Istanbul of Networks: Space, Technology, and Governance

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ABSTRACT

ROLIEN HOYNG: Istanbul of Networks: Space, Technology, and Governance
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This dissertation explores the promises and politics of "networking" in the

globalizing city Istanbul, Turkey. It focuses on organizations of governance and struggle in

relation to technological practices involving information communication technologies (ICTs)

as well as discourses of networking inspired by ICTs. The question this dissertation seeks to

answer is: how do discourses and practices of networking generate new models and

mechanisms for urban governance and participation in the global city, yet simultaneously

animate searches for, and enactments of, alternative trajectories of urban transformation? In

more abstract terms, this dissertation inquires into the possibilities and limitations of

participation and citizenship in the global city. To answer my question, I focus on two

governance projects that underscore Istanbul's transformation into a global city: the

"information society" project and the "creative city" project. Both these projects rely on

networked formations of governance in which non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and

self-organizing communities play key roles. Involved NGOs stimulate communities to

acquire and produce new sets of skills and knowledge in preparation for what these NGOs

take to be the necessities of the immanent future. In doing so, these NGOs integrate these

communities with globalizing forms of labor, consumption, and citizenship. However, in the

process, undermining a fixed division between more established civil society and forms of

resistance, discourses and practices of networking also produce communities as entities endowed with a degree of political authority and with capabilities to not just adjust to but also appropriate and *repurpose* the technologies, discourses, and logics of the so-called "information society" and "creative city." Against accounts of a homogenizing process of "globalization," I show that the modalities of power that order the spaces of the global city and its technological modernity do not come strictly "from above" or from "elsewhere." Rather, they are produced within complex contextual relations; they work through specific logics and are mediated by particular forms.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION NETWORKING AND CONTEXT

write comments. ask questions. get information. meet
people. make friends. smile. enjoy. cry. listen to music.
explore. get ideas. share ideas. watch. see. open up
your ears. lend an ear. dream. get inspiration. give
inspiration. think. learn. wonder. read. search. find. ask.
give answer. talk. write. share your concerns. sell. buy.
do work. find work. share with your friends. like. don't
like. comment. socialize. open up to the world. see. hear.
open your eyes.

Walk.
'don't touch my internet!' protest march

Campaign pamphlet "Don't Touch My Internet!" [*İnternetime Dokunma!*]

On 15 May, 2011, over 10,000 people flooded İstiklal Caddesi, Istanbul's most

crowded street in the historic entertainment district Beyoğlu at the European side of Istanbul

(Reporters Without Borders, 2012). It was the biggest demonstration among gatherings in 30

other Turkish cities and even in some European capitals where diasporic Turks reside. The

immediate issue at stake was the government's introduction of a compulsory, centralized

internet filter system. Some of the protests signs carried through İstiklal that day indicated

the internet's importance for socially marginalized groups. There were signs in Kurdish and

Armenian, a gigantic rainbow flag by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transsexual (LGBT)

movement, and some carried the musical instrument *saz*, a symbol of leftist resistance and

Alevi folklore.[1] Nonetheless, the social media campaign leading up to the protest did not

focus on demanding the state's recognition of cultural rights or on political liberties and the

protection of freedoms in general. The campaign's digital pamphlet, reflected in the above

epigraph, listed all the everyday activities conducted by regular consumer-citizens on the

internet that mediate their intimate social interactions and personal experiences. The

pamphlet also borrowed from rather trite commercial discourses relating information

technology to self-realization and exalting discoveries and novelties. The sum-up of everyday

activities amounted into one final imperative, which incited to dissent: "walk." The protest

call on Facebook again addressed the reader and internet user, presumably caught up in

everyday internet activities, in order to warn and incite action. The call made use of internet

slang rather than more formal political speech:

> You're still busy fooling around [on the net] writing comments such as "Hey Burcu
> [female Turkish name], nice pic!" or "I missed you, let's hang out soon," but one day
> you'll realize that nothing is the same anymore. OK, we've accepted all that's
> happened until now, but don't you think it's gone too far? Unless you'll get your butt
> out of your chair and take your eyes off the monitor and do some serious thinking...
> (Damn, I don't know how to end this).

The call hailed the internet as "your only reality." It argued that while other media

including newspapers, television news, and books were marked by the authorities' command,

the internet was the only space where their control, thus far, failed: "Only the internet has no

limitations. The only thing [the authorities] cannot interfere with is the internet." Nowhere,

however, did either the pamphlet or the Facebook call take up a more formal language of

rights to demand that the state respects and protects them. Rather, protestors alluded to a

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[1] Alevis are an ethno-religious minority group that historically has supported leftist and secularist politics.

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freedom consisting in the state's noninterference in networked communication. Instead of any rights and protections, they demanded the state's retreat.

This dissertation focuses on the promises and politics of networking in contemporary Turkey. It explores technological practices involving information and communication technologies (ICTs); discourses of networking inspired by ICTs; and organizations of governance and politics shaped by these discourses and practices. Many scholars have noted a continuing trend of talk about "networking" as a practice somehow related to ICTs and especially to the internet (Dean et al., 2006: xvii; Law, 2000; Thrift, 1999). I situate my analysis in this growing literature, drawing particularly from Andrew Barry's (2001) work on how networking today informs practices as varied as governance, business, and protest. Barry (14, 86, 87) notes that networking, beyond defining ICT-supported practices fulfilling a strictly technical function, provides models through which actors in these different fields understand and intervene in reality and through which they invoke political futures.

Discourses of networking might be globalized and promoted by information industries and governance institutions that operate worldwide, but they nonetheless are articulated contextually. In this dissertation, networking, associated with ICTs, repeatedly appears as an alternative to state centralism, supposedly overcoming negative relations of government. The above-mentioned "Don't Touch My Internet!" protest formed a reaction to the fact that some branches of the Turkish state, led by the conservative-Islamic Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP), sought to centrally regulate the internet as a space that fell under government authority and control. However, for the mostly young, educated, and secular populations attending the protest, the newly proposed filter system seemed to go against what the internet was all about. The protestors were invested in

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reclaiming the internet as a zone that lay beyond the state's domain of intervention; a zone in which they could act without being subjected to the Turkish authorities and free from either the state's protection or control.

As this dissertation argues, for several segments of Turkish society, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and activists, networking promised a way of organizing and mobilizing that had more democratic legitimacy than state governance. In their discourses, networking connotes organization through "participation," "decentralization," and "horizontal interaction." Moreover, for NGOs networked governance formations would support new models of development beyond state-led modernization by exploiting complexity, creativity, and self-organization. This dissertation centers on two NGO-led projects: one "information society" project and one "creative city" project. The complex ways in which discourses and practices of networking structure and organize participation in, as well as development toward, the "information society" and "creative city" are central themes of this dissertation.

