group bringing this issue to a discussable level, so I do not believe that one of them is more valuable than the other.⁴⁸

In this regard, we can argue that GM has a more complex texture than it is

represented and that it needs to be thoroughly studied. Until now, I have tried to

⁴⁵ "İki tarafın birlikte bir güç olabilme alanı olabilir mi diye sorduğum bir şeydi çünkü birlikte çalışılmayınca inanın çok büyük kaynak da israf ediliyor, sorun doğru analiz edilmediğinde geliştirilen projeler iyi niyetli de olsa etkisiz olabiliyor yani cinsiyetçiliği yeniden üretilebiliyor. Özel sektörde kadınları değersiz gören ve sürekli onları desteklemeye çalışan köklü bir yapı var. Kadının yükselmesi için ek destek mekanizmaları kurulmamış iş- yaşam dengesi, şu kadının üzerindeki çocuk bakım sorumluluğu hiç kale alınmamış, bu tarafları göremeyince dönüşüm mümkün değil."

⁴⁶ "Bir eylem var gidiyor, özel sektör bir yöne doğru gidiyor, bu tarafta bir kadın hareketi var yani yüksek sesle konuşuyor bağırıyor ve şey yapıyor, e arada ne olacak? Benim en büyük sorum oydu yani, bu boşluğu kim dolduracak, doğru söylemi o tarafa kim taşıyacak?"

⁴⁷ "Çoğu kişi özel sektörde çalışıyor, yani oraya gitmezsek nasıl insanlara ulaşabiliriz? Kimse bizim akademik makalelerimizi okumuyor."

⁴⁸ "Değişimin sosyal değişimin farklı kanalları olmalı yani sokakta bağırın bir grup da olmalı, lobi yapan bir grup da olmalı daha böyle bu konuyu konuşulabilir zemine çeken bir grup da olmalı yani tek bir tarafın diğerinden daha değerli ve önemli olduğunu düşünmüyorum."

convey the importance of ‘the new global order’ discourse in determining GM projects, while also emphasizing that it cannot be explained solely as a result of it. Although feminism as a grassroots movement has a unique history in Turkey, there is also a growing trend of enacting feminism through GM projects and activities for institutional change. Because this thesis focuses on the latter, the following chapter delves into the praxis of some of these projects for shedding light on the contestations, negotiations, and compromises.

CHAPTER 4

WORLD-BUILDING ENGAGEMENTS: COLLABORATION AND ITS EXCESS

What does gender mainstreaming do? Which ambiguities does it create? How does it produce new actors, institutional structures, work habits, as well as various meanings in different contexts? In this chapter, I intend to trace these questions by focusing on collaboration. Particularly, by focusing on contestations, negotiations, and compromises that ensued from the collaboration, I aim to reveal the conflictual meanings of GM as well as its practices in the context of Turkey. In order to do this, I will draw on the accounts of my interlocutors, who are the ones who participate in the contact zones on a daily basis. Contact zones, as I argue, are “terrains of struggle” where contestations, negotiations, and compromises take place (Li, 1999; Pratt, 1991). However, since my participation in contact zones is limited, stories told by my interlocutors will serve as a solid basis for the arguments and analyses I wish to make in this chapter. I will combine my observations with the accounts of GM practitioners Helin, Okan, Salih, Mariel, Elsa, Serap, Kemal, Elif, and Özlem to further comprehend the collaboration between corporations, government agencies, and academic research institutes.

I find it important to bring our lens to terrains of struggle because they reveal what has been problematized, and what is emerging as a problem in those very moments (Foucault, 1984; Gilson, 2014). I put forward that focusing on these terrains enables “problematization” in a Foucauldian sense which refers to a process of “elaborating and forming problems”, defining both the “contours of a problem and the conditions” that cause it to exist (Gilson, 2014, p. 77). Using collaboration as a methodological tool, on the other hand, draws attention away from the never-ending

standoff between opposing interest groups, not because it implies that compromise is always on the horizon but because it fosters new interests and identities that not everyone benefits from them (Tsing, 2005). Deriving from these presumptions, in this chapter, I focus on the tensions that occurred between various parties and the implications of collaboration on gender equality.

In the first section of this chapter, I concentrate on conflicts that ensue in collaborative projects established with governmental institutions and how they are resolved. Here, I will argue that anti-gender discourses of the Turkish government need to be interpreted also as an effort for reinstalling its power vis-a-vis “the West”, and its proponents in Turkey. As a result, the debate’s ground is shifted, forcing gender rights advocates to devise new strategies that influence gender conceptualizations and performances. Moreover, strategies to mitigate conflicts sometimes result in the consolidation of governmental authority and sometimes its weakening. I demonstrate that how these conflicts are resolved directly affects the discussion of gender. In the second section of the chapter, on the other hand, I am going to focus on challenges raised in the collaboration with the business where patriarchal norms are very much ingrained in its institutional structure. Also, I show different tactics developed by advocates of gender equality to achieve their stated goals to argue that GM activities are more than pink-washing and generate new working habits that bring new questions. In the last section of the chapter, I discuss the unintended consequences of the collaborative projects for GM. In other words, I contemplate the new identities, new work habits, and new institutional structures fostered by the collaboration.

4.1 To collaborate, or not to collaborate with the government

It is almost illegal to use the word "equality" in certain situations, and it is punishable by imprisonment if you use it excessively. It [GM] is a knife-edge issue; it is an issue that you might fall foul of the government In Turkey.⁴⁹

- Okan, the trainer.

This is what Okan, a psychological counselor and education specialist who worked in AÇEV (Mother Child Education Foundation) as a training coordinator for ten years before founding a consulting and training company and becoming a freelance trainer and a consultant, told me while explaining GM activities in Turkey. I find this quotation very essential first because it expresses a belief shared by many other gender rights advocates that define the boundaries of the terrain in which they are attempting to act. Second, I find it ironic that the government participates in such projects despite its strict opposition to GM activities and the term “gender” itself. Therefore, it is reasonable to ask why governmental institutions in Turkey, such as ministries, municipalities, and district governorships, engage in GM activities, despite their authoritative discourse on gender. It is, in fact, difficult to ask this question since public institutions diverge in terms of the ideologies of the political parties to which they belong and because most of the activities are not labeled as “gender mainstreaming” since the term “gender” fall foul of Turkish government’s ideologies. But still, I believe, government workers’ opposition deserves to be approached with caution in terms of revealing the sensitivities of the government in relation to ‘the new global order’ discourse as well as to gender equality. Thus, I find asking this question essential to understand both the governmental attitudes towards GM and the other parties who are willing to collaborate with these institutions.

⁴⁹ “Bazı konularda eşitlik demek yasak Türkiye’de, hapse girebilirsin çok eşitlik dersin. Bıçak sırtı bir konu, hükümetle ters düşebileceğin de bir konu.”

In the previous chapter, I tried to show various motivations behind participating in GM activities and argued that ‘the new global order’ discourse, as well as standby agreements for EU and OECD memberships, pushed the government of Turkey to align with Western standards and practices (Ararat & Uğur, 2003; Babül, 2017; Kaya, 2014). These standards, however, are not passively accepted, and practices are not free of contestation and debate (Babül, 2017; Mosse, 2005); on the contrary, they generate counterattacks, affecting the conceptualization of gender and its performances. Thus, in the following two sections, I examine various nodes that arise from collaboration with governmental institutions and how they are disentangled by various strategies developed by gender rights advocates. I believe diving into their disputes would allow us to illuminate the conflictual meanings of GM in the context of Turkey.

In the first sub-section, I focus on the reactions of government workers towards GM activities and argue that GM appears to be a threat to the Turkish government not just because it challenges masculinity but also because it undermines the government’s power to define social relations. The debate over who will have the final say, the government as the purveyor of the national power or transnational agencies as purveyors of transnational power, displaces the ground of the main issue and forces gender rights advocates to develop various strategies that affect gender conceptualizations and performances. My findings demonstrate that collaboration with governmental institutions always ends up making concessions about gender equality and consolidation of governmental authority.

On the other hand, in the second sub-section, I dwell on the instances that create the impossibility of collaboration with the government. Gender equality advocates, for maintaining their projects without making concessions about gender

equality, apply to other sources including funds from abroad, and establish freelance companies to bypass the government and its protocols. This results in the weakening of the governmental authority yet the privatization of CSOs and problems such as unequal distribution of access to GM activities. This section demonstrates that far-right circles in Turkey including the government, maternalist women organizations, and the mainstream media are against GM because it challenges patriarchal relations that play a central role in the formation and reproduction of nation-states.

4.1.1 Playing with existing hierarchies: The oscillation between geographical hierarchies and sexism

Almost all trainers I interviewed stated that they have no trouble with any training as much as with governmental institutions. In the words of Okan:

I received the worst beating in Çanakkale's Çan interior, two hundred governmental workers gave me hell. They said, “you have had shifted your qibla to the West”, “you always use European examples and never mention *Veda Hutbesi* [the Farewell Sermon]”, “what you have been arguing is nothing more than Western imposition”.⁵⁰

GM activities in this context are portrayed not just as advocacy of gender equality but as a betrayal of religious sensitivities, and national and local values. In this sense, they contribute to yielding “reactionary nationalism”, which is justified by asymmetrical power relations based on geographical disparities⁵¹ (Babül, 2017, p.

⁵⁰ “En büyük dayağı Çanakkale’nin Çan ilçesinde yedim mesela, iki yüz kamu çalışanı benim canıma okudu. Mesela şu lafi duydum “siz kibleinizi Batı’ya çevirmişsiniz”, “siz hep Avrupa’dan örnekler veriyorsunuz”, “Veda Hutbesinden hiç bahsetmiyorsunuz”, “bunlar Batı’nın bize dayatması olan şeyler” dediler”.

⁵¹ In that sense, my data confirms Elif Babül’s findings. Drawing on her extensive fieldwork conducted in the human rights training programs, she demonstrates how governmental subjects consolidate governmental legitimacy and bureaucratic authority despite their shifting position from the educator to the one in need of education. As she puts forward, “the tutelary relationship between the state elites and ordinary citizens” and the cultural superiority of governmental workers can be traced back to the early Republican period (p. 41). State elites have been drawing a distinction between themselves and common people based on their high level of education and their ‘civilizing duty (p. 43). Her ethnographic records affirm that the hierarchy is achieved to be maintained through governmental workers accuse of training programs and cosmopolitan academics by not having “locally grounded knowledge” (p. 55). In the words of Babül, “being internationally connected becomes synonymous with being disconnected from

54). As Partha Chatterjee demonstrates in his book *The Politics of the Governed*, in everyday encounters, groups who can relatively exercise less power, play with the existing structures, and adapt them to their own interests (2004). In the context of trainings, since government workers are in the position of “in need of education and reform”, they have less power than in their everyday configurations (Babül, 2017, p. 42). This, combined with ‘the new global order’ discourse and Western standards of governance influencing Turkey, leads to government workers exploiting geographical disparities to advance their own interests, i.e., justifying violence against women. In other words, government workers adapt nationalism and Western hostility as counter-discourses to reinstate their sovereign position at the training as well as to justify violence towards women. Rather than passively accepting what has been said, they play with the hierarchical structures, holding on to the historical and geographical division to which they are subjected and using it to legitimize their own prestigious position both as a man and as a bureaucrat. In this sense, contrary to acting unconsciously or ignorantly, “they have a specific idea of what they have and what they can achieve” (Zeybek, 2012, p. 1559).

Although governmental institutions participate in such trainings as one of the conditions of being included in the global market economy, “everyday sites of development partnership” reveals that government workers are deliberately undermining what is imposed by ‘the new global order’ discourse (Babül, 2017, p. 11). This is why I have been claiming GM needs to be analyzed within this frame. In fact, the existence of the nation-state appears to be threatened by GM and its

local/national reality and thus incapable of understanding and addressing the actual problems facing Turkey” (p. 55). In that sense, EU accession and human rights training programs are not succeeded in undoing hierarchies, on the contrary, they contribute to yielding a reactionary nationalism as opposed to international asymmetries of power and socio-economic privilege as well as justifying the bureaucratic authority.

transnational connotations because they challenge “imagined communities” as Benedict Anderson refers to them, by establishing "contact zones" built on heterogeneous networks (Anderson, 1984; Pratt, 1991). In “Arts of Contact Zones” Mary Louise Pratt (1991) refers to Benedict Anderson and his well-known book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, stating that the concept of “contact zone” contradicts three features that imagined communities are built on: a finite boundary, a sovereign status, and “a deep horizontal comradeship” (Anderson, 1991, p. 15). Therefore, since GM unsettles the power dynamics that the government relied on, it frustrates government workers and ends up with their attempt to shift the ground of the debate. As a result, gender has remained stuck in power struggles between two positions of power embodied in the nation-state and transnational governance. I claim opposition of government workers has unique consequences for gender equality.

This backlash that identifies GM activities with the Western impositions creates an impossibility of mainly focusing on gender. As Okan points out, the Farewell Sermon is represented as a testimonial of universal human rights by the government workers even though it involves phrases legitimizing slavery and violence against women. In response to that Okan indicates:

I do not say “as you know, there is a phrase in the sermon that allows for the lightly battering of a wife”. Because training would be over as soon as I said that. I am attempting to put it implicitly by arguing that we should look at the references. Let them not say, "wow, what are the traitors talking about". My priority is to create a resistance-free terrain and make them exposed to what I am saying voluntarily.⁵²

⁵² “Ben demiyorum, “farkındaysanız onun [hutbenin] içinde bu da var”. Yani “referanslara bakmak lazım diyorum”, üstü kapalı söylüyorum sadece bunu çünkü onu dediğim anda bir daha eğitim yok. “Vay hainler neler anlatıyorlar” demesin. Benim birinci önceliğim direnç yaratmamak, gönüllü bir şekilde dediğime maruz kalmasını sağlamak.”

As it is obvious in his words, these counterattacks shape what to say and what not to say in the training. Neither gender equality nor Western standards but the sensitivities of the audience start to determine the course of events. This leads trainers to develop various strategies, sometimes evading as in the example of Okan, sometimes learning more about the sensitivities of the audience as a part of the capacity-building logic, and sometimes developing a certain jargon. For instance, Salih, another freelance trainer who worked at AÇEV for almost 13 years and co-founder of a training and consulting company, denotes:

Embracing me, the trainer, is easier in a long-term program, in a six, seven, or ten-week training session, but in a one-and-a-half-hour seminar, jargon is the way to ensure it. Opening the session by hailing "selamün aleyküm" and talking more about yourself as a friend prevents estrangement.⁵³

The format of the trainings also plays a determining role in how the conflicts will be managed, and this will be emphasized in the next chapter. Now, I focus on what Salih underlines about the jargon and the conflict between the intellectual and non-intellectual.

The jargon of the audience is adopted for undoing the hierarchies between the intellectual and non-intellectual for preventing any resistance. Since, in the words of Salih, "in our society, non-intellecuals are eager to exclude the literate intellectual", he behaves like one of the government workers rather than being in a position of an intellectual who knows better and thus teaches. As Babül (2017) nicely argues, capacity-building projects, which aim to push Turkey's bureaucracy to meet Western standards, favor those who are familiar with those practices. Therefore, since it disrupts "the elite positioning of the bureaucrats", trainings are complicating power

⁵³“ Beni benimsemelerinden bahsediyorum, bu işte uzun süreli bir programda, altı, yedi, on haftalık haftada iki saat görüştüğümüz bir ortamda daha kolaydır ama bir buçuk saatlik bir seminerde onu sağlamanız gerekiyor. Onu ne sağlar? Jargon, “selamın aleyküm” ile başlamak. Bir arkadaş gibi kendinizden bahsetmeniz yabancı hissetmelerini önler.”

dynamics between government and non-government actors (Babül, 2017, p. 49). Adopting the audience's jargon in this context is for undoing the hierarchies, however, it actually results in consolidating the governmental authority and its premises about gender. However, as I will bring forward in the next chapter, this attitude could have a certain potential in terms of establishing voluntary contact between groups who rarely interact in everyday life and making them discuss issues like gender.

The consolidation of governmental authority comes about also in the projects that GM practitioners accept to use the phrase "equality between men and women" instead of "gender equality" at the request of the governmental actors. However, for some proponents of gender equality, this is viewed as a minor issue. For instance, as Elsa, the director of CGFT puts forward:

I do not believe we have encountered a major stumbling block. There are minor details. For example, instead of using the concept of gender equality, we must say equality between men and women, which necessitates the use of gender binary in public documents if the public contribution is significant. However, I do not believe that these have changed the essence of the work, because the most important element of ensuring the realization of sustainable⁵⁴ development is the cooperation of the state, business, and civil society including universities.⁵⁵

Subjects who are not included in the binary gender regime and the political struggle for using the term gender are sacrificed for the sake of collaboration and sustainable development which are initially portrayed as tools for equality. Rather than being a tool, collaboration and development are becoming the main objects of these projects.