The first half of this dissertation (Chapter 2, 3, and 4) discusses two "information society" projects undertaken by the state and by a set of Turkish NGOs respectively. Through its "information society" project the state represented itself as the responsible agent of development. It constructed the ICT-supported informational realm as a national territory and interpellated ICT users as Turkish citizens. Concrete governance practices, conducted through and at the site of ICTs, structured relations between governors and governed accordingly by drawing on particular software applications and their interfaces, ICT training centers, and the spaces of the filtered internet. The NGO-led "information society" project however re-articulated relationships of government and responsibility between the state and

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its citizens, and between global actors and local populations. Rather than conceiving of the rise of NGO-led governance as a process of democratization *per se*, I explore how its practices produced socio-technical organizations involving new modes of control while also opening up particular political possibilities. As Chapter 3 and 4 argue, networking in the case of the NGO-led "information society" project facilitated governmental control and capitalist accumulation by inhibiting politicization of Turkey's course of development, including the implementation of the so-called "information society." This inhibition—or depoliticization of social and technological development—stands in sharp contrast to what NGO-led governance promised on the local level: governance experiments in support of "skilled" and "participatory" communities that would be able to co-determine local and national affairs.

The second half of this dissertation (Chapters 5, 6, and 7) shifts focus from "information society" projects to a NGO-led project that targeted Istanbul's transformation into a "creative city" as well as a "hub" for global knowledge economies. Although the project addressed differs, this half of the dissertation extends the analysis of how discourses and practices of networking generate new scales, agents, and mechanisms of participation and development. Chapter 4 ends on the emergence of the "local" as a distinct scale of governance and on the empowerment of local communities as agents with political authority. Chapter 5 continues this theme by studying urban relations and politics in which discourses and practices of networking by NGOs and "participatory" communities again play an important role.

The second part of the dissertation develops the argument that while networking in urban governance generated particular modalities of participation in, and belonging to, the so-called "creative city," it also enabled possibilities for protest and struggle over urban

transformation and the goals of the "creative city" project. The latter project targeted the mobilization and integration of diverse knowledges, resources, and energies by stimulating and coordinating practices of networking between public institutions, NGOs, the cultural sector, and, importantly, "participatory" citizens. The goals of such networking were simultaneously cultural-democratic transformation and (potential for) economic growth through Istanbul's rise as a top-ranked global city. In order to contest Istanbul's transformation into an exclusive global city, urban activists appropriated and exploited technologies, discourses, and logics of networking.

The NGO-led projects I discuss relied on self-organizing communities which, by way of citizenship performance, would produce and acquire new sets of knowledge and skills. While preparing communities to do well for themselves in what were taken to be emergent social conditions and economic realities, the NGOs integrated these communities with globalizing forms of labor, consumption, and citizenship. At the same time, undermining a fixed division between more established civil society and forms of resistance, discourses and practices of networking also produced communities as entities endowed with a degree of political authority and with capabilities to not just adjust to but also appropriate and *repurpose* the technologies, discourses, and logics of the so-called "information society" and "creative city." Together, the chapters of this dissertation map how discourses and practices of networking enabled, organized, *and* constrained popular participation, while managing Turkey's trajectories of development. They further explore how networking evoked political practices beyond the "participatory" regimes of NGO-led governance as well as alternatives to its projected developmental trajectories.

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As this dissertation demonstrates, discourses and practices of networking are implicated in current spatial and political reorganizations in Turkey in important ways. In the projects I discuss, NGOs worked in-between supranational governance institutions such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) on the one hand and "participatory," self-organizing communities on the other. Operating in networked formations of governance, NGOs mediated between emergent global and local scales and agents of governance and development. The following section argues that the NGO-led projects decentralized state responsibility for governance and development, but at the same time they also generated contradictory tendencies toward supra- or transnationalization *and* localization of governance and politics. Discussing the contexts into which NGO-led governance was articulated and that it produced, I end by highlighting, first, the emergence of more heterogeneous, not strictly national, spaces of governance and politics; and, second, the transformation of Turkey's developmentalist welfare state toward what Neil Brenner (2003) calls the post-development state (see also Ong, 2006).

Spatial and Political Reorganization

Writing about NGO practices in Turkey, Fuat Keyman (2003; 2007) argues that since the 1990s there has been an upsurge of initiatives seeking a more "participatory political culture," aimed at breaking the country's strong-state traditions. Turkish NGOs have pushed for political activity that would be democratic, non-hierarchical, participatory, and initiated "from the bottom up" (Keyman, 2003), but the demands for a change in political culture and governance did not come only from actors inside Turkey. They also came from supranational governance institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and

the European Union (EU). These organizations were in the position to exert pressure on Turkey for different reasons. One reason was the loss of political legitimacy of the Turkish government due to unsustainable fiscal deficit, major corruption scandals, and financial crises in the newly liberalized markets, which led to the very deep economic crisis of 2001. While Turkey took out staggering loans, the IMF and the World Bank made "political conditionality" a *sine qua non* for development lending. In doing so, these institutions pushed for standards of "good governance" that included democratization, improvements in human rights, and changes in the government institutions (Aydın, 2005: 60; Sönmez, 2011: 114).[2] Some of the principles that the IMF and the World Bank enforced on Turkey resonated with EU-imposed criteria for Turkey's accession to the Union. Turkey applied for an association agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC) as far back as 1959, shortly after Greece did so. After obtaining this agreement, again following Greece, Turkey applied for full membership in 1987. Different from Greece, however, the Turkish application was rejected and Turkey was instead offered the option of joining a customs union with the EU, which happened in 1996. The country finally attained candidacy status in 1999; accession talks were opened in 2005, but thus far have been inconclusive (LaGro & Jørgensen, 2007). The Copenhagen Criteria, which as a candidate country Turkey was required to meet prior to the start of accession talks, demand that Turkey has "institutional stability as a guarantee of democratic order and the rule of law, and for ensuring respect for human rights, as well as respect for an the protection of minorities" (Van Westering, 2000, quoted in Aydin, 2005: 104). Through the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ECLSG), the EU pressured

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[2] Turkey received IMF funds, reaching an approximate 30 billion dollars, which made Turkey the second highest borrower from the IMF after Brazil. Turkey received loans and grants from the World Bank on a project basis, particularly in relation to the implementation of agricultural and trade reforms (Eder, 2003: 217).

for government decentralization (Alkan, 2011: 32-34).[3] Regardless of the outcome of the accession talks, the accession process set in motion many transformations and struggles for further political transformations.