⁵⁴ Since the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Progress was established in 1992, sustainability has been represented as a critical strategy for addressing environmental issues and enabling countries' social and economic development (Mercimek, 2019).

⁵⁵ "Ben ciddi bir engelle karşılaştığımızı düşünmüyorum. Ufak tefek şeyler var örneğin toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği kavramını kullanmak yerine kadın erkek eşitliği dememiz gerekiyor yani binary bir cinsiyet kavramını kullanmak zorunda kalıyoruz, kamuya açık dokümanlarda, eğer kamu katkısı önemliyse. Ama bunların ben için özünü değiştirdiği kanısında değilim. Çünkü sonuç olarak sürdürülebilir kalkınmanın hayata geçmesini sağlamanın en önemli unsuru devlet, iş dünyası ve sivil toplumun ve bunun içinde üniversiteler de var, birlikte çalışması zorunlu.

As a product of the staunch opposition towards GM activities in Turkey, this pragmatic attitude makes gender equality something that can be negotiated. As I demonstrate in the following chapter, every act in this terrain is the result of a constant calculation of costs and benefits. Now, I will sum up what I have been arguing.

A study of GM requires an understanding of power dynamics among various parties, because, without it, the consequences for gender equality and problems that should be addressed may go unnoticed. As I tried to portray, GM and its transnational connotations, which are linked with global and corporate governance frustrate government workers and end up dislocating the ground of the debate. In the following section, I will dwell more on the connotations of gender that exasperate government workers, arguing that GM is not frustrating only them but also other groups in Turkey that profit from the maintenance of the existing order which is leaning on patriarchy, nationalism, and capitalism. In this sub-section, on the other hand, I aimed to underline that although the attack of government workers on GM activities is not merely about gender, it creates consequences in terms of gender equality. The opposition of the government workers creates three results. First, it pushes gender equality advocates towards developing specific strategies to make themselves heard, such as acting based on the audience's sensitivities i.e., learning more about the hadiths and khutbahs, or adopting their jargon, which results in the consolidation of governmental authority and their sexist premises. Second, in order to make the work done, gender equality advocates become obliged to compromise. Third, it leads to developing a pragmatic attitude that results in leaving some issues out of the debate. This will be more emphasized throughout the chapter, now I turn my lens toward instances that defy the governmental authority.

4.1.2 Threatening concept ‘gender’: Privatization as a strategy for bypassing the state

My findings demonstrate that collaboration with governmental institutions always results in gender equality advocates’ concessions based on the sensitivities of the government. However, in order to carry out GM activities without compromise, gender experts use alternative methods, such as applying other sources provided by transnational agencies or companies and developing different institutional structures in which they are not required to collaborate with the government. For illustrating my argument, I begin with a concrete example that also allows me to make other arguments.

While we were talking about initiating projects, Okan told me about their upcoming initiative:

The Swedish consulate released a project announcement before the pandemic, and you know, the consulate is very good at gender issues. I previously carried out one of its projects at AÇEV. Thus, we decided to apply. Since the Ministry of National Education has already messed up what is going on in this regard, what can we do then, we said let's write about a project on gender equality in education [...] We have designed a year of in-depth study for gender at a private school, trainings for parents, teachers, students, and all the personnel. We have imagined touching everyone who has an impact on the child, conducting a pre-and post-test, and seeing what happens. The project was accepted.⁵⁶

When Okan said: "the Ministry of National Education has already messed up what was going on in this regard", he was referring to the Ministry of Education's removal of the Promoting Gender Equality in Education Project (ETCEP). The project that was launched in 2014, funded by the European Union and the Government of Turkey

⁵⁶ “İsveç konsolosluğu pandemi öncesinde bir proje duyurusu yayınladı ve biliyorsun konsolosluk toplumsal cinsiyet konularında çok iyi. Daha önce AÇEV’de bir projesini yürütmüştüm. Bu nedenle başvurmaya karar verdik. Madem Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı bu konuda zaten ortalığı karıştırmış, ne yapalım o zaman eğitimde cinsiyet eşitliği ile ilgili bir proje yazalım dedik [...] Özel okulda cinsiyet, ailelere, öğretmenlere, öğrencilere ve tüm personele yönelik eğitimler. Çocuk üzerinde etkisi olan herkese dokunalım bakalım etkisi ne olacak, ön test son test yapalım, olduğunu görelim dedik. Proje kabul edildi.”

aimed to develop tools for making schools gender-sensitive environments. The project that was conducted and completed in 162 pilot schools, was about to pass to the implementation phase. It was, however, canceled by the ministry only two days after former Minister Ziya Selçuk announced the project's implementation. Yekta Saraç, the president of the Council of Higher Education back then, argued that the concept of gender is incompatible with Turkey's social values and acceptances⁵⁷. His words were in line with the backlash from several groups including maternalist women organizations and the conservative media in Turkey. For instance, Yeni Akit [New Agreement], a fundamentalist far-right Turkish daily newspaper indicated that “homosexual perversion is instilled in children through the ETCEP project”⁵⁸. KADEM [Women and Democracy Association], on the other hand, in a public statement denoted that:

We believe that the project’s approach, which ignores gender differences entirely, renders the unique characteristics of the male and female sexes meaningless, reinforcing the genderless perception. In addition, the term “sexual orientation” is used in the project guide article, which states, “There is no discrimination between parents, in terms of language, religion, race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and so on.” We evaluate this expression as a justification of various sexual preferences and we do not accept it [...] As KADEM, we adopt the principle of gender justice in social regulations governing women's and men's roles, and we apply this principle to all of our work in this field.⁵⁹

In these discourses, the term gender is either distorted or denied. KADEM as a maternalist women's organization rather than advocating gender equality, emphasizes the importance of reaffirming ‘women’s feminine functions and roles’ as if they are biologically determined (Mies, 1981). For them, gender is a biological category rather than social, therefore, roles associated with these categories are also innate. In

⁵⁷ <https://kesk.org.tr/2019/02/20/egitim-sen-yok-baskaninin-aciklamasi-turkiyede-yasanan-kadin-dusmanligini-en-yetkili-agizlardan-onaylayan-bir-ibret-vesikasidir/>

⁵⁸ <https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/etcep-projesi-ile-cocuklara-escinsel-sapkinlik-asilaniyor-580447.html>

⁵⁹ <https://www.sabah.com.tr/egitim/kademden-etcep-aciklamasi-4490309>

GM activities, contrarily, the term gender is framed as a social product which itself denotes that gender roles are socially produced and can be altered accordingly.

According to my interlocutors, KADEM's understanding of gender, however, is shared by a significant number of people in Turkey. Almost all trainers mentioned this as one of the greatest challenges they face. In the words of Salih:

There is an issue of *fitrat* [disposition]. They strongly insist on: "men and women have different dispositions that God has given them; let us not try to change. Women are compassionate and emotional, and this is a fact"⁶⁰.

This conceptualization of gender that essentializes gender roles have always been contributing to the reproduction of patriarchy and unequal division of labor (Federici, 2004; Meis, 1981). In *Gender of Turkish Modernization: Men Establish the State, Women Establish the Family*, Sancar (2012) portrays that throughout the modern nation-building process of Turkey, women were represented as individuals responsible for raising the new state's modern children and the maintenance of the family while men were represented as the state's founders and keepers. The woman's role as wife and mother has always been emphasized as a national duty (Kadiođlu 1998; Sirman, 1989). This constituted gender regime which is more or less prevalent today in Turkey glorifies femininity because of its 'natural gift' of the maternity (Gülen, 2015). According to Meltem Ahıska (1994), this belief also unfolds as a feminist understanding concluded for undoing the 'otherness' of women. This approach is based on emphasizing the biological difference of 'womanhood' and glorifying everything specific to its nature (Ahıska, 1994). However, Ahıska highlights another approach, manifested in the history of feminism, that embraces cultural positionality and the relationality of gender (1994). By bringing forward the distribution of social and cultural codes between the poles of femininity and

⁶⁰ "Yani işte bir fitrat meselesi var, kadının fitratı erkeğin fitratı. Kadının bir fitratı var Allah'ın verdiği, erkeğin var, bunu değiştirmeye çalışmayalım. Kadını şefkatlidir, duygusaldır, şudur budur."

masculinity, this approach collapses an ahistorical definition of what we can call the essence of women (Ahiska, 1994). Because the concept of gender derives its meaning from such a context, equating it with biological sex is tantamount to denying the term's meaning.

In the discourse of Yeni Akit, on the other hand, the meaning of gender is distorted. It is presented as “propaganda of homosexuality” as if it is something need to be afraid of (Akit, 2019). First, this representation results in producing non-heterosexual bodies as objects of hatred and legitimizing all sorts of discrimination and violence against them (Ahmed, 2004). Second, it shifts the ground of the truth, it equates equality with sameness. Salih argues that they encounter this type of reasoning in the trainings held in companies as well:

The main issue I observe in trainings, including in companies, is that people mistake equality for sameness. It's such very funny, but it's true. When we say that you are equal as a woman, a bisexual, a gay, a white, and a black person, for example, I have been asked, “How come I am a woman now?”⁶¹

Although Salih finds this response funny, all trainers including himself try very hard to fix this misunderstanding. This is why illuminating contact zones is fundamental, it enables to shift of what has been problematized and opens up terrains for re-assessing the problems (Gilson, 2014). This quotation, for instance, reveals that misinterpretation of the meaning of gender is an essential obstacle in Turkey for actualizing GM activities. Nonetheless, since this will be the focus of the next chapter, I turn to how this opposition is interpreted by the trainers. Okan summarizes this opposition as follows:

The concern that ‘they are attempting to change us and turn us into homosexuals with the help of the European Union’ has been a concern for

⁶¹ “Türkiye’de benim şirketlerde bütün bu cinsiyet rolleri eğitimlerinde falan gördüğüm en temel sıkıntı şu, eşitliği aynılık zannediyor insanlar. Bu çok komik basit bir şey ama gerçekten öyle. Sen kadın olarak biseksüel olarak eşcinsel olarak, beyaz siyah bilmem ne olarak eşitsin dediğimiz zaman. "Nasıl yani ben şimdi kadın mı oluyorum?" diyor mesela.”

five or six years; it was not like this before. Thus, now we are trying to adjust our positions in light of the fact that reality has evolved there.⁶²

As I tried to show in the previous section as well, this positioning has a very large repertoire. It includes, in the words of Okan, “developing a language that alleviates anxieties such as narrating the issue through a binary gender regime” and developing projects that could bypass the governmental institutions. Designing a project targeting private schools is one an example. As Okan continues:

Private schools already have opportunities; you may ask why you are doing it there, but Turkey is in such a difficult chokepoint that it is critical to even create a model in a private school in this case. To put it another way, when deciding on a project, it is necessary, to begin with, the needs and realities.⁶³

This, of course, raises the question of how these trainings will be made available for public schools. Although privatization generates an unequal distribution of access, as I previously stated, the Turkish reality leads to gender equality advocates adopting a pragmatic attitude in which they constantly calculate how to frame gender and where to narrate equality. On the other hand, it results in the formation of new institutional structures. I argue that increasing freelance initiatives need to be considered in this context. Because associations are required to follow certain protocols that compel them to form a relationship with government institutions, establishing freelance companies emerges as a viable option for avoiding this relationship. In Turkey, the number of freelance companies providing gender equality training and consulting services is increasing. Far from competing, they collaborate and share projects. It should not be coincident that employees who quit AÇEV, establish freelance companies, yet continue to collaborate with AÇEV. GM practitioners, thus, tend to

⁶² “Avrupa Birliği, katkısıyla bizi değiştirmeye, eşcinselleştirmeye çalışıyorlar’ endişesi 5-6 yıldır var; daha önce bu denli değildi. Gerçeklik şu an biraz buraya evrildi, o yüzden biz de ona göre konum almaya çalışıyoruz.”

⁶³ “Özel okulların zaten imkanları var niye orada yapıyorsunuz diyebilirsiniz ama Türkiye o kadar zor bir dar boğazdan geçiyor ki bu durumda, özel okulda model oluşturmak bile çok önemli. Yani bir projeye karar verirken önce ihtiyaçlardan yola çıkmak iki gerçekliklerden yola çıkmak lazım.”

establish freelance companies with various motivations including securing gender rights, working more autonomously, earning a living, and making an entrepreneurial profit. Although the emergence of private companies for GM has also a strong link with the process of privatization of public services as part of the neoliberal logic, it cannot be solely explained by that. It is this neoliberal logic juxtaposed with the authoritarian rule of governments. In the words of Okan:

When you operate on your own company, which you call freelancing, you have much more freedom, especially if you do it alone, you can make your own decisions and progress much faster, which I believe is one of the most significant differences [...] We have less fear; in the worst-case scenario, we lose a certain project; however, because AÇEV is a waqf, it is required to follow certain procedures.⁶⁴

Thus, in the Turkish context, working at a freelance company means working without making concessions on the issues of gender. Rather than behaving according to the sensitivities of the government or obeying their protocols, some gender rights advocates find privatization as a strategy for bypassing the state. This correlates with Dennis R. Young's (2015) definition of entrepreneurs, as actors who seek spaces of creativity and autonomy apart from material goals (Laville et al., 2015). On the other hand, the need to work faster as an emerging issue is linked to increased collaboration with corporations. Now, I will dwell on the collaboration with corporations.

4.2 Collaboration with corporations: Possibilities and limits

In this section of the thesis, I elaborate on the backlash from male employees and its ramifications in the broader context of Turkey. Here, I also want to show that

⁶⁴ "Freelance çalışma diye adlandırdığım kendi şirketi üzerine çalıştığında çok daha özgürsün hele tek başına yapıyorsan çok daha hızlı karar alıp ilerleyebiliyorsun, bence en büyük farklarından bir tanesi [...] Bir de bizim korku diyeceğim ama korkumuz daha az, en fazla iş kaybederiz ama AÇEV bir vakıf olduğu için bazı prosedürleri var."

companies emerging as terrains of advocacy and contestation based on gender equality. Through collaboration, GM practitioners develop various practices to overcome the barriers to increasing women's employment. However, collaboration with companies has costs including changes in working habits by emanating the market rationale into non-market forces and favoring practices embodied by Western middle-class women.

In the first sub-section, I show collaboration with corporations is also fraught with difficulty. Since GM activities aim to distort the superior position of men in corporations, it bothers hegemonic masculinity regardless of socioeconomic status and occupation. I find challenges ensued by men toward GM essential in terms of resonating with what Kandiyoti refers to as a “crisis of masculinity” (Kandiyoti, 2013 January 10). In the second-sub section, I discuss the effects of collaboration with corporations in terms of changing institutional structures and working habits that raise the questions of transculturation and managerialism.

4.2.1 Frustrations of Masculinity

In the previous sections, I aimed to show a wide range of repertoire developed by trainers for handling the contestations that ensue in trainings. Despite the fact that confrontation is the least preferred approach, it is sometimes seen as necessary for trainers, especially in cases of legitimizing honor killings. For instance, Okan thinks, confrontation was necessary when textile laborers appraise honor killings:

In the textile workshop, someone said: “Of course, in general, I am opposed to violence, with the exception of honor. For the sake of honor, a woman can be killed if necessary”. My eyes widened. Then the entire group began defending it. Here, you cannot think of what will happen if I confront it, whether I lose the audience or not. You must state that it is unacceptable and that it should not even be discussed.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ “Tabi hocam namus hariç ben de şiddete karşıyım ama namusta gerekirse bir kadın öldürülebilir de diyen oldu tekstil atölyesinde çalışırken. Bunu duyunca gözlerim büyüdü artık, yok artık yani. Sonra ne

Bethany A. Corbin (2014) defines honor killings as “the organized murder of a family member—typically female—for bringing perceived shame and dishonor to her family or community” (p. 280). Although the definition of honor varies by region and culture, according to Corbin, it has been remaining for centuries (Corbin, 2014). As Corbin points out, in Turkey, it has two contrasting meanings. *Şeref* refers to virtuous behavior possessed solely by men as a marker of social worth whereas *namus* as in the honor killings [*namus cinayetleri*] refers to “moral qualities that women ought to have” (Corbin, 2014, p. 282). However, Nükhet Sirman argues that *namus* is a social phenomenon that not only governs the female body, but takes control of all individuals’ place in society, their behavior, and desires (2006). Beyond being a control mechanism, it functions as organizing inter-group and intra-group relations of the patriarchal society (2006). In her words, “A man becomes dishonest when he cannot control the sexuality of a woman or women under his responsibility, whereas a dishonest woman is one who cannot control her own sexuality”⁶⁶ (2006, p. 49). This is to say that women’s sexuality is kept under control by men in this patriarchal equation (Kalav, 2012). Corbin writes, “Structured as a gender-specific code of honor, *namus* requires females to maintain their family’s social reputation through sexual purity and creates a preoccupation with women’s chastity” (p. 282). However, Dicle Koğacıoğlu (2004) objects to framing honor killings as codes of honor, or as a product of a particular tradition or culture.

According to Koğacıoğlu, honor killings “stand at the intersection of multiple

oldu biliyor musun bütün grup bunu savunmaya başladı. Burada işte şey yapamazsın, yok grubu kaybederim eğitim gitmez, orada diyeceksin ki bu gibi durumlarda arkadaşlar bu söylediğiniz şey şiddet, tartışması yok bir insanın hayatından bahsediyorsunuz farkında mısınız deyip orada mesela yüzleştirmeyi yapacaksınız.”

⁶⁶ “Bir erkek, kendi sorumluluğu altındaki kadın ya da kadınların cinselliğini kontrol edemezse ‘namussuz’ olurken, namussuz kadın kendi cinselliği üzerinde kontrolü gerçekleştiremeyendir.”

political and social dynamics” when it is considered that “one’s ethnic identity as a minority, one’s activism, or one’s position in relation to state structures are integral to” the maintenance of honor killings (2004, p. 119). She argues that because traditions are formed and reformed “in relation to the actions of institutions”, reducing and eventually abolishing honor killings requires the intervention of institutions (p. 120). However, the rationale that places the blame on tradition erases the institutions’ responsibilities in this regard that Koğacıoğlu refer to as “the tradition effect” (2004, p. 121).

As in the case of conceptualizing honor, the domination of men over the female body is maintained through social sanctions and laws. In line with this, Acar and Altınok (2013) use the term ‘politics of intimate’ for denoting norms, discourses, decisions, policies, and laws that regulate the reproductive capabilities of individuals, sexualities, and intimate and family relationships. According to them, in the neo-conservative rule of the AKP government, any challenge to patriarchal and heterosexual family structure is strongly rejected as evidenced by the treatment of issues such as homosexuality, abortion, or the sexuality of young or unmarried women (2013). As a result, claims for reproductive or sexual rights do not receive a response from policymakers (2013).

Hence, neo-conservative politics, not only in Turkey but also in other countries, have been faced with women-led opposition, such as the Arab uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. Deriving from her observations, Kandiyoti claims that we are witnessing a “crisis of masculinity” that no longer secure its positional superiority over women (2013, January). The image of the male provider and a bread-winner clashes with the millions of unemployed male youths who are unable to support themselves, let alone protect women from the rigors of public exposure (2013).

Kandiyoti comes up with the term “restorative masculinity” which manifests itself in “more violent and coercive assertions of male prerogatives where the abuse of women can become a blood sport” (2013). In a similar line of reasoning, in one of the meetings of the “We Will Stop Femicide Platform” I participated in, the oppressive use of force by the current regime was seen as a reaction to the regime’s loss of political power. Therefore, I argue that responses toward GM activities can be understood within this framework as well.

During one of the trainings, Elif, the freelance trainer, a playwright, and a queer rights activist shared an anecdote and said:

When I asked what gender equality meant, a male employee from one of the companies said, "Ms. Elif, this company has been on our throats for three years, constantly mentioning gender equality. Please get off my bumper, I am treating my wife well".⁶⁷

Elif argues that we need to think about this response especially because it comes from someone who works in a company, working on gender equality for three years. I think it can be read in line with what Kandiyoti puts forwards: GM activities frustrate hegemonic masculinity because it aims to undo the superior position of men in one of the terrains where they have been sustaining a hegemonic position. Insomuch that many gender rights advocates, I have interviewed, mentioned the anxieties of men related to losing their jobs. In the words of Okan:

There are posters everywhere stating that we are increasing women’s employment in this company; as a man, he thinks that there will soon be no jobs for me [...] In that sense, trainings are critical; in trainings, you try to explain that because cake grows, you are not going to lose your job.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Peki ne demek toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği diye sorduğum şirketlerden birinde böyle bir erkek çalışan söz aldı dedi ki "Elif hanım bizim bu şirket üç yıldır gırtlığımızı basıyor toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği, toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği diye, ben karıma iyi davranıyorum düşün benim yakamdan" dedi”.

⁶⁸ Şimdi her yerde afişler var, ‘kadın istihdamını arttırıyoruz’ yazıyor bir şirkette, bir erkek olarak diyor ki “lan yakında bana iş kalmayacak” [...] Halbuki önce eğitime başla, de ki “istihdam çok önemli çünkü pasta büyüyor sana da iş kalacak merak etme”, eğitimler bu yüzden önemli.”

In line with this, Okan mentions that he sometimes feels uncomfortable with the way men look at him. He told me that “because I question masculinity and myself as a man, I have seen men's expressions like ‘wow look at the traitor he betrays our case [*davamıza ihanet ediyorsun*]. They do not tell me, but I feel”.

As I also learned from other GM practitioners, men’s discomfort regarding GM activities is not particular to certain class. According to Serap, the main manifestation of such is violence rates. While she was interpreting the results of BADV project, she put forward that “this became a study that completely debunk the notion that only women of low socioeconomic status are exposed to violence”.

Although different classes may employ different strategies, if we are discussing the crisis of masculinity, we are discussing it regardless of socioeconomic status or occupation. I stated that different classes may use different tactics because as evidenced by advocacy activity on corporate boards of directors, men on the boards of directors attempt to reproduce their dominant positions not through explicitly legitimizing violence but through covert ways such as cynicism. For illustrating this point, I would like to share the words of Serap, the CGFT project coordinator:

You can attend general assemblies even if you only own one lot of shares in publicly traded companies in Turkey. Thus, we purchased one lot of shares from companies as part of the 30% Turkey Club Project, and we attended their general assembly meetings to ask why they do not appoint women members. It is like we drop a bomb there. Of course, they hate me, they think I am a feminist who is obsessed with this issue.⁶⁹

The 30% Turkey Club Project, as I learned from her, is an offshoot of the Independent Women Directors Project, which was launched by Sabancı University’s Corporate Governance Forum in 2012, when the Capital Markets Board of Turkey

⁶⁹ “Türkiye’de halka açık şirketlerin herhangi birinden bir notluk hisseniz olsa dahi onların genel kurullarına katılıp soru sorabiliyorsunuz ya da görüş bildirebiliyorsunuz. Biz de bu şirketlerden birer lotluk hisse alıp genel kurullarına katıldık ve “neden kadın üye atamıyorsunuz?” diye soruyorduk. Sanki bomba atmış gibi oluyorduk Genellikle tabi benden nefret ediyorlar benim bir feminist ve bu konuya kafayı bozmuş bir insan olduğumu düşünüyorlar”

amended its Corporate Governance Guidelines. According to this amendment, companies are recommended to “set a target level of no less than 25% women on their boards” and determine when they plan to meet the goal⁷⁰. Serap told me that while her colleague was questioning the boards, he was met with a cynical response such as “whom will you recommend, will you recommend your wife?”

Here, “cynicism emerges as a necessary attitude to maintain and enhance” masculine power (Babül, 2017, p. 158). It goes hand in hand with an excuse of not having an adequate women candidate. In response to those excuses, within the scope of the Independent Women Directors Project, and in collaboration with a private company, a database containing the resumes of women professionals qualified to serve on the boards of public companies is maintained, and this database is made available to requesting companies free of charge. As a result, the rate of women on the boards, which was %11 in 2012, increased to %17 by 2021.

Apart from cynicism, according to two of my interlocutors, benevolent sexism and ambivalent sexism are widespread in corporations. As Salih denotes:

In secular companies, there is this difficulty referred to as benevolent sexism. You know, sexism has two different forms, one is hostile, and the other is benevolent. Everyone agrees on the first one, on the basis of not discriminating against women; they say, “let's put a fifty percent quota, let's be careful” etc., etc. However, benevolent sexism is the invisible form of sexism. Telling a women employee, “You have a child, go home early, we will work a little more” is an example of benevolent sexism. They continue and make some critical decisions, leaving her out of it. Acting too helpful, and making some jokes are other examples.⁷¹

⁷⁰ <https://cgft.sabanciuniv.edu/en/node/37>

⁷¹ “Türkiye'de seküler iş yapmaya önem veren firmaların zorlandığı nokta şu oluyor, benevolent sexism denen şey. Bilirsiniz, cinsiyetçiliğin iki farklı biçimi var, biri hostile diğeri benevolent. Kadınlara ayrımcılık yapılmaması temelinde yani birincisinde herkes hemfikir bu firmalar; “Yüzde elli kota koyalım, dikkat edelim” vb. diyorlar. Ancak benevolent cinsiyetçilik, cinsiyetçiliğin görünmeyen biçimidir. Bir kadın çalışana “Çocuğun var eve erken git, biz biraz daha çalışırız” demek benevolent cinsiyetçiliğe bir örnektir. Orada tartışmaya devam ederler ve bazı kritik kararlar alırlar ve kadını onu bunun dışında bırakırlar. Fazla yardımcı olmak ve bazı şakalar yapmak da buna örnek olabilir.”

Similarly, Kemal an academic who works at İstanbul Bilgi University and the director of the Center for Sociology and Education Studies as well as a freelance trainer puts forward that:

Ambivalent sexism is very common. These are not based on scientific data, but rather on intuition, and based on what I observe in the trainings organized in companies. The same source informs me that "I am not against women; heaven lies at the feet of mothers, so how can I be? I have a mother and a sister. I am just opposed to feminists." Therefore, in those trainings, he probably says that "I am not a sexist, why are you telling me this anyway?" It seems to me that this is such a fundamental problem.⁷²

Therefore, for some GM practitioners, aiming for policy change is insufficient; a more comprehensive attitude requiring different methods is necessary, as I will demonstrate in the following chapter.

Nevertheless, the accounts I provided were intended to demonstrate that GM activities are more than just pinkwashing. They include creative solutions such as developing a database and advocacy activities that promote contestation and debate in corporations. Examining these contestations reveals that GM activities are successful in terms of bothering hegemonic masculinity as well as challenging the “ideology of housewife, the notion of a woman sitting in the house, as providing the necessary subjective and socio-cultural element for the creation and maintenance of a production system” (Mohanty, 1988, p. 73). In the next section, I will further analyze the costs of collaborating with corporations.

⁷² “Ben bu ambivalent sexism denen, çelişkili cinsiyetçilik diyorlar, çok yaygın olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bunlar böyle çok bilimsel veriler değil ama çok sezgi, benim şirket eğitimlerinde gördüğüm. Çelişik duygulu cinsiyetçilikte aynı insanda ikisi de var, “kadınlar, anneler benim kız kardeşim” var, “cennet anaların ayakları altında, ben yani nasıl kadınlara karşı olabilirim ama ben şeye karşıyım bu feministlere karşıyım, bu feministlere karşıyım”, aynı insanda bu var. Dolayısıyla o eğitimlerde aslında diyor ki “ben cinsiyetçi değilim ki zaten bana bunu niye anlatıyorsun?” Böyle temel bir sorun var gibi geliyor bana.”

4.2.2 A transformational model: Change in working habits, terminologies, and rationale

Collaboration has an influence on each party. In this section, I discuss how collaboration with corporations affects the working habits of institutions, terminologies, and the rationale. I begin by narrating the history of AÇEV for portraying the transformative power of collaboration in general and change in institutional structures in particular. By depicting the history of AÇEV, I hope to demonstrate that collaboration has always been on the table and has a transformative effect both on the content and the form.

The story of AÇEV starts in 1982 when three professors from Boğaziçi University conducted a comprehensive study on preschool education in Turkey. When a 4-year study revealed the inadequacy of early childhood education in Turkey, scholars decided to develop a program called Mother-Child Education Program (MOCEP) as an “alternative home-based preschool education” (the Mother-Child Education Foundation, 2019). In 1993, the Mother-Child Education Foundation (AÇEV) has founded for promoting the program under the leadership of Ayşen Özyeğin who is currently a member of the seventh richest family in Turkey as well as the president of AÇEV (2019; Economist, 2021). Afterward, AÇEV began to implement MOCEP in collaboration with Turkey’s Ministry of National Education. According to one of my interlocutors, nonetheless, their relationship was never a stable one but rather full of turbulence, which I mentioned earlier. As Okan denotes, AÇEV has developed the Father Support Program in 1996, and trainers have started to mention gender roles to the fathers. In 1998, MOCEP was implemented in Bahrain, followed by Belgium and France in 2000. After receiving the “Millennium Award” from the Women’s Health Commission in 2001, AÇEV opened its

Education Center for Children and Families in Diyarbakır in 2003 (2019). When we come to 2009, AÇEV launched two more projects, the first of which was funded by the Sabanci Foundation's Grant Programs and the second by the Vodafone Turkey Foundation, both of which are foundations of well-known Turkish corporations (2019). Rewards dedicated to AÇEV, and its collaboration with diverse groups have been carried on in subsequent years. Nevertheless, Helin and Okan who worked in AÇEV for several years highlighted two breaking points in AÇEV's history; the first of which is the collaboration with UN Women, and the second is with Koç Holding. In their remarks, AÇEV's collaboration with the UN Women in 2010 has enabled gender mainstreaming in AÇEV, while being a partner in Koç Holding's project "I Support Gender Equality for My Country" in 2015, contributed to AÇEV's entry into companies. Since then, AÇEV has been implementing gender equality trainings in private sector organizations. After receiving a lot of demand from companies in this regard, AÇEV decided to launch a new entity called Equality Matters (Eşitliğe Değer), a social enterprise with the stated goal of promoting gender equality for organizations (Equality Matters, 2020). As Helin puts forward because AÇEV is an association, its current functioning was insufficient to meet corporations' requirements and thus they made the decision to restructure themselves in accordance with the working dynamics of the corporations. Therefore, I believe, it is reasonable to argue that this marks yet another breaking point in AÇEV's history. Since Equality Matters donates its incremental revenue to AÇEV from its services, including trainings and consulting, it adopted a quite different income structure compared to other CSOs as well as to AÇEV.

Equality Matters is a concrete example of a hybrid organization. The term "hybridity" has been used in organizational literature since at least the 1970s to

denote organizations “which are part public, part private” (Emmert & Crow, 1987, p. 55; Rhodes & Donnelly-Cox, 2014). In other words, they are “intermediate forms” combining public and market orientation (Joldersma & Winter, 2002; Wamsley & Zald, 1973). There are different approaches to these hybrid forms in organizational theory and I find two of them very essential (Rhodes & Donnelly-Cox, 2014). One of them defines hybrid organizations as “heterogonous arrangements” described by a mixture of different rationalities, action logics, cultures, and ideal types (Brandsen & Karré, 2011). The other approach, on the other hand, comes up with the term “prime sector” which denotes the primary sector that more or less determines the “rules of the game”, although have some elements from the other sectors (Billis, 2010, p. 3). As a social enterprise, Equality Matters combines “business practices and methods with social goals” but which prime sector determines the rules of the game is obscure (Rhodes & Donnelly-Cox, 2014, p. 5). In this regard, we can turn back to how Helin defines Equality Matter’s relationship with the private sector:

The relationship between the private sector and civil society organizations is not transactional, but transformational. It is not like “come on private sector I have a project, let’s support it”. More than that, it is a model that transforms both parties [...] In this model, conflicts emerge because of the different perspectives on work habits, but as we start working together these conflicts open up and gradually become talkable [...] Consequently, our working model is also changing, we start to work faster, agile, based on trial and error.