Reflecting on Turkey in the 2000s, critics have explored the consequences of the paradoxical move toward decentralization and localization through supranationalization and transnationalization. They note that the rise of technocratic planning by global governance institutions seems to inhibit questioning the nature or politics of development (Aydın, 2005: 75, 76; Dulupçu, 2005). However, it is important to note that NGO and supranational institutions' opposition to state-centralism did not necessarily position these actors as opponents of the Turkish state. For historical reasons, the Islamic-conservative AKP, which came to power in 2002, also supported a break with state centralism. The AKP grew out of the Islamist movement The National Outlook (*Milli Görüş*). Since the 1970s, the leader of the movement, Necmettin Erbakan (1926-2011), attacked what he saw as the doctrine of imitation of western modernity that relegated Islam to a position of obscurity and backwardness (Atasoy, 2005: 127). He argued that in Turkey the majority of Muslim believers was oppressed by its own leaders—a situation that undermined the moral foundation of Turkish society. The National Outlook had a tense relationship with the secular state and its bureaucratic, military, and juridical elites. These Kemalist elites acted in the name of the secularist and statist principles introduced by the revered military leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk when he founded the Turkish Republic in 1923. The National Outlook movement was, before and after the 1980 military coup in Turkey, represented by a series of political parties. However, these parties, the last of which was the government party Welfare

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[3]According to Alkan (2011), local governments remained under strict central supervision by the central state. Since they were not granted enough financial resources they came to rely heavily on private-public partnerships and privatization in order to meet their budgets.

Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP) were consistently banned by the Constitutional Court in defense of the secular state (Atasoy, 2005: 123).

Kemalist elites and supporters feared AKP for its Islamist roots when the party came to power in 2002. However, AKP distanced itself from its National Outlook roots. For instance, Erbakan propagated a Turkish-Islamic, anti-western, and anti-capitalist state. He proposed internationalization by forging a Muslim common market as opposed to one with the EU (Atasoy, 2005: 126-129). Distinguishing itself from The National Outlook, the AKP declared to seek integration with the west, thereby seemingly meeting the Kemalist imagination of modernization as Europeanization rather than setting out on a course that would separate Turkey from the west. While the AKP continued to advocate Islamic morals and a compatible lifestyle, it followed the EU and the larger west on two fronts. For one, the AKP accepted European liberal principles of democracy, human rights, and individual freedoms, which they endorsed as "universal" values in line with the "Muslim" rules of conduct they advocate. Second, the AKP proclaimed that it supports "a free-market economy with all of its rules and institutions" and that it adopts "the principle that the state should not directly engage in economic activity" (AKP 2002, quoted in Atasoy, 2009: 113; see also Adaş, 2008: 169; Tuğal, 2009: 6).

While not attacking Kemalist secular principles, the AKP nevertheless impacted, as Atasoy (2009: 136) argues, the "old Kemalist modality of public space," which was "organized for state-dominated ways of social life." In place of the "territorially homogeneous space of the state," AKP politics opened up "a multiplicity of micro-political spatial domains within the state" (ibid). State sovereignty became contingent on, and understood in relation to, "a different set of boundaries and notions of social space" (ibid).

Against Kemalist elitism and its centralist, strong-state traditions, the AKP mobilized the legacy of the Ottoman Empire as a unique, nonwestern, pluralist period in history that ended with the establishment of the Republic. Such allusions appealed to folklorist fashions and identities and accommodated the upward social mobility of the rural ex-migrant populations in cities, foremost Istanbul, which had elected the RP and AKP into power in the first place (Atasoy, 2009: 137; Bora, 1999: 52, 53; Tuğal, 2009). The AKP accentuated aspects of cultural, social, and emotional life, and especially Islamic moral principles, in support of state transformation and as resources for development. A more democratic system would serve "the cultivation of a social ethic of self-realization" and in doing so benefit Turkey's welfare and development (Atasoy, 2009: 110, 111). As part of accepting "universal" liberal principles and distancing itself from the Kemalist concern over the "unity" of the nation, the AKP promised to improve cultural rights for minorities in Turkey including Kurds, Roma, and Alevis.

It is exactly in this turn away from homogeneous state space that AKP seems to match the demands of both supranational governance institutions and Turkish NGOs. However, the fact that NGOs, supranational institutions, and the AKP government agreed on a movement away from state centralism and toward "good governance" has not led so much to consorted action but opened up new fields of struggle over relations of government. As this dissertation argues, "good governance" principles did not form measures and manifestations of a process of democratization *per se* but they mediated struggles over the reorganization of the scales and agents of government, as well as its mechanisms and aspirations. Articulated with "networking," these principles formed an important site of new imaginaries and practices of citizenship privileges and duties at the intersection of macro-

political (related to institutions) and micro-political (related to behaviors) forms of power and control.

Moreover, discourses and practices of networking are concomitant with particular modalities of control and regimes of accumulation. While Turkey in the 2000s perhaps has more possibilities for certain types of participatory forms of governance and "bottom-up" organization than before (Keyman, 2003; Keyman, 2007; Koplow & Cook, 2012), the moves to decentralization come together with new scales of development that are regional and urban rather than national. Identifying tendencies of spatial development in Europe, Neil Brenner (2003) analyzes the "reorganization of state regulatory arrangements at multiple spatial scales." He notes that newly emerging entrepreneurial cities are subject to spatialized state strategies of "reconcentrating the capacities for economic development within strategic subnational sites such as cities, city-regions and industrial districts" (2003: 209). These urban regions are in turn "positioned strategically with in global and European economic flows" (198). Brenner finds that the focus on entrepreneurial cities challenges the organization of Europe's Keynesian national welfare states, which "attempted to equalize the distribution of population, industry and infrastructure across the national territory."