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Her words resonate with Anna Thomasson’s claiming that “the combination of characteristics and objectives present in a hybrid organisation generates conflict of interests” and seem to affirm both approaches to hybridity (2009, p. 364). However, her words also raise the issue of transculturation, it underlines a need to interrogate

⁷³ “Özel sektör ve sivil toplum kuruluşları arasındaki ilişki transactional değil, transformational. “Özel sektör benim projem var, hadi gel beni destekle” değil. Bunun da ötesinde, her iki tarafı da dönüştüren bir model [...] Burada sivil toplum çalışma bakış açısıyla bence özel sektör çalışma bakış açısının bir çatışması var ama bir çalışmaya başladıkça bu alanlar açılmaya başlıyor, yavaş yavaş konuşulabilir hale gelmeye başlıyor. İş yapış şekilleriyle ilgili sivil toplum açısından baktığımda bizim daha böyle hızlı karar almamız daha atik olmamız gerekiyor, deneme yanılma ile çalışmaya başlıyoruz.”

whose interests or rationalities are becoming dominant. Transculturation means “a process of cultural transformation marked by the influx of new cultural elements and the loss or alteration of existing ones” (Merriam-Webster, 2022). According to Pratt, as being a phenomenon of the contact zone, transculturation is different from assimilation or acculturation (1999). In the words of Pratt:

The term, originally coined by Cuban sociologist Fernando Ortiz in the 1940s, aimed to replace overly reductive concepts of acculturation and assimilation used to characterize culture under conquest. While subordinate peoples do not usually control what emanates from the dominant culture, they do determine to varying extents what gets absorbed into their own and what it gets used for.

In line with this, I argue that hybrid forms that are generated by the collaboration between diverse parties result in transculturation that requires more interrogation. As I argue, because it is difficult to discern who is oppressed and who is the oppressor in this terrain, the term transculturation can be employed as a methodological lens to identify whose values are becoming dominant and whose are being lost.

Most of the academics and CSO employees I have interviewed complain about companies’ requests for fast responses, treating other parties as subcontractors, being too demanding or the tendency to highlight their own corporate identity. However, just like Helin denotes, each party tries to adapt itself for maintaining the collaboration. For instance, corporations’ related departments such as human resources, corporate communication, or CSR units change their approach while working with CSOs. For instance, Borusan Holding Corporate Communications and CSR unit manager, Özlem puts forward that:

As we get to know each other, both parties adapt themselves. There is mutual learning, we learn from one another. We do not form a benefit-oriented relationship with NGOs, we do not approach them as if we purchase their service. For instance, we do not try to bargain or anything [...] However, progress in civil society may take longer, and their management

processes may be weaker in terms of governance and management, causing some problems.⁷⁴

To solve these problems CSOs start to use the lexicon and lucrative tools developed by the private sector such as accountability and effectiveness. As Helin denoted, rather than spending too much time on reflecting and designing, they try to keep up with the pace of the companies, developing models through trial and error. Changes in working habits are becoming consistent with neoliberal governmental rationality, which envisions a smaller government focused solely on maintaining the conditions of a functioning market economy, “while transferring welfare and social policy responsibilities to the private realm and to a civil society” now identified as the ‘third sector’ (Babül, 2017, p. 25; Burchell, 1997; Kamat, 2010). Although Özlem argues that they approach CSOs in a different manner, as I observe, gender rights advocates mention trainings as the service they supply for the demand of the private sector. Since trainings are framed as a service, the content of the trainings is generally determined by the companies’ needs which I will give more detail about in the next chapter.

This whole process is explained in the literature as CSOs entering a new era of ‘managerialism’ which is defined as a “system of description, explanation and interpretation of the world based on management categories” (Chalant, 1998, p. 61; Laville et al., 2015). This era is perceived to be dominated by instrumental rationality, with actors portrayed as “economic objects without any affect, history or culture” (Laville et al., 2015, p. 9). I believe, this instrumentality manifests itself in what I call the ‘pragmatic attitude’ gender advocates developed. However, rather

⁷⁴ “Birbirimizi tanıdıkça, her iki taraf da kendisini adapte ediyor. Karşılıklı öğrenme var, birbirimizden öğreniyoruz. STK'lar ile ilişkilerimizde standart bir satın alma yapar gibi, ticari yaklaşmıyoruz konuya. Orada bir pazarlık yapma şeyine girilmiyor. [...] Ancak sivil toplumda ilerleme daha uzun sürebiliyor ve yönetim süreçleri yönetim ve yönetim açısından daha zayıf olabiliyorlar ve bu da bazı sorunlara neden olabiliyor.”

than actors emerging ahistorically or aculturally, I attempted to demonstrate that their sensitivities and cultural affirmations play a critical role in the praxis of GM activities. Therefore, it can be argued that collaboration with corporations contributes to emanating the market rationale into the non-market forces, however, it is not enough to explain this terrain. As I will show in the following chapter, the practices have more relied on mediation, brokerage, and social skills rather than standardized professionalism, accounting, or managing.

4.3 Unintended consequences of GM: The excess

In this chapter, I tried to demonstrate that collaboration creates unintended consequences such as privatization, hybridization, and transculturation that in fact influence discussions of gender equality. In this sense, I argue, GM activities need to be conceptualized as world-building engagements rather than pinkwashing or smokescreen. Tsing employs the phrase "world-making projects" to describe projects that emerge from the practical activities of human and non-human actors co-creating lives that alter our planet (2015, p. 21, 22). Inspired by her, I refer to the material-semiotic worlds created by contact zones as world-building engagements. Rather than directly sustaining life, as in world-making projects, these engagements generate new materialities by redefining social categories on a regular basis. In this sense, I define GM activities as one of those world-building engagements because close contact between civil society, academia, and the public and private sectors at various scales, including international and domestic, creates new work habits, institutional structures, and professional identities, which in turn affect the conceptualization of gender and its performances. The excess is what the

collaboration creates new. Now, I will explain what I refer to as new work habits, institutional structures, and professional identities.

My findings reveal that collaboration between civil society, academia, public, and private sector at various scales results in the incorporation of pedagogical, ethical, and political processes into the corporations as well as emanating the market rationale into the non-market forces. Hereby, both institutional structures and professional identities are becoming increasingly similar. That means some units in corporations and universities start to work like CSOs while research centers at universities and CSOs work like white-color employees. Mariel, for instance, said, “the work we do at the research center is similar to that of an NGO; it is a volunteer job, and the center would not exist without the volunteer work”. Similarly, in one of the workshops, Serap, the CGFT project coordinator, stated, “we are the university's unit that functions more like a civil society”. However, during the interview, she also told me that “ours is a unit that functions similarly to that of a corporation”. The CGFT as being a research center at Sabanci University that develops advocacy activities within corporations, and Equality Matters, as a hybrid organization that donates its incremental revenue to an association, are some examples of new formation of institutional hybridization. The hybrid functioning shows that sectoral boundaries are becoming more and more blurred and institutions are becoming more like each other (Evers & Laville, 2005; Rhodes & Donnelly-Cox, 2014).

Nevertheless, it is difficult to argue that the corporate rationale is gaining hegemony over other rationales because certain units of companies that have developed to deal with social issues also start to work like CSOs. Employees from various departments volunteer to join these units. “Equal Borusan”, a social equality

platform established by Borusan Group in 2015 might be a nice example. In the words of Özlem:

Equal Borusan has representatives and a leader. These representatives could be from the executive board, or they could be from the production or operation line. There is a non-hierarchical structure in place that encourages collaboration and gender equality. Each group company of Borusan has it. Every three months, the entire group gets together for a meeting. We encourage businesses to create their own projects. For example, paternity leave at Borusan⁷⁵ was increased to two weeks as a result of this group decision. While the official leave was three days, we increased it to two weeks in our group companies. This is a collective decision. Efforts are being made to reach such conclusions.⁷⁶

Committees regarding social issues are becoming much more prevalent in transnational and family-owned conglomerates today in Turkey. Inasmuch that one of the objectives of GM activities, in the words of Helin, is “attempting to raise advocates and activists in institutions”. As I will demonstrate in the following chapter, some of the GM activities involve forming committees in companies made up of people who have been trained to write gender-sensitive policies and to be trainers.

The change in working habits and institutional structures reflects also in professional identities. The “transformational model”, as Helin describes it, causes the conventional job definitions to shift and blurred. Mariel, for instance, denotes, “academics wear their academic hat but sometimes they wear their activist hat as well”. This ‘hat’ metaphor is also used by Helin: “I develop training content, I give

⁷⁵ Workers in heavy manufacturing are also benefit by these policies. See the following link for a more detailed report: https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/f608ce9f-bdb7-4a4f-9d6f-30ccab4b05ce/Borusan_Layout+2.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=IXu8vbH

⁷⁶ Tüm grup şirketlerimizde Borusan eşittir platformu kurulu, bu bir yapılanma, bir Borusan Eşittir lideri var ve onunla birlikte çalışan temsilciler var. Bu temsilciler icra kurulu da olabiliyor, üretimde çalışan biri de olabiliyor. İşte hat operatörü de olabilir. Dolayısıyla çok hiyerarşik yapıda olmayan birlikte çalışmayı ve tee konusunda çalışmayı teşvik eden bir yapı bu. Her grup şirketimizde var. Periyodik olarak üç ayda bir bir araya geliyor bu grup tüm grup olarak. Hem şirketlerin kendi projelerini geliştirmeleri yönünde teşvikte bulunuyoruz hem de grup projelerini nasıl yapabiliriz grup olarak olarak nasıl yeni teklifler alabiliriz bununla ilgili çalışmalar yapıyoruz mesela bir örnek babalık izni Borusan’da iki haftaya çıkarıldı, resmi izin 3 günken biz grup şirketlerimizde bunu iki haftaya çıkardık. Bu bir grup kararı. Bunun gibi kararların alınmasına yönelik çalışmalar yapılıyor.

trainings; you know, I have different hats; I am a manager, a trainer, this and that; I am whatever is required”. Hence, while professional identities are becoming increasingly blurred, professionalism emerges as those identities’ overlapping quality. Okan, for instance, once defined his work as “professional activism”. This can be portrayed as another unintended consequence of this collaboration. Here, we can argue that identities melt beneath the guise of professionalism which raises certain questions. Blurring boundaries may appear to be going beyond them, but what if it makes other boundaries invisible? What about other forms of action if professionalism is regarded as a means of transformation? Professionalism introduces new dynamics to existing hierarchies when it is defined as the norm. In other words, favoring professionalism and specializing in project execution and gender policy assessment requires tools particularly appropriated by white, well-educated, and middle-class women (Alvarez, 1999; Naples, 2002). However, just like institutional structures and working habits, according to Sonia E. Alvarez, new professional feminist groups molded “hybrid political strategies and identities – developing expertise in gender policy advocacy while retaining a commitment to movement-oriented activities aimed at fostering women’s empowerment and transforming prevailing gender power arrangements” (1999, p. 182).

This hybridization can be interpreted in two distinct ways. First, it is possible to argue that it undermines the feminist principle of autonomy, which denotes independence from the state, the market, and men while consolidating liberal values and maintaining Western middle-class women and their lives as a reference point (Mohanty, 1988). Second, when professionalism is not defined as the sole mean of transformation, the process of hybridization itself has the potential to destabilize the existing order, which is based on the imagination of homogeneity and monophony by

fostering heterogeneity of meaning and practices. As I showed in this chapter, it has the capacity to disrupt the sovereignty of the nation-state or frustrate the hegemonic masculinities. In the following chapter, I will demonstrate that GM practice fosters heterogeneity, ambiguity, and contingency rather than standardized norms and practices or rationalized professionalism.

CHAPTER 5

PRAGMATICS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING: ENACTING POLITICS

...More is involved in what one communicates than what one literally says; more is involved in what one means than the standard, conventional meaning of the words one uses.
-Kepa & Perry, Spring 2020⁷⁷

Pragmatics: a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the relationship of sentences to the environment in which they occur.
-Merriam-Webster, 18 April 2022

What is ‘beyond saying’ about gender mainstreaming? What is not involved in ‘public transcripts’? To what extent do pragmatics of gender mainstreaming allow enacting politics? The first part of the chapter is titled ‘pragmatics of gender mainstreaming’ because I try to deal with what practitioners of gender mainstreaming do with gender mainstreaming, beyond what is said and written in ‘public transcripts’ (Scott, 1990). I draw on the words of Scott in which he highlights that the formal order is always and to some extent “parasitic on informal processes, which the formal scheme does not recognize, without which it could not exist, and which it alone cannot create or maintain” (1998, p. 6). Korta Kepa and John Perry define pragmatics as “dealing with the effects of context”, and they distinguish between *Near-side pragmatics* and *Far-side pragmatics*, the first of which deals with the facts in what is said, and the second with “what happens *beyond saying*, what speech acts are performed in or by saying what is said, or what implicatures” (Spiring 2020). In that sense, I incorporate far-side pragmatics into my work and broaden its direct connection to linguistics by modifying it. Rather than focusing on what GM practitioners imply in their statements, I concentrate on what they do in

⁷⁷ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pragmatics/>

addition to what is known about what they do. The other reason I use the term pragmatics is because of its relevance to the context. As I will demonstrate throughout the chapter, GM practitioners do not follow a standard “menu”, but rather act in accordance with the circumstances; shaped by the context while shaping it.

The second part of the title, on the other hand, is titled ‘enacting politics’ in reference to Jacques Rancière and his conceptual set. Rancière defines politics as “a polemical form of reframing of common sense”; reframing what is able to exist; redistributing what is sayable and what is not, what is visible and what is not, what is heard and what is not (2009, p. 277; 2010). In that sense, according to him, politics differentiates from “meta-politics” which means “interpretation of politics from a vantage point of policy” (1995, p. 61). While policy fixates a certain “distribution of the sensible”, politics creates “dissensus” which refers to a never-ending standoff about what is given as sensible, politics, equality, and so on⁷⁸ (2004, 2009, 2010). The contrast between meta-politics and politics, on the other hand, does not imply that they are mutually exclusive forms; rather, Rancière believes that they are intertwined (2019). For him, the political is “the encounter between two heterogeneous processes” namely, policy and equality (1995, p. 58). Nonetheless, equality is not a possession, but a set of practices driven by the presupposition that everyone is equal. I propose to evaluate the character of the terrain GM creates in line with this conceptual toolset because they, in my opinion, can help us break through the deadlock in the development literature which is fixated on the question of whether development precludes the formation of political configuration or not, as I have discussed in the previous chapters.

⁷⁸ In that sense, Rancièrian notion of staging dissensus resonates with what Foucault (1986) calls ‘heterotopian space’ which refers to spaces that permit “different norms of social performances” (Foucault, 1986; Mosse, 2005, p. 87).

In this chapter, I will contend that the context, which is often regulated by GM practitioners and their brokering skills, determines the final meaning and practice of gender mainstreaming. In the preceding chapter, by elaborating on how GM is perceived and contested, I attempted to demonstrate that rather than achieving standardization, GM promotes diverse and conflicting meanings and practices. This chapter, by dwelling much more on its design, shows that GM practices have already been formulated according to these conflicting meanings. In that sense rather than contributing to redistributing the sensible, they broadly act according to the given matrix of the sensible with few exceptions (Ranci re, 2010, 2019). For instance, in terms of posing a question - why do not you have any women on your board of directors? - which can disrupt the existing gendering, advocacy activity on boards of directors I have depicted in the preceding chapter is one of the examples of this exception. Exceptions illustrate that these two states, i.e., *redistribution of the sensible* and *playing on the given matrix of sensible*, do not have to be mutually exclusive. In fact, transformative potential emerges sometimes in between these states. Through delving into pedagogically designed spaces and listening how GM practitioners situate pedagogy, I will argue that while pedagogy, by definition, is designed according to the given matrix of the sensible, it may open spaces for redistributing the sensible.

As I promised in the introduction, in this chapter, I develop counterarguments regarding three distinct positions that I refer to as the conservative, the instrumental, and the critical. The conservative position, as articulated by the government and maternalist women's organizations such as KADEM, assumes that international agreements, projects, and regulations lead to cultural corruption by incorporating foreign standards into Turkish culture. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that

standards are not conveyed as they are, but rather are subject to constant change at the operational level. I also challenge the instrumental position taken by executives of collaborative activities who believe that policy can solve problems and directly shapes how practice is conducted. My findings reveal that GM is not only driven by the policy but is enabled through practices of mediation. Finally, I disagree with the critical position that reproduces meta-narratives by neglecting the situated knowledge that is embodied and produced at the operational level.

The first layer of the chapter is concerned with the design of GM activities, their pedagogies, and how GM practitioners position themselves in this terrain of struggle. Here, I elaborate on the conditions affecting the design of GM activities, and how GM practitioners frame gender equality, and different formats of trainings. In the preceding chapter, I demonstrated how GM creates contact zones by bringing together a broad group of actors with differing rationalities, values, and sensitivities about gender and development as well as with different positions of power. In this chapter, I show how specific actors are in charge of mediating this uneven terrain. Trainers, in my study, appear as translators who mediate “multiple systems of knowledge” and the ones who make this terrain possible (Babül, 2017, p.10).

The second layer, on the other hand, is about enacting politics in GM activities by drawing on Jacques Rancière and distinguishing between policy, politics, and meta-politics (Rancière, 1995, 2004, 2010). I use Rancièrian concepts because I believe that these concepts can assist us in breaking through the impasse in the politics of development (Rancière, 2019). It has long been debated what development has to do with politics (Babül, 2017; Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1994; Ferguson et al., 2016; Lewis & Mosse, 2006; Mosse, 2005). Critical anthropologists have been conceptualizing development as an apparatus that shuts down political

contestation by converting political problems into technical matters. Aside from the problem of demarcation between the technical and the political⁷⁹, the meaning of the political is generally taken for granted. This conceptualization is depicted in the work of James Ferguson the *Anti-Politics Machine* (1994). However, as Lewis and Mosse argue and Babül nicely puts forward, “the ethnography of everyday sites of development partnership reveals that they are full of contestation and debate” (Babül, 2017, p. 11; Lewis & Mosse, 2006). Similarly, as I showed in the previous chapter GM as one of the sites of development partnership creates terrains of struggle where contestation, negotiation, and compromise take place. Does this imply that terrains of struggle are necessarily political? It depends on what we mean by politics. Politics, as far as I can tell, is neither for my interlocutors nor in scholarly discussions have a standard and fixed meaning. Therefore, by appealing to the conceptual set developed by Rancière, I define politics as opening a stage of equality in terms of modifying the distribution of sensible by creating dissensus (Rancière, 1995, 2004, 2010) and ask: to what extent do pragmatics of gender mainstreaming allow enacting politics?

5.1 Designing Gender Mainstreaming: Translating gender equality

I wish to begin with an anecdote Helin told me:

An energy company with a high turnover rate wishes to increase the proportion of women in senior management to middle management. While looking for a solution, they read research; unfortunately, research that appears to be about gender equality can sometimes reproduce sexism. When they read that "women with very high emotional skills become better managers", they decided to implement a meditation program, making a significant investment for making women discover their feminine energy within them. Imagine this. Of course, it is critical for people to recognize their own potential, but what about the feminist movement in Turkey? There has been a

⁷⁹ These scholars tend to represent the political and the technical as diametrically opposed. They are unconcerned about the technical processes of the political and the political processes of the technical. In *Modest Witnesses: Donna Haraway, Science and International Relations*, Andrew Barry (1998) exemplifies how these two are mutually constitutive.

women's movement in Turkey for many years, do not you even think about it? How did all of this return to women and become their responsibility?⁸⁰

Throughout my research, I heard about a wide range of projects and activities that can be classified as GM. There are the ones who reproduce sexism there are the ones who challenge it. Even at very prestigious conferences, I encountered essentializing discourses that may reinforce sexism. However, in this chapter, I write about those who try to handle of a wrong in terms of undoing patriarchy and redistributing the gender roles with the supposition that everyone is equal⁸¹.

Almost all of my interlocutors mentioned to me a gap, a gap between the theory and practice, a gap between different worlds, a gap between different languages. In response to this, they position themselves as actors who try to fill this gap, “build a common language” and correct misunderstandings. For instance, although Kemal is critical of companies’ involvement in these issues, he says:

In any case, I think it is critical to discuss gender equality, and I believe that increasing contact is important since sexism persists regardless of educational level; we live in a sexist society. People think they know the concepts, but we are not talking the same language.⁸²

⁸⁰ “Bir enerji firması çok yüksek cirolara sahip ve yani kadın üst yönetimden orta kademe yönetime kadar kadın oranını arttırmak istiyor bir stratejisi E ne yapayım ne edeyim derken şey diyor yani araştırmalara bakıyor, maalesef araştırmalar da bazen hani toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği ile ilgili görünen araştırmalar da cinsiyetçiliği destekleyebiliyor, işte duygusal becerileri çok yüksek kadınların de daha iyi yönetici olduğunu okuyorlar. Hop ne yapıyor o zaman kadınların içerisindeki bu beceriyi daha çok ortaya çıkaralım, bir meditasyon programı hayata geçiyor, içindeki dişil enerjiyi keşfet diye ciddi bir yatırım yapılıyor buna. Şimdi hayal et. Tabi ki insanın kendi potansiyelini keşfetmesi önemli de bu kadar yıldır Türkiye’de kadın hareketi var feminist hareket var, bir tanenizin bile aklınıza gelmedi mi? Nasıl oldu da mevzu yine kadına döndü, onun sorumluluğu oldu?”

⁸¹ In “Politics, Identification, and Subjectivization”, Rancière (1995) defines the political as “the encounter between two heterogeneous processes”; policy and equality (p. 58). According to him, policy concerns with governing and creating consent, equality, on the other hand, “consists of a set of practices guided by the supposition that everyone is equal” (p. 58). He calls these practices emancipation and calls the process of emancipation politics. For him, the aim of the political is “handling of a wrong” which refers to the form of meeting policy and emancipation (p. 58). On the other hand, here, I am using this phrase in a more literal sense.

⁸² “Her halükârda, ben bunların [*cinsiyet eşitliğinin*] konuşulmasını, bu artan temasın çok önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum çünkü bu cinsiyet meselesi varsayılan bir şey biliyoruz, herkes duyarlı bilmem ne vs. ama öyle değil. Eğitim seviyesi fark etmeksizin cinsiyetçilik var. Cinsiyetçi bir toplumda yaşıyoruz.”

In chapter three, I attempted to depict the differences between multiple systems of knowledge and the conflicts that arise as a result of them. Nevertheless, in this chapter, I write about those who try to mediate this gap through constant work of translation. In the words of Helin:

We are attempting to make feminist discourse more understandable and applicable in the workplace [...] We don't say much of something brand new. What we're attempting to do is try to integrate what civil society talks to itself into this world by making it a little easier, try to make it understandable, edible, and practical in this world.⁸³

In that sense, what GM practitioners do is translate; they translate one system of knowledge into another. They do constant work of semantic translation. Lawrence Venuti (2008) differentiates two methods of translation: *domesticating* and *foreignizing*. The first of which denotes deleting and changing the foreign utterances to ensure that they fit into the norms ingrained in the official language; the second on the other hand refers to “disrupting the target language and the cultural codes” that are embedded in it (Babül, 2017, p. 146). According to Venuti, the choice between the two is a political one. Why not use this analytical differentiation for semantic translations? I contend that GM practitioners use both methods while making a semantic translation about gender equality, and their choice is contingent on the “level” of the institution or the audience regarding gender equality, the format of the training, and the trainer's approach.

GM is a set of practices including seminars, workshops, and policy work aimed at changing the audiences' ideas about gender equality and modifying the policies of institutions. Seminars, workshops, and policy work can be defined as

⁸³ Biz temelde feminist söylemi anlaşılabilir hale getirmeye ve hani çalışanların dünyasında pratik uygulanabilir hale getirmeye çalışıyoruz [...] Biz yepyeni bir şey çok söylemiyoruz, bizim hani yapmaya çalıştığımız şey söylenen ve sadece sivil toplumun kendi kendine konuştuğu şeyi birazcık kolaylaştırarak bu dünyaya entegre etmeye çalışmak hani, bu dünyanın içerisinde anlaşılabilir, yenilebilir yutulabilir uygulanabilir bir yöne doğru götürmeye çalışmak.”

different tools designed for different ends ideally complementing each other. However, as trainers put it, workshops are tools that open up spaces to address the anxieties of the audience and enable them to “correct misunderstandings”, for instance on equality and employment. It allows trainers to explain that equality does not mean sameness and that hiring women does not imply a reduction in the number of men employees. Therefore, I will put more emphasis on workshops in this chapter and argue that workshops carry the potential to enact politics and redistribution of the sensible because they are designed to take place over multiple sessions and encourage diverse actors to discuss and redefine gender roles.

5.1.1 Different approaches in Gender Mainstreaming: Towards an intersectional gaze

Among GM practitioners, there are two main approaches: one is concerned with policy change, while the other is concerned with changing the belief system and behaviors as well as the policy. This difference corresponds to different development approaches regarding GM. In this chapter, I will give more attention to the latter.

Before that, I want to layout these two approaches which are embodied in my interlocutors’ accounts. For Mariel, for instance:

On the one hand, there is a belief in justice, in giving equal opportunities, this is the right thing. I wish everybody would believe in it, but this is not a realistic point of view, thus I am always telling corporations and leaders that they need to use their power, the leader can say “whether you believe or not, I don’t care, this corporation has some rules, there is no discrimination here, we do not use sexist language, we do not behave unequally”, believe or not, who cares. No one can stop you from using sexist language at home; there is some pragmatism in what I say, but I am a realistic person⁸⁴.

⁸⁴ Bir taraf da inanç var, adaletle ilgili, eşit fırsatları verelim, bu doğru olan bir şey. Ya keşke herkes inansa, ama bu gerçekçi bir bakış değil bence. O yüzden ben devamlı şirketlere söylüyorum ya da liderlere söylüyorum yani, o gücün kullanılması gerekiyor. O lider şey de diyebilir, tamam inan ya da inanma o beni ilgilendirmiyor bu şirket bu yolu takip ediyor bu şirkette olmak istersen kurallar böyle biz ayrımcılığa girmiyoruz, biz cinsiyetçi dil kullanmıyoruz, biz eşitsizlik yapmıyoruz, inan inanma

Mariel's statements align with the Women in Development (WID) approach, which emerged from a liberal feminist stance in the early 1970s (de Waal, 2006). This approach focuses on "women's practical needs", which are translated into efforts to meet "women's material needs within the existing gender order based on the sexual division of labour, resources, and rewards" (de Waal, 2006, p. 210). On the other hand, the Gender and Development approach (GAD), arose from a "frustration with the lack of progress of WID policy, in changing women's lives and in influencing the broader development agenda" (Reeves & Baden, 2002, p. 33). This approach emphasizes the need to disrupt conventional gender norms and relations by focusing on the socially created basis of inequalities between men and women (de Waal, 2006). In both approaches gender is misinterpreted as 'women' and despite GM practitioners I have interviewed knowing that gender does not refer to women, they nonetheless sometimes opt to use it in that way, as I will explain in the next section. Before that, I will lay out how the GAD approach is embodied in the field. In the words of Salih:

Focusing on quotas and numbers is not all bad. However, these are results. It is critical to accurately identify the criteria via which we will achieve these outcomes. It is very important to change the mindset, the perspective, and find the method that suits this end. Consider gender equality, men's participation in equality, women's sexual orientation, and other issues. In all of these endeavors, in my opinion, a pedagogical and educational perspective generally remains missing.⁸⁵

According to Salih disrupting the gender order requires more than policy change; it also necessitates a shift in mindset. Here, trainings are framed as necessary tools for

who cares. Eve gidip dışarıda cinsiyetçi dil kullan, ya kimse onu kontrol edemiyor, , o konuda biraz pragmatizm var yani, gerçekçi bir insanım.

⁸⁵ Dolayısıyla kotalara sayılara odaklanmak fena bir şey değil ama bunlar sonuç. Bu sonuca nasıl geldiğimizi ve bu sonuca nasıl gideceğimizin parametrelerini doğru belirlemek lazım. Anlayış, bakış açısını değiştirmek ve bunun temsil ettiği yöntemi bulmak çok önemli. Ya ben mesela şeyi düşünüyorum bu toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği, erkeklerin eşitliğe katılımı, kadınların cinsel yönelimi vs bütün bu çalışmaların içerisinde bir pedagojik ve eğitimsel bir bakış açısının ve nosyonunun sıklıkla eksik kaldığını görüyorum.

changing the existing gender order. Nonetheless, as Reeves and Baden (2002) argue, although the WID and GAD perspectives are theoretically separate, in practice, the distinction is less apparent, with programs containing components of both. Now, to explain how Salih came to such a conclusion, I will continue with the story he told me about the revision of training programs in AÇEV in 2008.

As I mentioned earlier, AÇEV started with a program focused on supporting parents in order to create equal opportunities for them. In order to do this, they developed a mother support program and a father support program. However, they decided to revise these programs after discovering that although programs are good at teaching methods and techniques, they fall short in creating a perspective and an attitude. In his words:

We were talking about democratic parenting. We later understood that prejudices stemming from gender roles and stereotypes were the main barriers to not having such an environment. Protecting a child from neglect and abuse is only possible when a suitable developmental environment is provided, which can be achieved by eliminating inequalities based on gender roles, and, of course, in a non-violent environment, which can be created by people of all genders, ethnicities, religions, and sexual orientations. Discrimination must be abolished.⁸⁶

In the same line of reasoning, trainers in AÇEV and trainers who leave AÇEV to establish their own companies had begun to narrate ‘prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination’ as the first and foremost material in trainings. In doing that, they read articles and communicate with academics who specialized in this area. It is not a coincidence that Kemal who gave me the ‘prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination’ lecture at Bilgi University in one of my sociology classes, is the

⁸⁶ Bir ebeveynin demokratik olmasından bahsediyorduk ama demokratik olmasının önündeki engel neydi cinsiyet rollerinden kaynaklanan ön yargılar kalıpyargılar, Çocuğun ihmal ve istismardan korunması ancak uygun bir gelişimsel imkan ortam sağlandığı zaman mümkün oluyor bu da cinsiyet rollerine bağlı eşitsizliklerin ortadan kaldırılması ile mümkün ve tabi ki şiddet olmayan bir ortamda ve böyle bir ortamın oluşması için de işte cinsiyetten tutun etnik, dini, cinsel yönelim her türlü ayrımcılığın ortadan kaldırılması gerek.

trainer for the first session of the training that Equality Matters provides to companies. Thus, in this first session of the workshop which takes approximately 75 minutes, by using methods of adult education Kemal narrates these three concepts i.e., prejudice, stereotype, and discrimination, and how they function. In this approach, gender is considered from an intersectional standpoint. Helin who also mentioned to me the importance of intersectionality, responded to my question on how they define gender equality as follows:

We describe it as a situation in which no gender is superior to the other and all genders are entitled to the same rights and opportunities. We strive to approach from an intersectional point of view that underlines multiple layers of discrimination. Discrimination is so much processed, something like the backbone of our trainings. It's important for us not to be limited to second-wave feminism. Do you face your privileges, and do you open that space to underprivileged groups? The feminist approach is actually a stance, an activism, and if you are rising, you have to pave the way for your rise as a collective. Power is not for domination, but to become stronger collectively. If she is a disabled woman or a Kurdish woman, we attempt to bring her to a place where she can recognize these categories as well, so she does not become trapped in one category, but is aware that all categories are questionable.⁸⁷

All trainings I participated in narrated how gender roles are constructed and can be undone, but I also attended trainings that mention different experiences of a lesbian woman, woman worker, or a woman in a veil. I contend that this approach which is based on the foreignizing method of translation has the potential to enact politics since it encourages redistribution of the roles that make the existing gender order as well as making the invisible visible. I am referring to the visibility of subjectivities that are also sculpted by other forms of hierarchies, revealing that the

⁸⁷ “Bir cinsiyetin diğ erinden daha üstün olmadığı ve eşitlik aslında, eşit hak ve imkanlara erişim gibi bir yerde tanımlıyoruz. Kesişimsel bir yerden de bakmaya gayret ediyoruz. Ayrımcılık bizim çok işlediğimiz, bel kemiği gibi bir şey bütün yaptığımız çalışmada dolayısıyla çoklu ayrımcılıklar üzerinden de bir yerde durmaya çalışıyoruz o yüzden ikinci dalga feminizmle de kısıtlı olmamak önemli bizim için. Sen ayrımcılıklarınla yüzleşiyor musun, ayrımcılıklı olmayan gruplara o alanı açıyor musun? Feminist yaklaşım aslında bir duruş bir aktivizm ve sen yükseliyorsan kolektif olarak yükselmenin yolunu açmalısın. Engelli bir kadınsa veya Kürt bir kadınsa buraları da görebilsin hani tek bir kategoride kalmasın kategorilerin hepsinin sorgulanabilir olduğunu da farkında olsun.”

category of women, as well as their experiences, are not homogeneous. Now, I turn to how GM practitioners design GM activities.