This dissertation considers the ways in which networking is implicated in the extension of such spatial reorganization toward Turkey. I feature Istanbul, which is Turkey's absolute economic and cultural center, as the site of spatialized strategies of development. In many ways, Istanbul's growth in recent years cannot be equaled by Europe's entrepreneurial cities and it has proven hardly manageable by any planning strategies. Istanbul, whose population grew from over one million in the 1950s to 15 million today, has facilitated much of the 7 percent average economic growth made in Turkey in the period 2002-2007. In this

period, flows of foreign direct investment going into Turkey grew from $1.1 billion in 2002, to $20 billion in 2006, and $22 billion in 2007. Istanbul alone absorbed 95 percent and 89 percent of these investment flows in respective years (Islam, 2010). Meanwhile, in order to support Istanbul's competitive standing, the metropolitan municipality started partnerships to develop appropriate strategies and policies and to redesign and regenerate the city. Among its partners are private firms and supranational governance institutions such as the EU, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Meanwhile, parliament passed a set of new laws that emphasize the role of urban governance and empower the metropolitan municipality (Uzun, 2007: 34, 35). Enacting yet another spatialized strategy, mega events and festivals contributed to the status of Istanbul as a global city. Since the beginning of the 2000s, Istanbul hosted Formula One Races, a NATO summit, prestigious international conferences, pop festivals sponsored by international brands, and the city was elected as a European Capital of Culture (see Chapter 5). The urban transformations and governance arrangements accompanying Istanbul's emergence as a global city are the focus of the second half of this dissertation. Discussing urban governance and protest, this part explores discourses and practices of networking in relation to struggles over Istanbul's emergence as a global city and a productive "hub" in global knowledge economies.

In summary, this dissertation argues that discourses and practices of networking in Turkey, and specifically Istanbul, stands at the intersection of different political investments in decentralization by NGOs, supranational governance institutions, and the Turkish state. Networking mediated emergent relations of governance and politics as well as spatialized strategies of development. On the one hand, networking supported Turkey's integration with

globalizing apparatuses of production and control as the so-called "information society" and "creative city" formed the projected horizons of Turkey's development. Yet, investments in networking entail various political imaginaries of participation and self-organization cultivated by NGOs as well as "participatory" citizens who are motivated by different concerns over their cities and communities. On the other hand, then, networking by self-organizing and participatory communities generated multiple forms of knowing and acting in the world and ways of belonging spatially and socially. There is no blueprint for how these two tendencies in which networking is implicated combine. As this dissertation shows, networking may open up particular possibilities for political intervention yet foreclose others. "Participatory" communities may either reinforce or disrupt globalizing apparatuses of control and trajectories of development.

Networking Beyond the Grid

Noting that discourses and practices of networking form global trends, this dissertation nonetheless aims to underscore the contextual particularity of their forms and functions and the multiplicity of the effects they may generate. In the following, I develop a framework for studying networking contextually. I argue that this involves a nonessential approach to both technology and context. Whereas my notion of technology rejects the assumption of a "fixed" object or essential logic, my notion of context rejects the assumption of a pre-existent condition "out there" or a taken-for-granted geography as backdrop of networking practices. Rather, technology and context (alternatively conceptualized as space, culture, society, etc.) are articulated together, in historically contingent, particular ways and through concrete practices. Studying articulations in this way means neither presuming

essential logics nor denying the operation of forces that produce articulations. Following

Lawrence Grossberg's description of cultural studies' radical contextuality, the task at hand

is "making, unmaking, and remaking relations and contexts, of establishing new relations out

of old relations or non-relations, of drawing lines and mapping connections" (2010: 21). I

started this project three years ago because I was troubled by asymmetries in how particular

topics and themes get "distributed" and studied in relation to either east or west, as if the

preferable place for studying technology would be the "advanced" western metropolis while

the appropriate place for studying matters of culture and identity, including their

hybridization and "disappearance," would be the east. From the beginning, I have tried to

find new ways of imagining why technological practices matter contextually and to define

problematics, or problem-spaces without embracing prevalent discourses about Turkey

(taking for granted "Islam," "neoliberalism," "globalization," "alternative modernity").

Thus far I have said that discourses and practices of networking are affiliated with

ICTs and supported by them. I have not yet explained how I conceive of technology and its

relation to culture or social praxis. Although in this dissertation I at times I talk about

"technologies" and "ICTs," I do not limit my conception of technology to their conceived

view as "fixed" objects and devices (Slack & Wise, 2005). While I am interested in the

material and phenomenological properties of ICT devices as artifacts and infrastructures, I do

not consider such devices to function independently from particular *techniques* and *practical

usages*: ways of representing and acting in the world that involve particular languages, bodies,

minds, desires, skills, and traditions of use (Barry, 2001: 9; Terranova, 2004: 5). Such

techniques and practical usages of technological artifacts produce and maintain, or "reveal,"

the world in certain ways (Flew, 2002: 36-40).

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Furthermore, conducting a contextual analysis of discourses and practices of networking in Turkey and specifically Istanbul, this dissertation rejects the assumption that networked forms comprise an essential logic that is reducible to the workings of networking technologies as "fixed" objects and infrastructures. Evocations of an expanding "grid," imagined as an infrastructure facilitating smooth connectivity and speed, assume a technological reality existing prior to and separate from practices of use. Such assumptions have been made at the expense of tracing the particular and uncertain processes through which technological networks take shape (Latour, 2005: 39, 131, 132; Law, 2000). Taking the "grid" for granted, both influential critiques and appraisals of networked forms such as the network society and collective intelligence have centered their analysis on an essential, singularly dominant logic that operates independently of context yet also absorbs, reconstitutes, and controls it.

An influential critic of networked forms, whose work exemplifies what I hold to be the "grid approach," is Manuel Castells (2000), author of the academic best-seller trilogy *The Information Age*.[4] Castells' account of the network society is structured on the basis of the binarisms of the "information-capitalist" and the cultural, or "flow" ("the Net") and "place." Through these binaries, Castells describes two contrasting spatio-temporalities that have developed in correspondence to growing socio-economic schisms: the space of flows and the space of places. The latter, the space of places, is characterized by the fact that "form, function, and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of physical contiguity" (453). The space of flows, Castells holds, refers to the circuits of electronic exchanges facilitated by worldwide ICT structures and to the mobilities and speeds that characterize social spaces such as business areas in global cities (442). The space of flows signifies the growing

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[4]See http://www.manuelcastells.info/en/SSCIsocialranking_eng.pdf, retrieved on August 1, 2012.

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opposition between function and meaning, between objective logics and subjective experiences. While Castells initially distinguishes between production, power, and experience as different realities and dynamics (corresponding to informational capitalism, social and political institutions, and subjective experience), all of them end up being implicated in one singular development and history toward the network society. Flow is not just one conjunctural element, but it expresses all of economic, political, and symbolic life. Castells deploys in fact a quasi-technological discourse for his description of the present social morphology, and turns the network into a social ontology (see also Kampmann Walther, 2007: 25). In doing so, Castells' analysis features what Slack and Wise (2005) call "expressive causality." In expressive narratives of socio-technical development, essential theme or logic unfolds over the course of history. Technologies are deemed to "reflect the essence, manifest the essence, and enhance the essence—whatever the particular essence might be understood to be" (Slack & Wise, 2005: 111). For Castells, the expressed essence of the network society comprises the dialectics between the Net and the Self, between function and meaning, and the corresponding spatial logics. What Castells' critique of the network society is missing is exactly a relational conceptualization of the experiences, practices, and negotiations of particular forms of power in everyday life and at the margins as the grounds for analytical work pertaining to global networked modernity.