5.1.2 Getting ready for design: Analyzing needs and determining the dose

How do institutions reach out to GM practitioners? GM practitioners operate within a network constituted by market relations. As Okan told me, “We have a name in the market, they usually find us directly because of the previous experiences.” Similarly, Helin said that “We have never had to go knock on the door of an institution; there is a lot of demand and people know about you through word of mouth.” Furthermore, in the *EU Projects Event Series* organized by Kadir Has University, Mariel said: “This work does not work without a network.” The network that carries out GM activities in Turkey has become visible to me throughout my field research.

Everyone I interviewed knew another person I was interviewing with or have already collaborated with each other. As Mosse (2005) puts forward, projects need “strong institutional links and extended networks to build their reputation” (p. 172). All the GM practitioners I have interviewed work or have previously worked at prestigious institutions in Turkey. Nonetheless, GM practitioners work there not only for monetary gain but also to facilitate connections. For instance, Sabancı University does not provide money to CGFT but a reputation. In the words of Serap:

Of course, because we are under the umbrella of the university, it is an institution that appears to be more reliable than other institutions [...] Working as a fledgling association, especially on violence, would be much more difficult. However, I would argue that going under the roof of a university is much more effective for many companies in terms of prestige and acceptance.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ “Bir üniversite çatısı altında olduğumuz için tabii kurumlar tarafından daha güvenilir olarak görünen bir kurum oluyor bu. Belki bir dernek olarak gitsek yeni başlayan bir dernek, özellikle şiddet konusunda çalışmak çok daha zor olurdu ama üniversite çatısı altında gidiyor olmak birçok şirket için prestij ve kabul etme anlamında çok daha etkili oluyor diyebilirim.”

The genesis and maintenance of the projects are thus first and foremost determined by institutional ties and the prestige of the institution, and secondly, by the ambiguity it creates, which allows different interests to be translated into the same project model (Latour, 2002; Mosse, 2005)

This ambiguity manifests itself in the design of the trainings and framing of gender equality. Helin believes that as the number of institutions working in this field grows, so do the discourses. Therefore, she argues that it is essential to frame gender equality in accordance with this multiplicity of discourses. In her words:

It's a multifaceted issue, and I think as the institutions that work in this field increase, discourses diversify. For me, it's all about women's human rights, but as someone who has studied development, I understand where it stands for development, for the process of self-improvement of a society. We've been talking about economic development for a long time, and now we're talking about social and human development as well. There is also a liberal economy discourse on productivity, profitability, and so on. We approach it primarily through the lens of human rights, but we incorporate all other discourses into our training because we believe we have an opportunity to initiate a change from the point at which it hooks the audience. On the other hand, we run the risk of reinforcing sexism through particular discourses; patriarchy reproduces itself, and capitalism thrives within it, and we need to be a little more cautious about it.⁸⁹

This shows that GM practitioners adopt various discourses for persuading the importance of gender equality as well as containing irreconcilable perspectives. As Mosse shows in *Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice*, projects require to have “interpretive communities” to be maintained (p. 8).

⁸⁹ “Yani çok yönlü bir mesele ve bence bu alanda çalışan kurumlar arttıkça da söylemler de farklılaşıyor, yani benim için tamamıyla insan hakları meselesi kadının insan hakları meselesi ama kalkınma okumuş biri olarak bunun kalkınmada durduğu yeri de anlayabiliyorum hani bir toplumun kendini geliştirme süreci olarak. Çok uzun zaman ekonomik kalkınmayı konuşuyorduk sonra sosyal kalkınma ve insani kalkınmayı konuşmaya başladık. Bir yandan liberal ekonominin de getirdiği de söylemler oluyor dediğim gibi karlılık verimlilik üretkenlik. Biz temelde bunu bir insan hakları vurgusuyla ele alıp bunların hepsini de söylemlerimizin içerisine koyuyoruz çünkü şunu düşünüyoruz karşı taraf neresinden alıyorsa o taraftan bir değişim başlatabilme imkânımız var yani böyle bakıyoruz. Dolayısıyla olabildiğince çok söylem çeşitliliği olmasının ben önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bir yandan sadece işte belirli söylemlerin tekrar cinsiyetçiliği üretme riski ile karşı karşıyayız yani bu patriarka da kendini yeniden üretiyor bunun içerisinde kapitalizm de çok güzel yol buluyor onun içerisinde falan onlara karşı biraz daha temkinli olmamız gerekiyor.”

In other words, enrolling and maintaining a group of believers is vital for working projects out. In order to generate interpretive communities, project executives and trainers frame and reframe the necessity of gender equality, what gender refers to, and its stance. As Helin's account validates, since interpretive communities consist of a variety of actors with diverse interests, framings need to be ambiguous enough to catch all the actors. Moreover, sustaining selective networks and legitimizing representations necessitates a significant amount of effort on the part of skilled brokers who read the meaning of the project in the eyes of various institutional supporters and thereby maintain "long chains of translation" (Latour, 2002; Mosse, 2005, p. 172). This is why project designs must be ambiguous and adaptable to many goals (Mosse, 2005). Although GM practitioners, skilled brokers, the ones who enable projects to work out, recognize the risks of incorporating all the discourses, they continue to do so for the sake of the projects.

Furthermore, the relationship between GM practitioners and institutions establishes in two ways, either GM practitioners send an invitation to institutions or institutions find GM practitioners and make an offer. The first is more akin to advocacy activities in terms of recommending a change in the current status quo whereas the second one enforces market-based relations in terms of creating a supply chain. The BADV project provides an example of making an offer to institutions as well as advocating a change in the institution where GM practitioners are located. As Serap denoted, the BADV Project "uses the invitation method", meaning CGFT determines institutions with their partners in the project and sends them an invitation to their top management. To be more precise, they began the project by conducting a survey with employees of Sabancı University, where the center is located, and measured their perceptions of violence. When it is found that "the figures are not as

good as at other companies” says Serap, CGFT made an offer to the university administration, requesting that the university establishes policy in this area. Since the management at the time approached this offer positively, a policy-making team comprised of representatives from various universities and departments was formed, led by the vice-rector. It was first released in 2016. A year later, the purchasing unit renewed its procurement contracts and added a new clause stating that ‘all organizations we serve are required to receive training on violence against women and gender equality’. In 2019, an impact survey was conducted to determine whether these policies reached employees not only at Sabanci University but also at all of the 89 corporations and 14 municipalities involved in the BADV project. For Serap, “reducing the number of incidents of violence was not the goal; on the contrary, as the trainings are carried out, people will begin to call their experiences violence, and thus the numbers will rise”. According to the results of the impact survey, 60% of employees be cognizant of the policies which, in the words of Serap, “is a significant rate when we consider that only Garanti Bank has 60,000 employees”.

In the other scenario, when the institution finds GM practitioners, the GM practitioners either provide a variety of services, including that of training and consulting institutions or they take a part in an ongoing project. Even though they have packages that are set, they design the training or policy according to the institutions’ “readiness” [*hazır oluş*] regarding gender equality, conditions they can provide, and needs. As Helin denotes:

We have different trainings, structured and shaped over time according to the needs of the institutions. A one-time relationship takes shape over time, it can then return to a partnership, and evolve into different structures, but we offer both options: “so that’s our menu, what do you want or if you have something, that’s our menu, but we can add something if you want”.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ “Şöyle farklı eğitimlerimiz var, kurumların ihtiyaçlarına göre zaman içinde de yapılıyor ve şekilleniyor, devam da ediyor. Tek seferlik bir ilişki zaman içerisinde şekilleniyor, o daha sonra ortaklığa dönebiliyor daha farklı yapılara evrilebiliyor ama iki opsiyonu da sunuyoruz, yani bizim

Their “menu” is consisting of awareness seminars, workshops targeting a small group of people who became responsible for GM activities in institutions, training of trainers aiming to develop trainers in institutions, women empowerment programs, and consulting policy change. Awareness seminars are introductory courses targeting a large group of people that lasts a maximum of two hours. Workshops, on the other hand, generally target the departments that are established specifically for the GM activities of an institution. It includes sessions on mechanisms of discrimination, violence towards women, masculinities, gender inequality in the workplace, writing gender-sensitive policies, institutional change, and so on. Depending on the topic of the training, trainers communicate with academics from various institutions and feminist organizations which are specialized in their area and sometimes contemplate together on the content of the training and sometimes develop it together. Following these workshops, the department is expected to identify areas of action, develop action plans, analyze potential resistance, and devise strategies to overcome these resistances. Furthermore, women empowerment programs include a literacy program for women with a maximum secondary education degree that includes components such as understanding, interpreting, analyzing, and accessing information. So far, this program has begun to be implemented with women textile workers and in the automotive industry⁹¹.

According to GM practitioners, the action plan, project ideas, and the “dosage” of the training vary greatly depending on the institutions’ and audiences’

menümüz bu, ne istersiniz veya sizin bir şeyiniz mi var okey, bizim de menümüz bu ama bunları da ekleyebiliriz isterseniz falan diye bir daha böyle daha uzun soluklu işler de yapabiliyoruz. “

⁹¹ In most of the trainings, trainers mention of glass ceiling [*cam tavan*] which is a metaphor that represents invisible barriers that prohibit a particular population (usually women) from going over a specific level in a hierarchy. They encourage the audience to develop projects to overcome these barriers. As a result, there are an increasing number of programs aimed at expanding the employment of working-class women. In Borçelik, for example, there is a project called “No Job Too Tough For Women” aimed to train personnel in areas such as crane operators and line operators.

level of readiness. The level of readiness is either determined by conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups or by negotiating with the project executives in the phase of design. In practice, as Salih points out, two approaches are used in the design process. The scope of the content is defined first by the institution's demand, then by research with the target audience and their needs. The aim of the research with the audience is to design programs in line with the principles of pedagogy, as I will discuss in the following section. Now, I turn to negotiations with the project executives who are familiar with the institution. Trainers call this process “need analysis”. In the words of Okan:

Before the training we're doing a needs analysis, mostly with people who know this company, talking to human resources, and people who know the group. By the way, it's crucial to know what the institution's policies are. The other day, I said to the company, “Look, we organize [*örgütlerimiz*] people via trainings, if they ask for nursery rights, if they say we need a nursery, do you have a policy on that? What is the legal lowest limit you provide them if they want to increase paternity leave? Do you have that perspective to discuss it, and do you do anything about employment if they wish to increase it?” So, if the institution says we're not doing anything, I'll reduce the dose in the training a little bit, so I don't over-provoke people. However, during the training, I usually remind the audience that they must ask for their rights; rights do not just come when the institution grants them. However, the extent of my provocation is determined by the company's policies; for example, some argue that “we've already done so, we're good at employment and increase the number of women”, I'm going to up the dose a little bit, like boosting demand a little bit more. That's where I conduct the needs analysis.⁹²

⁹² “Önden bir ihtiyaç analizi mutlaka yapıyoruz bu arada, daha çok bu şirketi tanıyan genelde insan kaynaklarıyla konuşarak, grubu tanıyan kişilerle yapıyoruz. Bir de bu arada şey de çok önemli, şirket politikaları ne? Geçen şöyle söyledim şirkete, biz örgütlerimiz bak eğitimlerle insanları, çıkıp kreş hakkı isteriz, kreş gerekiyor derlerse sizin bu konuda politikanız var mı? Babalık iznini arttırmak istiyorlarsa sizin verdiğiniz yasal alt limit, onlar arttırmak istiyorsa böyle bir bakış açımız bunu tartışmaya açmanız var mı, istihdam konusunda bir şey yapıyor musunuz? Yani önce onlardan bir şirket politikalarını duyuyorum hiçbir şey yapmıyoruz diyorlarsa ona göre biraz dozu biraz azaltıyorum ki insanları çok kıskırtmayayım, ama talep edin diye de mutlaka söylüyorum bir yerde yani bunlar sadece şirket size verince olmaz siz şirketten talep ettikçe olur ama kıskırtma seviyemi de şirketin politikaları belirliyor mesela, bazıları diyor ki biz zaten bunları bunları yaptık, istihdamda şöyle iyiyiz, kadın arttırdık falan diyorlarsa o zaman ben de dozu arttırıyorum mesela biraz daha fazla talep etmeyi arttırıyorum gibi. İhtiyaç analizini yaparken oradan yapıyorum.

All the trainers I interviewed mentioned this need analysis, which determines the course of training, the scope of the policy as well as the framing of gender equality. the most “contentious issues” appear to be LGBTQIA+ rights, as well as sexual identity and sexual orientation, trainers inquire about the stance of the institution on these issues beforehand. All my interlocutors stated that when they asked about the institution’s willingness to discuss LGBTQIA+ rights, they generally responded “we are not ready yet”. However, Salih pointed out that, for some institutions, on the contrary, it is problematic not to talk about it. As Serap puts forward, “Some companies' work in this area is much more extensive; for example, there are companies that celebrate Pride Week and others that work on LGBTQIA+. The training content actually varies depending on the corporate culture”. Either way, what to say and not to say is more or less determined by the demand of the institution. As a result, gender is framed sometimes in a binary system, sometimes in a fluid spectrum and this difference directly affects the scope of the policy in the institution on gender equality. This shows that, for the sake of completing training, trainers sometimes use *domesticating method* when translating gender rights in a realm where cultural codes are foreign to gender rights (Venutti, 1995). Rather than changing the realm’s cultural codes, the subject of the translation changes in accordance with the given cultural codes. In these instances, trainings fail to redistribute the sensible and enacting politics. Queer bodies, in this context, appear to be the most expendable. This is justified by the belief that Turkey's political climate is not yet ready to discuss LGBTQIA+ rights, as well as the idea that training should be designed according to the pedagogical approach which I will contemplate in the next sections.

To epitomize, the boundaries of the discussions and policies are determined by the institutions and in these instances, certain bodies are left behind. However, trainers also attempt to broaden the field of action within these boundaries and convert the ambiguities that arose during the trainings into opportunities. In other words, although trainers design the training based on the demands of the institutions, during the training they act according to the responses of the audience; they “sometimes increase the dose, sometimes reduce it”, which is mostly depending on the format of the training, as I will show in the following sections. Now, I will elaborate on different formats of trainings and their rationales.

5.1.3 Following critical pedagogy: Different formats, different ends

The trainings are categorized into two main formats: seminars and workshops. Seminars are two-hour trainings generally designed for a large group of people to raise awareness, introduce the main concepts, and name inequalities. It covers what gender is, how gender roles are constructed and which inequalities they cause, and the consequences of these inequalities in everyday life and institutions. Workshops, on the other hand, are trainings with a maximum of 15 participants that last at least one day aiming for behavioral change. According to Okan, seminars are the first steps to “recognize the aquarium in which we swim” but are not sufficient for behavioral change. In his words:

I am a fish who lives in an aquarium. I would never say there is too much water. I do not even realize the water in which I swim. Gender is such an issue. We are unaware that we live with it and how much affecting us.⁹³

⁹³ “Ben akvaryumda yaşayan bir balığım. Asla çok fazla su var demem. İçinde yüzdüğüm suyun farkında bile olmam. Cinsiyet böyle bir konu. Onunla yaşadığımızın ve bizi ne kadar etkilediğini fark etmiyoruz.”

Okan uses the same metaphor while explaining how he starts to be concerned about gender equality. He recalls that the Women for Women's Human Rights-New Ways (IKH+YÇ) awareness seminar he and his colleagues attended caused him to “shake”, and “look at the aquarium in which he lives”. Nonetheless, he emphasizes that this is just the beginning of the process, which will continue with ongoing self-discipline and self-confrontation. He then goes on to say:

The most distinguishing feature of being an educator is that you will first look at yourself, face yourself, be a little embarrassed, notice, and notice the people around you. You have to beat yourself up, things start only after that.⁹⁴

The metaphor of the aquarium evokes Marxist notions of alienation and false consciousness; being estranged from one's conditions of living and the inability to recognize inequality, oppression, and exploitation of the one exposed. These words, on the other hand, remind what Foucault calls *disciplinary power* which is relied on self-surveillance and “indispensable ascetism” (1975; 1984, p. 38, 47). In his early works, Foucault claims, in contrast to the *sovereign power* where the force of the sovereign is imposed on the body, in *disciplinary power*, punishment works through the mediation of the subject's soul and trains its body⁹⁵ (Foucault, 1975). This new type of “technology of power” is reflected in the constitution of subjectivity (p. 89). The subject itself imposes “a discipline more despotic than the most terrible religions” on itself (1984, p. 47). However, Foucault sees potential in this attitude because for him, the “critique is the movement by which the subject gives himself right to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth” (2007, p. 47). Therefore, on the one hand, this attitude produces "self-

⁹⁴“Eğitimci olmanın en büyük alametifarıkası öncelikle kendine bakacaksın, kendinle yüzleşeceksin azıcık utanacaksın azıcık fark edeceksin, çevrendekileri göreceksin, o yüzden ilk iş kendinle ilgili bir dayak yemen lazım, kendini dövmen lazım bu konuda anca ondan sonra başlıyor işler.”

⁹⁵ It is highly connected with the idea of humanism which is the ramification of Enlightenment. Since the proliferation of the humanist discourse inhibited visible violence, violence traversed to other spaces: the prison, the clinic, and the colonial geographies.

governing liberal learners", while also serving as a tool for a way out (Babül, 2017, p. 106).

It can be argued that critical pedagogy stems from the motivation of finding a way out. Following in the footsteps of humanist Marxists, Antonio Gramsci, Paulo Freire, and Raymond Williams, critical pedagogy seeks to transform educational practice in order to foster self-empowerment among learners and, ultimately to precipitate the revolutionary transformation of society (Babül, 2017). Critical pedagogy constitutes an important aspect of trainings for GM. For instance, Helin puts forward that:

Education is also a means of empowerment. It is an empowering tool for confronting your own experiences and figuring out how to change them. Isn't that so, the journey from knowledge to behavior? We utilize education as a foundation for reforming institutions and facilitating change. There is a point at which it can begin, and there are areas where it can be enhanced. No single formula will work for everyone, but education opens up a field of possibilities for how it can begin, maintain, and what the institution can carry based on its potential.⁹⁶

Empowerment and change, however, are not the anticipated outcomes of seminars; rather, they are aimed at recurrent workshops in which the same group of people meet numerous times to elaborate on gender equality and discuss it from diverse angles. According to trainers, the impact of the training is very dependent on the format and the method of the training. Kemal notes that there is a significant difference between training for 9 days in a row and training one day per week for 9 weeks. For example, in the project they collaborated with Sabancı University Gender and Women's Studies Excellence Center (SU Gender), they provided training to

⁹⁶ "Eğitim bir güçlenme aracı aynı zamanda. Kendi yaşadıklarınla yüzleşip hani bunları nasıl değiştirebileceğine dair bir güçlenme aracı. Öyle değil midir zaten, bilgidan davranışa doğru giden süreç? Biz eğitimi yani kurumları dönüştürebilmeye, dönüştürebilme sürecini kolaylaştırabilmede bir zemin olarak kullanıyoruz yani hani başlayabileceği nokta var, daha geliştirebileceği alanlar var, kimseye tek bir formül işlemecek ama eğitim bunu nasıl başlatabileceği nasıl ilerletebileceği ve kurumun kapasitesine göre de nelere taşıyabileceği ile ilgili bir alan açıyor."

teachers for 9 weeks and observed that at the end of 9 weeks, the audience was “conceptually strengthened, capable of conducting qualitative analyses, and had learned strategies”. According to him, the 9-week contact itself is transformative because people in everyday life do not gather with others who are different from each other if not necessary. Nevertheless, Kemal does not believe that the two-hour company training is effective if it does not turn into institutions’ policies and is not discussed elsewhere. In a similar line of reasoning, all trainers mention that they target perspective and behavioral change through workshops. Thus, they advise institutions to hold both seminars and workshops rather than just seminars. However, because companies often “put a checkmark on and go on”, as Okan puts it, they settle with seminars. GM practitioners mention that their influence is minimal in companies that participate in these projects solely for marketing purposes. Thus, they devote their energy to those who wish to continue with workshops and policy processes.

The whole idea of empowerment and change through trainings in institutions can be read as the following:

Take a term like ‘empowerment’, which originally came out of social movements and was very much a way of addressing poverty as a question of powerlessness. This term was quickly appropriated by mainstream development politics and made into a depoliticized, technical term that has now been emptied of almost all content (Schouten, 2009).

This is an excerpt from one of the theory talks, Peer Schouten had with James Ferguson (2009). Ferguson seems unequivocal about the idea of depoliticization, but I believe he “fails to do justice to the range of knowledge” of practitioners driven by their local experience (Scott, 1998, p. 313). In the following section, I will discuss where pedagogy stands in trainings and how it functions by paying attention to the situated knowledge of GM practitioners.

5.2 A pedagogical method: Is it a curse or a key?

According to Babül (2017), there is a direct relationship between critical pedagogy and adult education because adult education is embraced by human rights movements all over the world deriving from the idea of making citizens aware of their rights and enabling them to fight back against their oppressors. Similarly, in GM practice, liberal humanist ideals of progress and neo-Marxist critical tradition become intertwined. While critical pedagogy is an integral feature of the rationale of GM trainings, andragogy (adult education) constructs its methodology.

Critical pedagogy initially derives from the idea of empowering the oppressed (Scheper-Hughes, 2009, p. 170). However, as I showed in the previous chapter, it is difficult to discern who is oppressed or oppressor in the contact zones that GM created. The power relations are continuously shifting owing to changing settings, but the tension between diverse worldviews and knowledge systems remains constant. Here, andragogy comes into play. Adult education methods and approaches appear to be tools that enable GM practitioners to mediate this uneven terrain.

The term andragogy refers to adult education methods and principles and is derived from the Greek terms (andr-) for 'man' and (agogos) for 'leader of' implying 'leading men'. It is founded on a humanistic understanding that positions learners as autonomous and self-directed beings whereas teachers as facilitators of the learning (Collins, 2004; Huang, 2002). Because adults have a wide range of life experiences, andragogy is built around communicating with these experiences in order to capture the audience's attention and create a 'democratic space' (Collins, 2004). It is based on the idea that learning together by exchanging ideas eliminates hierarchies between the learner and the learned. In the words of Kemal:

If we understand something like a classic teacher who comes and teaches, from being an instructor, or if we understand a monologue from the education, I don't position myself that way. In fact, I think every session, every gathering is very different. It's important to expose different experiences and get them to talk with each other. Trainings are shaped according to the participants, according to the dynamics of the group. So, I'm positioning myself as a facilitator because I know that these questions don't have such easy answers. Scientifically, yes, we know certain things, but there is no single and simple solution.⁹⁷

As the interlocutors repeatedly state, the pedagogy requires considering the audience's background knowledge, needs, and responses; it does not operate with established standards and rules. It necessitates "determining the learning outcome according to the level of the target audience" as Salih notes. According to the rationale of andragogy, facilitators "should begin educational sessions by finding out what the adults already know about the topic" (Collins, 2004, p. 1485). This, on the one hand, poses the risk of not discussing certain topics and concerns at all; on the other hand, makes certain issues discussible. In the following sections, by dwelling on this pedagogical approach, I elaborate on its potential and restrictions for enacting politics and leave this discussion open-ended since I also believe there is "no single and simple" answer.

⁹⁷ Eđitmeden klasik anlamda bir bilen geliyor ve anlatıyor gibi bir Őeyi anlıyorsak ya da monolog anlıyorsak kendimi öyle konumlandırmıyorum. Bence her oturum her bir araya geliş çok farklı. Farklı deneyimleri açığa çıkarmak, onları işte konuşurmak vs. çok önemli katılımçıların niteliđine göre, gruplara göre dolayısıyla ben hani o yüzden kendimi biraz daha kolaylaştırıcı gibi konumlandırıyorum çünkü Őunu farkındayım bu soruların öyle kolay cevabı yok. Bilimsel olarak evet bazı Őeyleri biliyoruz ama çözüm böyle işte basit çözümleri yok bu işin.

5.2.1 GM practice as acrobatics: Skillful brokers, the *metis*, and mediating the uneven terrain

*Each story has its own dynamic and context; that must be captured.*⁹⁸

- Salih, the trainer.

In the last chapter of *Seeing Like a State*, James C. Scott (1998) introduces the concept of *metis* to compare the types of knowledge ingrained in local experience with the more abstract and general knowledge adopted by the state and its agencies. In his words, “*metis* represents a wide array of practical skills and acquired intelligence in responding to a constantly changing natural and human environment” (1998, p. 313). As it is apparent in Salih’s account, GM practice, but especially the environment of training requires *metis*-laden skills of trainers, and as I claim, these skills allow actors with different rationalities, values, and sensitivities to interact and discuss gender equality. Moreover, in GM practice, pedagogy emerges as a tool for mediating multiple worldviews and interests, rather than merely as a facilitator of change, with trainers serving as mediators of this uneven terrain.

As I mentioned earlier, although trainers design training based on institutional demands, during training, they act according to shifting, transient, ambiguous, and disconcerting situations generated by that particular moment. For instance, Helin puts forward that:

Some institutions do not want us to go into certain subjects, they can specifically indicate. We experiment a little during the training depending on how the group reacts when the dose is increased, whether the resistance is high, and where they stand. The trainer is already an expert in profile detecting.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ “Her hikâyenin kendine özgü bir dinamiği var bağlamı var, o bağlamları yakalamanız lazım.”

⁹⁹ “Bazı kurumlar bunlara girmemizi istemiyor, özellikle belirtebiliyor. Biz şöyle bakıyoruz eğitim anını düşünürsek sadece eğitim anında gelen bir profili, eğitici zaten o konuda uzman kişi bir profili yoklama, nerede duruyor, belli yerlerde hani biraz böyle şeyleri deniyorsun, ayarını arttırınca nasıl tepki veriyor, direnç yüksek mi, nerede duruyor diye bakıyorsun.”

In response to my query on how trainers decide whether to increase or decrease the dose, Okan said:

As soon as I feel the group has grown accustomed to it, I begin to increase the dose. Sometimes the opposite, I reduce the dose and there are times when I don't even come close to it, of course. It is, in fact, a matter of experience.¹⁰⁰

Trainers are the experts in comprehending how the wind blows and adjust themselves accordingly. Through experience and constant interaction with their counterparts, they learn contradicting meanings of GM and the sensitivities of diverse groups. Hence, for maintaining the training, they position themselves according to that current situation. To put it differently, GM practitioners are “responsive to the mutuality of participants, reaching a destination that cannot be specified in advance” (Scott, 1998, p. 323). In this sense, GM operates not through standardization, calculation, and measurement, but rather through the metis-laden skills of GM practitioners and their ability to “cully” [*oyun çevirmek*], as Helin defines what they do during the training. Thus, GM practice although derived from “high modernist” ideals, defies its own categories (Scott, 1998, p. 4). In contrast to the “rational design of the order” anticipated by high modernism, the practice consists of ambivalent, contingent, and context dependent figures (Scott, 1998, p. 4).

The metaphor of “acrobatics” used by Okan, nicely fits this conundrum:

The difficult part of our job is working with values and values are not always beautiful things, they sometimes involve murdering sometimes involve homophobia. When we touch their values, people jump as if we touch the nerve in their teeth. Therefore, we do a little bit of acrobatics.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ “Ya hamura bakıyorum grubun buna alıştı olduğunu hissettiğim anda dozu arttırmaya başlıyorum mesela, bazen de tam tersi dozu azaltıyorum, bunun yakınına bile gelmediğim zamanlar da olabiliyor tabi ki. Bu işte biraz deneyimle alakalı bir şey aslında.”

¹⁰¹ “Bizim için zor yanı o, değerlere dokunuyoruz ister istemez, değerler her zaman güzel şeyler değil, öldürmek cinayet bunların hepsi de içerisinde değerlerin ister istemez dokunuyoruz ve insanların bazen dışındaki sinire dokunmuşuz gibi zıplıyorlar. O yüzden biraz cambazlık yapıyoruz yani gerçekten.”

This quotation indicates two things. First, GM practice is not only driven by policy, but also by ‘hidden transcripts’ of scattered practices such as brokerage and mediation (Mosse, 2005, p. 9; Scott, 1998). Thus, instrumental perspectives fail to comprehend how development practice is done by assuming policy directly shapes practice. Second, since acrobatics, here, means determining what to say and not to say, trainings generate multifarious meanings and practices on gender equality rather than standardizing concepts, norms, and ideals. For instance, gender is framed sometimes in a binary system, sometimes in a fluid spectrum and this difference affects the scope of the policy in the institution on gender equality which raises the question of who will benefit from the policy and who will not. For instance, Kemal argues that:

It [*the binary gender regime*] is impossible to deal with it in a short amount of time, but at least necessary to mention it, because the main issue is the binary gender regime. However, speaking directly about it with institutions is still difficult.¹⁰²

In a context, where talking about gender regime is like touching the nerve in people’s teeth, GM practitioners develop various strategies, as I tried to show in the previous chapter. As one of the most predominant instruments, andragogy, deserves more attention, thus, I am going to delve into this pedagogical method.

5.2.2 Limitations of andragogy and its potential

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated how GM promotes a variety of contradictory meanings and practices. Nonetheless, elaborating on the design of the activities reveals that GM practices have already been formulated based on these contradictory meanings. However, this is not to say that GM practitioners always use the

¹⁰² “Bu kadar kısa sürede ele almak mümkün değil ama sözünü geçirmek lafını geçirmek bile hani mümkünse önemli çünkü hakikaten mesele ikili cinsiyet rejimi bir taraftan da yani. Ama hala şirketlerle falan filan doğrudan bunları konuşmak kolay değil.”

domesticating method. In other words, they do not always reproduce the existing matrix of the sensible. Rather, by using pedagogical methods, they call in the audience to discuss the distribution of the sensible and to build a common language. Just as Elif said at the start of the session, they “attempt to ensure congruence in the language [dilde mutabakat sağlamaya çalışmak]”. This is quite the opposite of dissensus in Rancièrian sense, and rather than searching for moments of dissensus in a terrain whose boundaries are, in the last instance, determined by the institutions, I attempt to comprehend limitations and potentials of andragogy. In order to do it, I am going to focus on how GM practitioners try to build this common ground.

As Jannette Collins (2004) puts forward, adult education is “based on valuing the prior learning and experience of adults” (p. 1489). Regardless of considering power relations, the educational environment is based on treating everyone equally and on a constant effort to understand what the audience thinks and feels. In words of Salih:

If I let someone leave the room because of something they said, if I focus solely on the matter of correctly expressing themselves, it is not possible for me to know what that person thinks or feels. I would not know what he will do with his wife if he is married when he returns home.¹⁰³

In a similar manner, all trainers I interviewed mention that they even value problematic discourses that appear in trainings because it allows them to respond, discuss, and correct. As Okan told me:

Those who object the most, by the way, are the most open to change. I am more afraid of those who remain silent, such as those who begin to draw something and then turn their gaze away. If someone objects, you have an opportunity to respond and talk to each other. That's a good thing; I wish they would protest more; I wish we had workshops more often so that our heads could collide a little like this and we could argue about something more.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ “Birini dediği bir şeyden dolayı odadan çıkarırsam, sadece doğru ifade etme meselesine odaklanırsam o kişinin ne düşündüğünü ne hissettiğini ve eve gittiği zaman çocuğuyla evliyse eşyle ne yapacağını bilmem mümkün değil.”

¹⁰⁴ “En çok itiraz edenler değişime en açık olanlardır, bu arada. Sessiz kalandan daha çok korkarım mesela, o bir şeyler çizmeye başlayıp bakışlarını çevirenler hiç ikna olmaz ama itiraz ediyorsa kafasına

Although trainers design trainings according to the given matrix of the sensible, they value tension for redistributing the sensible. As Helin noted:

Tensions are also important because you know there will be conflict and then something will be resolved. Through negotiations, there is a point where we are attempting to find a middle ground. Isn't it always that way? Feminist organizations insisted on referring to domestic violence as "violence in the household" [*hane içi şiddet*], but the law referred to it as "violence in the family" [*aile içi şiddet*]. So, there is always a negotiation will be going on. We stretch as far as we can and make them stretch [*elimizden geldiğince esnemeye ve esnetmeye çalışıyoruz*] to find a middle ground.¹⁰⁵

For Helin, resolving a conflict does not mean it is closed; rather, she speaks of a never-ending standoff in a realm where people -ideally- are not ashamed of what they are saying. As I observe, trainers are motivated by the idea that power does not reside in a specific body or location, but it is capillary. Thus, they listen to people's sexist or homophobic discourses and try to explain why such narratives are problematic and how this gender order oppresses one's life regardless of their gender. In the words of Salih:

We aim to highlight how prejudices based on learned and imposed gender norms have permeated the personality, the profession, and the way people speak and communicate, and how they have constricted their own life, before explaining how this might be changed.¹⁰⁶

Trainers do this by using phrases like "I understand what you are going through, come and take a look from here" to make the audience feel heard and their problems recognized. They may also have the audience participate in games that require them

yatmıyor, yatırman için sana bir fırsat veriyor, konuşuyorsun karşılıklı, o iyi bir şey, keşke daha çok itiraz etseler, keşke daha hep atölye yapsak da böyle kafalar biraz çarpışsa ters görüşler savunsak, üzerine tartışsak."