In contrast to Castells, Tiziana Terranova (2000: 49), an author invested in theorizing "network culture" by drawing from Autonomist theory, emphasizes that heterogeneous and divergent dynamics emerge from networks. Furthermore, instead alluding to a space of flow undermining processes and practices of place-making, Terranova argues that networking is constitutive of identities and places as the latter are recast as nodes or assemblages in the

network. Hence, the dynamic topology of network culture signifies, not a space of flows, but rather the "fluidity of place." I am sympathetic to this move, since it is one way of overcoming the binaries that structure Castells narrative. This approach emphasizes that networked socio-technical forces are productive of cultural and spatial formations (at the same time that they challenge others). It underscores the modalities of formative power of the technological apparatuses in networked societies and economies as well as the ways in which they generate an excess of capabilities, affect, and energies beyond capitalist control. My problem with this account, however, is that network culture seems universally and singularly formed by the dominance of certain dynamics inherent in networked communication and capitalism. Terranova privileges isolated technological apparatuses as foundational to network culture, which seems to absorb and encompass *all* culture and communication in the informational age. To the extent that Terranova reduces context or culture to a singular logic, her account features, like Castells', expressive causality. As it remains unclear how network culture intersects with other formations, shaped in relation to multiple histories, this approach brings little understanding of contextually particular articulations. The tendency toward isolating particular technological apparatuses coincides with the embrace of a "metastable" ontology, underpinning Terranova's definition of networked sociality, which does not feature historical processes of formation of particular subjectivities and collectivities, but emphasizes ongoing processes of "becoming" as such and the surplus energy that they generate.[5] While Terranova, in contrast to Castells argues that networking generates rather than nullifies heterogeneous and divergent dynamics, she reproduces the assumption of an essential logic stemming from information-capitalist forces.

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[5] 'The metastable' outlines Gilbert Simondon's conceptualization of the transcendental as in essence a fluid and turbulent order. The concept has informed Deleuze's 'plane of the virtual' and focuses on the ongoing, never-ending process of individuation rather than on subjects or individuals (Shaviro 80; Terranova 2004b).

The analytical task for me however is to ask: how are different apparatuses and logics of mediation articulated together and what contextually particular relations of power and political possibilities emerge through socio-technical practices as they constitute identities, forms of sociality, and belonging? Instead of essentializing technology and taking it as the basis for a social and political morphology, I look at negotiations and appropriations of the discourses, logics, and technologies that are implicated in Castells' network society or Terranova's network culture. I emphasize that the modalities of power that order the spaces of technological modernity do not come strictly "from above" or from "elsewhere," but that they are produced within complex contextual relations; they work through specific logics and are mediated by particular forms. My premise is that while the analysis of the modalities of power associated with networking should not be dismissed, power should be understood in relation to its negotiations in everyday life and at the margins. This provides a relational conceptualization of experiences, practices, and negotiations of particular forms of power as the grounds for analytical work pertaining to global network modernity.

Instead of conceptualizing networked forms or technological apparatuses and culture or context separately, I conceive of networking in terms of assemblages that include as their components technological artifacts and techniques of knowing and acting. However, assemblages are not just arrangements but ongoing processes of arranging and organizing that integrate various components (Wise, 2005: 77). As part of dynamic and unstable assemblages, artifacts and techniques are always in use and mobilized "somewhere" and they are rearticulated by the multiple contexts in which they operate (ibid). The "networking assemblages" that I discuss in the following chapters integrate diverse components including technical materialities; political imaginaries and organization models; institutional settings

and governance practices; capitalist and noncapitalist economies; spatial and scalar orderings forming geographies of ICT skills and access; and disciplinary apparatuses and micropolitical mechanisms supporting particular modalities of participation and belonging.[6]

Focusing on assemblages avoids essentialisms regarding technology (where the latter are regarded as fixed objects with a vast set of functions and effectivities) that result in technological determinism; and it helps us to understand technologies as they are implicated in effectivities that go far beyond those commonly scrutinized in media studies.[7] Following Lawrence Grossberg's (2010: 190, 191) take on Nietzschean / Spinozean mediation, networking assemblages mediate in the sense that they generate effectivities constituting reality as a positive multiplicity. While thus far I have developed a nonessential approach to technology, in the following I will argue that my analysis necessitates a concomitant nonessential approach to context. My notion of context does not refer to a pre-existent condition "out there" or to a taken-for-granted geography that demarcates Turkey or Istanbul. In my analysis, context itself is constructed partially in relation to the assemblages of networking and re-constructed through my effort to map it (see also Slack, 1996: 123-125).

As the previous section practices of networking mediate the reorganization of the scales, agents, mechanisms, and aspirations of governance and politics. This dissertation looks at the emergent relations and interactions that traverse different scales and contexts of governance and sociality, such as between global information industries and local municipalities or NGOs, between transnational EU programs and Istanbul's cultural sector,

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[6] See for comparable approaches Berland (2009: 12) and Slack and Wise (2005: 130).

[7] Grossberg argues that what is commonly understood as "the media," as objects in themselves, in fact involve transgressions of boundaries (with the everyday, with larger configurations of power in the conjuncture, and between discursivity and the non-discursive) (302). The consequence of the transgressions is that we cannot isolate "the media" or designate them as the privileged objects of analysis without mapping the contextual articulations.

and between resistant neighborhood organizations and wider networks of activists. In doing so, this dissertation does not presume a stable background. That is to say, it does not presume the global scale of the space of flows, the local scale of the city (Istanbul), nor the national scale of the country (Turkey) as a fixed referent or backdrop against which developments evolve. Rather, this dissertation looks at the articulation of spaces and scales of operation— the mutual production of the global, the local, and the national—through practices of networking, whereby each of these scales consists of forms and practices that help shape the other scales.

Assemblages of networking form a privileged point of access for the inquiry into emergent spaces and scales as the material effectivities of technological practices are in complex ways implicated in their production. Jody Berland (2009: 12) argues that "technologies, machineries, practices, and subjectivities do not proliferate randomly or endlessly, but emerge within and are shaped by specific geopolitical regimes." Berland relates the (re)production of a techno-spatial order to spatialized strategies of capitalist accumulation and governmental control. Her analysis draws from the work by Henri Lefebvre. Lefebvre (1991: 85) argues that techno-spatial orderings together with the social division of labor facilitate a capitalist mode of production.[8] His analytical category of *spatial practices* refers to all those activities and structures taking place in space that cooperatively

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[8] For Lefebvre, space and technology are respectively "means" and "productive forces" of capitalist production. Lefebvre states:

> Though a product to be used, to be consumed, [space] is also a means of production; networks of exchange and flows of raw materials and energy fashion space and are determined by it. Thus this means of production, produced as such, cannot be separated either from the productive forces, including technology and knowledge, or from the social division of labour which shapes it, or from the state and the superstructures of society. (1991: 85).

Space and technology serve, and are used in the interest of, neo-capitalism yet the consolidation of this system is never complete according to Lefebvre and resisting it is possible.

serve a society's cohesiveness and facilitate capital's production and reproduction (38). Technological practices, and the infrastructures and materialities they involve, form integral parts of the latter spatial practices. In line with these perspectives, in this dissertation, technological practices reproduce what Doreen Massey (1994) describes as the "power-geometry": a spatialized order of power relations resulting from intensified degrees of mobility and connectivity. In this order, "different social groups, and different individuals, are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows and interconnections" (Massey, 1994). Pointing to a power-geometry is however not the same thing as arguing for a globalized network society as Castells does by describing all-encompassing information-capitalist forces that in the final analysis determine local conditions. Avoiding such determinisms, I emphasize that the scale of the global does not exist by itself but is contingent on local activities and (dis)engagements. As Chapter 3 of this dissertation argues, sustaining a global techno-spatial order that serves information capitalism is contingent on the appearance of certain spheres of life as somehow "beyond" politics. Although, as this chapter argues, within the NGO-led "information society" project important questions about the nature and politics of development often did not get asked, the networked governance practices also generated contextually particular effects, unanticipated by Castells' thesis, including the emergence of political possibilities on the local and national level.

Networking assemblages have a much wider range of functions and effects than the reproduction of capitalism and their significance and meaning is a contextual question. All of the following chapters of this dissertation underscore ways in which networking engenders contradictory tendencies toward 1) integration with globalizing routines of labor, consumption, and citizenship and their apparatuses of control and trajectories of development;

and 2) contextually particular effects that multiply forms of knowing and acting in the world and modalities of belonging spatially and socially. Following Lefebvre and Harold Innis, Berland captures how assemblages of which communication technologies shape "the material communicative practices which order and enable the production of space—of people, meanings, and things in space—as a repository of social meaning and possibility" (Berland, 2009: 97).[9] In this dissertation, networking assemblages constitute virtual topologies of connection experienced as bonds of association as well as mental maps, meanings, and imaginations of space (Berland, 2009; Morley 2000). In addition, technologies, as they are embedded in cultural practices, mediate *in particular ways*: they offer formative material platforms and channels that give shape to cultural performances, memories, imagined futures, desires, and cultural politics.[10] This second tendency inherent in networking disrupts the projected trajectories of development and potentially undermines integration with globalizing apparatuses of control (see also Chakrabarty, 2000). This dissertation emphasizes the ways in which networking assemblages articulate modalities of belonging and participation as well as open up possibilities for resistance and the political practice of imagining alternatives to the existing order.

Producing a contextual analysis of networking assemblages involves rethinking networked global modernity as *multiple*, rather than singular and homogeneous. While I use the term "global networked modernity," I do not assume a universal grid or an all-inclusive network of connectivity, speed, and mobility (a smooth space of flow). Doreen Massey (2005)

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[9] Berland does not use the language of assemblage but deploys the term "cultural technology." I prefer assemblage over cultural technology as the former reflects better that networking forms an unstable and dynamic arrangement of diverse components, articulated together.

[10] Different perspectives in media-ecology point to the role of material and formal qualities of media and technologies. See Matthew Fuller, Katherine Hayles, and Marshall McLuhan.

emphasizes the need to recover the "multiplicities of space," in other words, the multiple trajectories that constitute space. Following Massey, global networked modernity is not a homogeneous grid, but consists of the coeval multiplicity of trajectories; the aggregate of particular articulations between the local and the global. The analytical task is then to think conjuncturally, in the tradition of cultural studies. Massey (2005: 141), quoting Low and Barnett (2000), describes this task as the "shuttling back and forth between different temporal frames or scales" with the goal to grasp the particular character of processes which somehow seem to intersect and belong to the "same" moment in time (a moment that is constructed and mapped in the analysis). Such an approach seems to have the potential to analyze networking contextually and in doing so fruitfully contribute to long-standing debates about Turkey's relation to the west, modernity, and globalization.

This dissertation is based on in 12 months of fieldwork in Istanbul during spring and summer 2010 and summer 2011. In addition, I made a one-week trip to Ankara. I conducted semi-structured interviews with governors, professionals, and activists that lasted generally around an hour. Interviews with volunteers and participants of the various governance projects that I discuss in this dissertation were sometimes focus group meetings. I also attended their meetings and events for participant observation. In order to grasp various articulations of 'networking' as multi-faceted assemblages, my research is multi-methodological. It includes spatial analysis, ethnographic observations, discourse analysis, and new media analysis (studying architectural and aesthetic features of digital platforms, dynamics of their use, and interaction with other media).

Chapter Overview

The first three chapters that follow explore the form and politics of the "information society" project as both a national project led by the state (Chapter 2) and as a project led by local and global actors including NGOs, the UN, and ICT companies (Chapters 3 and 4). The second set of three chapters focus on the "creative city" project, which I argue was an initiative aimed at strengthening urban democracy as well as a post-developmental investment in Istanbul's transformation toward a global city. Throughout the following chapters, I am concerned with networking as a political imaginary and with supposedly more participatory networked governance models. I explore in what particular ways networking assemblages shape, enable, and constrain participation and self-organization.

Chapter 2 explores the state-led information society project by focusing on three of its components: 1) the design of an information society by the Turkish state outlined in the planning document *Information Society Strategy, 2006-2010*; 2) state governance practices aimed at social transformation including the Movement for Increasing Opportunities and Improving Technology (*Fırsatları Artırma ve Teknoloji İyileştirme Hareketi*, FATIH) and municipal public internet access points; and 3) the Safe Internet initiative through which the state introduced an internet filter system. This chapter analyzes the contradictory set of spatialities and agencies involved in the state-led "information society" project. On the one hand, bureaucratic planning discourses stimulated Turkey's integration with global informational spaces and socio-technical trajectories planned by supranational governance institutions and foreign experts. On the other hand, these discourses constructed the state as the responsible agent of development and the transformation toward the information society as a development with national contours.