¹⁰⁵ "Bazen gerginlikler de çok önemlidir biliyorsun, bazen o çatışma olacaktır ondan sonra bir şey çözülecektir falan bazen. Yani müzakerenin sonucunda bir orta yol bulmaya çalıştığımız bir yer oluyor ama hep öyle değil midir zaten? Hane içi şiddet diye feminist örgütler yatıp kalktı ama aile içi şiddet olarak hani çıktı falan, dolayısıyla hep bir müzakere devam ediyor, esneyebildiğimiz kadar esnetebildiğimiz kadar esnetmeye biz de esneyebildiğimiz kadar esnemeye çalışıyoruz ve ara yol buluyoruz."

¹⁰⁶ "Cinsiyet rollerinden kaynaklanan, öğrenilmiş dayatılmış cinsiyet rollerinden kaynaklanan önyargıların kişiliğe sinmiş, meslek yapmaya sinmiş, konuşma ve iletişim biçimlerine sinmiş ve yerleşmiş bu algıların kendi hayatlarını önce ne kadar daralttığını sıkıştırdığını onlara göstermek ve fark ettirmek ve ondan sonra da bunu değiştirmenin mümkün olduğunu anlatmak amacımız"

to consider their own actions. For instance, Salih describes a game, he made district governors play:

We form pairs and ask one to wear an eye patch while the other walks the one with closed eyes around the room. Then, we make a few more versions, and afterward, we discuss what they felt. The basic logic is that you are completely under the control of someone else. This is encouraged to be reflected in a partner relationship, a manager-managed relationship, or a teacher-student relationship.¹⁰⁷

Rather than convincing or punishing the audience, Salih aims to make the audience reflect on their own actions without tread on their toes. In this context, a minor reflection might be seen as a gain. For example, when one of the district governors stated, “I have decided not to have the last word any longer; this was my occupational disease”, Salih told me that he expressed delight. Therefore, for GM practitioners, conducting training with the audience’s sensitivities and worlds of meaning in mind is an important method of directing the audience to the subject and handling of a wrong. Trainers attempt to create pedagogical spaces with the supposition that everyone is equal. In the words of Helin:

As a participant or facilitator, what all parties say is critical. Both parties’ perspectives are equally valuable. An approach such as “what you say is wrong or ridiculous” destroys the educational environment. We are not in such a state; rather, we are attempting to develop a collective consciousness. We are attempting to create an environment in which participants can discover themselves as well as an open space for this to be shared and discussed.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ “Çiftler oluşturuyoruz ve birinden göz bandı takmasını istiyoruz, diğeri ise gözleri kapalı olanı odanın içinde gezdiriyor. Sonra birkaç versiyon daha yapıyoruz ve ne hissettiklerini tartışıyoruz. Temel mantık, tamamen başka birinin kontrolü altında olmanın ne hissettirdiği üzerine durmak. Şimdi gelin bunu bir kadınla erkek ilişkisine, bir partner ilişkisine, bir yönetici yönetilen ilişkisine, öğretmen öğrenci ilişkisinde bir konuşalım diyoruz.”

¹⁰⁸ Bizim genel olarak şeyde kullandığımız yöntem artı artı, senin söylediğin önemli, katılımcının söylediği önemli yani iki taraf da değerli ve önemli ne anlatıyorsa yani şey gibi bir eğitimcilik yaklaşımı yıkar döker hani ne diyorsan de bu söylediğin çok saçma, anlamsız falan ne demek bu falan yani böyle bir yer değil bizimkisi, bizim durduğumuz yer orada bir kolektif bilinç yaratmaya çalışıyoruz. Katılımcıların kendilerini keşfedebilecekleri bir ortam ve bunun paylaşılacağı ve tartışılacağı bir açık alan yaratmaya çalışıyoruz.

This account resembles how Nancy Scheper-Hughes (2009) relates the method of critical consciousness with critical theory. According to Scheper-Hughes, “These are reflexive, rather than objective, epistemologies. Theory is regarded as a tool for illumination and for praxis” (2009, p.170). For comprehending the limitation of these pedagogical spaces enabled by GM activities, I will again appeal the argument of Rancière.

As Kelly Harman puts, between “Rancière’s critique of the public intellectual and Freire’s work on critical pedagogy (1996), where dialogic and participatory techniques are the preferred pedagogic approach” there are significant parallels (2019, p. 109). Both emphasize the necessity of nonhierarchical relationships between teachers and students as active knowers (Harman, 2019). However, according to Freire, the educational experience allows the oppressed to become aware of the “previously hidden operation of power”, which is the first step toward achieving emancipation (2019, p. 109). According to Bingham and Biesta (2010), underlying in this viewpoint is the belief that emancipation and equality can only be realized after the truth about oppression and its relationship to power is disclosed. Rancière, on the other hand, argues that rather than thinking of emancipation as a goal to be achieved in the future, which results in inequality in the now, equality should be “enacted in the here and now” (2019, p. 109). This necessitates the presupposition and verification of an “equality of intelligence” (Rancière, 1991, p. 38). For Rancière an “equality of intelligence” presupposes the shared capacity to “invent objects, stories and arguments” (Rancière, 2014, p. 279), which serves as the foundation for further action (Harman, 2019).

Hence it may be appropriate to close this section with questions that are difficult to answer but necessary to ask: Are GM trainings enacting equality “here

and now”? Can we talk about “handling of a wrong” if the relationship between worker and boss is not called into question or any hierarchy is not suspended? We might also turn the subject to ourselves and ask: What are the means for enacting equality? How can we invent them?

5.3 Closing remarks

In this chapter, I attempted to show that activities of GM are being circumscribed by institutions and GM practitioners try to generate a field of action within these boundaries by choosing between foreignizing and domesticating methods of translation, between redistributing, and reproducing the sensible. If we regard enacting politics as opening a space for the transformation of given roles and meanings, such as the redistribution of gender roles or the inclusion of subjects who are never acknowledged, we might argue that GM practitioners sometimes enact politics. Yet, since every gathering has its own dynamic that is contingent and transient, a generalized verdict -whether they are political spaces or not- is doomed to fail. Here, I offer to analyze terrains moment to moment according to the conceptual framework proposed by Rancière which can help us break the impasse.

Last but not least, when we do not delve into these spaces, we quickly conclude that GM is nothing but a management technology. However, the technical and political are not mutually exclusive; as Barry (1998) shows, technical has always a political component. If we consider GM just a company policy, how can we recognize that it is also a battleground, a field of struggle?

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

They know everything. They are doing our sociology for us and doing it better than we can [...] We just follow the players.

- Bruno Latour¹⁰⁹

In this thesis, to narrate a story of a unique space and time, I followed and listened to the actors that made this setting. I had two main purposes, first to show listening to the situated knowledge of actors can repeal the mainstream general formulas, and second to make a “thicker description” rather than reproducing monolithic representations (Ryle, 1971, p. 498). “Thicker descriptions”, according to Gilbert Ryle, involve more than just describing a deed; they also position actions in terms of their larger meaning or accomplishment (1971, p. 498). Thus, in Chapter 3, the first main chapter, I laid out a normative framework within which GM activities operate to demonstrate that a thicker description of GM can only be made if its relationship with the new development paradigm, corporate social responsibility, and project feminism is depicted. This framework was obscure at first but assembled like a patchwork through my research process both by my interlocutors, scholarly discussions, and me. This chapter attempted to illustrate that GM is a product of an increasingly privatized and snarer world as well as a reaction to it.

In Chapter 4, I attempted to demonstrate that this terrain is not devoid of contestation, and that delving into these debates can reveal conflicting interpretations and practices of GM activities. In order to argue that GM activities are more than just a smokescreen, I showed various strategies developed by GM practitioners to

¹⁰⁹ (Latour, 2002, p. 10).

achieve their stated goals, which directly influence how gender is framed. In this chapter, I also put forward that collaboration between diverse parties generates unintended consequences such as hybridization of institutional structures and professional identities as well as transculturation. To put it another way, I demonstrated that collaborative projects generate hybrid forms that involve various rationalities, action logics, and cultures, opening up discussions about which rationalities are becoming dominant and which are withering away. Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to delve deeper into it, but it does offer a wealthy field for further research. This kind of study requires close scrutiny of institutions, yet this research falls short in terms of observing institutions from the inside.

In Chapter 5, I analyzed what GM practitioners do in addition to what is known about what they do by focusing on the design of GM activities. I based my argument on the notion that focusing on the design phase will offer light on how GM is made and assembled. Here, I explored the worlds of trainers, their motives, and their roles within this terrain, demonstrating that they are accountable for navigating this uneven terrain. I showed that they come forward as translators who mediate various systems of knowledge and as actors who enable this landscape. I also put forward that GM practitioners already create activities based on the contradictory meanings I presented in the previous chapter. Therefore, the chapter lays out that rather than achieving standardization as it is assumed by both conservative and instrumental positions, GM creates diverse and conflicting meanings and practices. A closer examination of trainings would shed more light on the interaction between the audience and trainers, as well as the depiction of the effects of pedagogical tools on the audience.

In this chapter, I also discussed the extent to which they can enact politics within these limitations by concentrating on their method of translation and pedagogical tools. However, I could not elaborate on the multiple meanings of the political that ensued from my fieldwork. Since it is a subject that intrigues and excites me, I wish to conduct further research about the micropolitics of GM, where I would be able to walk around the blurred borders of the political and polemical, polarized and politicized.

Speaking of politics, I would like to return to the moment when I realized what political means to me. In one of the international conferences, hosted by Sabancı University and supported by the European Commission (EC), there was a discussion on leadership, decision making, and participation in civil society and local administrations. Considering the other sessions I participated in, I would say, the conference's main theme was the significance of participatory leadership over masculine and authoritarian ones. The forum I am mentioning was taken up by six women, including five participants and a moderator inhabit in Turkey. Although their diverse experiences are quite interesting, I was bored with hearing them affirm each other's words. Yet, when one of the participants, Yeşim, a lawyer and LGBTQIA+ rights activist, took the floor, the scene changed. Yeşim said:

Kaos GL was founded 26 years ago, and I was part of the founding team, so I have a 25- year activist background. We are an anti-hierarchical organization. Therefore, leadership is not a concept or an approach we accept. As an anarchist, I'm not concerned with whether anarchism will occur while I am still alive. It may not happen, but it is ideal; I may not realize it, but that does not change the fact that it is the ideal. Whether we like it or not, there are definitions of human rights and categories of rights. It has become one of the tools we use to determine how much we can bend the system in our favor and acquire certain rights in this regard. You can call it a liberal approach, and you might wonder how I am an anarchist if I am a lawyer who became involved in some movements within the system. While I am questioning the

system ideologically and theoretically, I do not consider efforts to broaden the field within the system as a contradiction¹¹⁰.

At that moment, I thought, the political was the courage to not defend the leadership at a conference built on leadership. Nonetheless, what Yeşim said was significant not just because it opens a political space, but also in terms of evoking an aphonic yet vital question, which was once raised by Theodor Adorno (Adorno et al., 2001).

Adorno's saying "wrong life cannot be lived rightly" is a very famous one, but the question he raised years later does not have such resonance (Gürbilek, 2015). As Gürbilek (2015) reminds us, in 1963, Adorno began his lectures on moral philosophy by asking his students the following question: "Is right life really possible or are we going to content with the claim that the wrong life cannot be lived rightly?"¹¹¹

In the final phases of writing my thesis, I received a message from one of my interlocutors, Okan, saying, "After our meeting with you, I thought a lot about myself. I even talked about it with a group of my friends." So, I requested a brief Zoom meeting to discuss how this interview had influenced him and during the meeting, something he said piqued my interest:

Recently, I have shifted my focus to children and youth studies; we will conduct an equality study in a private school. I realized that I was wasting a lot of time training adults. I worked so hard to get to the same place with them, and in the end, it yielded so little. However, when I began working with children this year, I realized that I had wasted time explaining this to adults. Things we say are much more easily transmitted to children. As a

¹¹⁰ Kaos GL'nin kuruluşu 26 yıldır, ben de o kurucu ekibe katıldığımda 25 yıllık aktivist geçmişim var. Biz anti-hiyerarşik bir örgütlenmeyiz. Dolayısıyla liderlik kabul ettiğimiz bir kavram, yaklaşım değil. Bir anarşist olarak, anarşizm ben yaşarken gelir mi diye düşünerek anarşist değilim. Gelmeyebilir ama ideali bu, hayata geçiremeyebilirim ama ideal olanın bu olduğu gerçeğini ortadan kaldıramaz. Beğenelim ya da beğenmeyelim insan hakları tanımını, hak kategorileri var. Bunun içinde biz sistemi lehimize ne kadar esnetebiliriz, birtakım haklar edinebiliriz konusunda kullandığımız araçlardan biri oldu. Buna liberal bir yaklaşım diyebilirsiniz, nasıl anarşistsiniz sistem içi birtakım hareketlere girmişsiniz diyebilirsiniz. İdeolojik ve teorik olarak sistemi sorgularken sistemin içinde de alanı genişletmeyi birbirine tezat olarak görmüyorum.

¹¹¹ "Doğru hayat gerçekten mümkün mü, yoksa 'yanlış hayat doğru yaşanmaz' iddiasıyla mı yitineceğiz?" (Gürbilek, 2015, p. 58).

result, I decided to increase my emotional and financial investment in young people.¹¹²

Okan's decision to stop giving company trainings reminded me of Yeşim's words once more. In light of both of their accounts, I find it is necessary to pose a question similar to Adorno's: Are we going to give up on adults, on corporations, on policy, on the mechanism of power, in other words, are we going to be content with the claim that "the wrong life cannot be lived rightly", or are we going to keep pushing, flexing, and distorting the limits of these structures of authority?

¹¹² Son zamanlarda çocuk, genç çalışmalarına kaydım, hatta özel okulda yıllara yayılan bir eşitlik çalışması yapacağız, okulun bütün politikalarını değiştireceğiz, çocuklar merkezde olacak. Ben eşitlik çalışmalarında yetişkinlerle bunca yıldır baya vakit kaybettiğimi anladım onlarla aynı yere geleceğim diye o kadar çaba gösteriyorum ki ve sonunda o kadar az çıktısı oluyor ki. Ama bu sene çocuklarla çalışmaya başlayınca yetişkinlere bu işi anlatmaya çalışarak vakit kaybettiğimi anladım. Çocuklara çok daha rahat geçiyor dediğimiz şeyler. Duygusal ve iş yatırımımı biraz daha gençler üzerine yapmaya karar verdim.

APPENDIX A

APPROVAL OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEE

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 27.05.2022-67789

T.C.
BOĞAZIÇI ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER YÜKSEK LİSANS VE DOKTORA TEZLERİ ETİK İNCELEME
KOMİSYONU
TOPLANTI KARAR TUTANAĞI

Toplantı Sayısı : 32
Toplantı Tarihi : 26.05.2022
Toplantı Saati : 10:00
Toplantı Yeri : Zoom Sanal Toplantı
Bulunanlar : Prof. Dr. Ebru Kaya, Prof. Dr. Feyza Çorapçı, Doç. Dr. Arhan S. Ertan, Doç. Dr. Senem Yıldız,
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Yasemin Sohtorik İlkmen
Bulunmayanlar :

Öznur İlke İmer
Sosyoloji

Sayın Araştırmacı,

Daha önce SBB-EAK 2021/33 sayısı ve "Yeni Kalkınma Modeli, İşbirliği ve Kimlikler: Türkiye'de Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitliği Politikalarının İmkan ve Sınırları" başlığı ile onay almış, içerik değişmeden başlığı "İş Birliğinin Etnografisi: Türkiye'de Toplumsal Cinsiyeti Ana Akımlaştırma Projeler Üzerine Düşünmek" olan araştırma projeniz 26 Mayıs 2022 tarihli toplantıda incelenmiş ve SBB-EAK 2022/48 sayısı ile kabul edilmiştir.

Bu karar tüm üyelerin toplantıya çevrimiçi olarak katılımı ve oybirliği ile alınmıştır. COVID-19 önlemleri kapsamında kurul üyelerinden ıslak imza alınmadığı için bu onay mektubu üye ve raportör olarak Yasemin Sohtorik İlkmen tarafından bütün üyeler adına e-imzalanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla, bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

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SOBETİK 32 26.05.2022

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

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