Chapter 2 describes how the state constructed the ICT-supported informational realm as a national territory and ICT users active in technological spaces as Turkish citizens. Through its "information society" project, the state positioned itself as the agent of development by producing ICT applications; managing the ICT-supported informational realm; and protecting and controlling citizens' relations to ICTs and their activities online and offline. Concrete governance practices, conducted through and at the site of ICTs, structured relations between governors and governed by exploiting particular sets of moral and epistemological discourses. However, while the state appropriated the information society as a project it was responsible for and held control over, ensuing processes altered what "state" and "nation" stood for. Managing the transformation toward the information society, the state became a provider of selective services to consumer-citizens and the nation transmogrified into an exclusive moral community. Activists criticized the impacts of these transitions in terms of moral panic, a lack of protection of citizenship rights, and judicial shortcomings.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the NGO-led "information society' project. I argue that, for those carrying out the project, the information-technical discourses of networking informed a political imaginary against perceived traditions of state centralism. This imaginary, promoted by several NGOs working on the information society project, constructed the centralist state as the antithesis to networking, which they privileged as the primary organizational principle of the so-called information age. Although these NGOs were in general not opposed to the government, they nevertheless claimed the information society as a domain that, on the basis of their professional mission and expertise, they were entitled to manage. Appealing to presumably "networked," "participatory," and "horizontal" models of governance, their

discourses constructed the informational realm supported by ICT as a global space of connectivity and networked exchange between *global* and *local* actors, thereby eclipsing the state as the sole agent of development toward the "information society."

In these chapters, I focus on the NGO Habitat Center for Development and Governance (*Habitat Kalkınma ve Yönetişim Derneği*, HKYD), which was responsible for the concrete practices of social transformation of the NGO-led "information society" project. Having multi-stakeholder partnerships with global ICT companies such as Cisco, Intel, Microsoft, and Vodafone, HKYD provided free or low-cost ICT skills training, ranging from basic ICT skills trainings to vocational education for "network experts." While HKYD arranged volunteer trainers, ICT companies provided mainly software, sometimes especially developed for certain target groups. Yet HKYD had a second goal beside skill training Turkish populations. What mattered mostly to the NGO's employees and volunteers was strengthening self-organization and participation on the local level. To realize this goal, HKYD facilitated community empowerment programs that were part of a collaboration with the UN's Local Agenda 21 (LA-21) project. According to the NGO, the two fronts on which they were active were intrinsically connected: ICT skills training would increase populations' abilities to participate in self-organization and to impact local and national policy-making.

The argument I develop over the course of Chapters 3 and 4 is that the NGO-led "information society" project generated two scales, namely the "global" and the "local," as two rather separate zones of governance and activity. Discourses of ICT-supported self-organization promoted the construction the local community as a social entity endowed with political authority, exercised through participatory mechanisms and with respect for principles of "good governance." However, such democratic political authority was absent

with regard to affairs that were not of a local or national but of a global nature, including the standardization of software and ICT devices, information capitalism as a mode of production, and the mechanisms of global governance through which the project was planned and implemented. Particular patterns of connection and disconnection in networked governance kept local and global governance zones apart and they differentially empowered corporate stakeholders, the NGO, and the people in Turkey actually undergoing skills trainings and other social transformation programs. I argue that networked governance facilitated governmental techniques of control over people's relations to ICTs and de-politicized questions of development and the future of the so-called information society. Yet, simultaneously, networked governance rendered so-called local communities rather experimental spaces that opened up new and indeterminate political possibilities.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore networked governance in the case of the year-long governance experiment and cultural project Istanbul European Capital of Culture 2010, or Istanbul 2010. In 2010, Istanbul received the annually rotating title of European Capital of Culture, which is awarded by the Council of Ministers of the EU to selected European cities. While hailing Istanbul as the "cradle of civilization" possessing cultural heritage from both "eastern" and "western" traditions, Istanbul 2010 did not just celebrate and "sell" the city's heritage. It also aligned "culture" with the project of the creative city by commanding particular forms of networked transformation and production. Istanbul 2010 targeted the mobilization and integration of diverse knowledges, resources, and energies by stimulating and coordinating practices of networking between public institutions, civil society organizations, the cultural sector as well as "participatory" citizens. Inspired by the paradigm of the creative city that was promoted by the renowned author-consultant Charles Landry

(2008), the NGOs initiating the project expected that "networking" would bring forth two gains. First, it would transform governance actors and introduce an alternative to the overtly centralist, repressive state and its top-down modernization project. Second, following the paradigm of the creative city, new networked partnerships would start cycles of cultural exchange that in turn would fuel cultural-democratic transformation as well as (potential for) economic growth. Istanbul 2010 networking assemblages rearticulated "culture" in relation to the economic: in the light of the regimes of value of so-called knowledge economies, culture became the source for "creativity," (globally) networked production, and a presumably inexhaustible, productive potential. Hence, Istanbul 2010's governance networks sought to manage and exploit culture and this had implications for the ways in which populations were able to participate in, and belong to, the creative city that Istanbul was supposed to become.

Chapter 6 argues that, in the case of Istanbul 2010, discourses of participation, which mediated hope for a more just city, intersected with technologies of place branding and their call for popular involvement in Istanbul 2010. This chapter explores place branding as a technology of participation in and belonging to the creative city. Following Celia Lury (2004), I argue that "Istanbul 2010" as a city brand functioned as an "interface" that set out to establish relations between different segments of participatory citizens. However, integrating place-branding technologies, Istanbul 2010's networking assemblages constructed interfaces that both incited *and* managed citizen participation. Despite the discourses promising the participation of "the many and the marginalized" and of "general creativity," networked participation and self-organization were clearly still selective concepts that privileged particular subject positions and forms of sociality, in addition to selected venues and types of

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interaction. I argue that, politically, the diagram of interactivity as manifested in the participatory networks implied that Istanbul 2010 reinforced and extended the *requirement to participate*. Participation formed a civic responsibility through which one attains a chance to have a voice, but there is no such right in the first place.

Chapter 7 looks to discourses and practices of networking in relation to urban resistance against Istanbul's transformation into an exclusive global city. It argues that networked self-organization and creative production were not restricted to Istanbul 2010 programs; they also informed the resistance networks that used place branding as a more differential technology of belonging to the so-called "creative city." I focus on the Sulukule Platform. This activist collective enacted the resistance around the Sulukule neighborhood, which was historically a Roma settlement and which got marked for demolition by the municipality in 2005. The Sulukule Platform activists aimed to enact their resistance through networks that would connect different populations, discourses, and mediating materialities. The knowledge production by the activists was rather diverse as a consequence of the Platform's networking across different scales and in-between different institutions, and circuits of information and communication. In some ways, for Sulukuleans and activists alike, there were important possibilities for the negotiation of their respective roles and identities and for constituting new knowledges and mental maps that contested planning discourses supporting Istanbul's transformation into a global city. However, urban struggle had to face and negotiate the repercussions of unequal distributions of knowledge and skills; conventional divisions in subjects and objects of various technologically enabled "gazes"; and disconnections between particular circuits of information and communication. The resistance movement attracted major press attention and made intensive use of commercial

internet platforms to reach out to audiences within Turkey and abroad. In these processes, however, divisions in subject and object of knowledge returned, resulting in the reproduction of Orientalist imaginary pertaining to the Sulukuleans, who did not manage to act as knowledge producers.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ONLINE NATION

Introduction

This chapter will look at the state-led efforts to create an information society in

Turkey in the years following 2006 when the official strategy *Information Society Strategy*

2006-2010 went into effect. It will focus on three elements of the state's project: the design

of the information society outlined in the *Information Society Strategy 2006-2010*;

governance practices aimed at social transformation including the Movement for Increasing

Opportunities and Improving Technology [*Fırsatları Artırma ve Teknoloji İyileştirme*

Hareketi, FATIH] and municipal public internet access points; and the Safe Internet initiative,

which introduced an internet filter system.

Undeniably, the state-led information society project integrated Turkey with global

spaces of information as they were designed by foreign, supranational governance

institutions. However, regardless of the transnational scope of informational spaces, this

project constructed the informational realm supported by information and communication

technologies (ICTs) as a national territory in which the state acted as the agent of

development. The state carried the responsibility to regulate, guide, and protect citizens by

means of introducing particular ICT applications and public services. This chapter explores

how the project structured relations between governors, governed, and the ICT-supported

informational realm. Technologies of governance, which operated through and at the site of ICTs, were integrated with public ICT services, internet access points, and an "interactive" filter system. I argue that the state's information society project constructed the internet as a national territory and users as members of a national community.

First, I will discuss the ways in which the techniques of representation in the *Information Society Strategy* integrated Turkey's social and technological developments with the global (yet predominantly western) space of information designed by supranational and international governance actors, including the European Union (EU). Albeit the *Strategy* followed the lead of these foreign expert institutions, it nonetheless claimed that development of an information society necessitated designating local actors to carry out the project and that the project had national contours. While compromised by this contradiction, the project positioned the Turkish state as the proud agent of technological development and legitimized its strong presence in ICT-related spheres of society and life. By explicitly critiquing the "advanced nations" for protecting their privileges in the global informational realm, the project promoted a degree of politicization of socio-technical development and enabled the imagination of alternative trajectories with implications for the futures of governance and technology alike.

Second, I will discuss the FATIH e-learning [online learning] project conducted at schools as well as similar municipal initiatives revolving around public internet access points. These initiatives aimed to stimulate "efficient" and "beneficial" use of ICTs by the general population and especially by the youth. I analyze these projects in terms of the spatial patterns they constructed and articulated with moral and epistemological frameworks: a topology associating online and offline spaces as well as the "inner" space of the soul. This

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spatial analysis leads me to a discussion of how the FATIH project and the municipal access points used morality as "technologies of the self" (Rose et al., 2006) that would guarantee development at individual and national levels. I will point to two paradoxical practices by the state under the rule of the Justice and Development Party [*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP], namely access provision and access and content regulation. Critics often understand access and content regulations in terms of censorship, restriction, and prohibition. However, for state officials advocating these practices but also for a significant segment of their constituency these regulations were integral to promises and experiences of development, progress, and the embrace of "modern" lifestyles. These technologies of permission— permission through restriction—are concomitant with a particular vision of Turkish history that situates the "kernel" of development and the "origin" of progress in the country's Ottoman past instead of in its western-oriented Kemalist, republican era.

Third, I will look at the Safe Internet initiative. This initiative offered internet filter packages to be applied in public as well as private environments. The Safe Internet initiative produced slippages between different governmental technologies. Politicians called for awareness, conscious consumerism, and "auto-control" technologies of the self. However, in addition to appeals to *auto-control*, state practices of internet filtering and banning instituted what I call *automated control*. State actors legitimized state protectionism and coercion by constructing the ICT-supported informational realm as a national territory and by interpellating users as members of a national moral community.

The National Information Society

The *Information Society Strategy 2006-2010*, produced by the Information Society

Department at the State Planning Organization of the Turkish Prime Ministry in Ankara,

presented the official strategy for Turkey's transformation toward the information society. It

(2006: 5) declared its alliance with the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

organized by the United Nations (UN), which in 2005 enjoyed the participation of 175

countries including Turkey. Moreover, in order to benefit "from international experiences"

the *Strategy* (50) focused on participation in information society activities carried out by the

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations

(UN), and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). However, for Turkey, the EU

was the most directly influential policy-making institution, even though the country was not

included in policies and programs for EU member states, but only in the eEurope+ Initiative,

a special program for EU candidate countries. The *Strategy* (1, 50) stated that the relations

with the EU "played a triggering and accelerating role in the process of Turkey's

transformation into an information society." It (50) assured that Turkey would follow the

EU's information society programs closely and implement standards for Pan-European

interoperability.

Throughout its chapters, the *Strategy* carefully followed the EU's legal and technical

framework, measuring Turkey's performance in relation to indexes and scores of EU

member states. Through ongoing comparisons between Turkey and other so-called developed

nations, the *Strategy* presented a roadmap that would align Turkey with presumably global

(yet predominantly western) technological conditions. Particular action items that proposed

to tackle measured "lacks" and recorded "deviations" from expected conditions reinforced a

linear trajectory of development; a certain line of modernization seemed to lay ahead. It was

the task of expert planning to enforce this line of development. Together with a globalizing

spatial framework of development, the representational techniques of the information society

constituted a rather technological determinist and progressivist temporality. The *Strategy*

attributed ICTs the capacity to bring progress and development. The document (4) cited

statistics of ICTs' impact on labor productivity improvement in the United States and the EU,

estimated as respectively 60% and 40%. In the EU "25% economic growth was due to ICT"

(ibid.). The *Strategy* suggested that Turkey could repeat this effect by becoming an

"information society." The document outlined strategies for "leaping" forward and "catching

up" visualized in charts and graphs. ICTs were portrayed as the shortcut to modernity,

welfare, and growth. As the *Strategy* (2006: 4) commented, "Making marginal advancements

in ICT is not sufficient for Turkey, it needs a serious jump if it is to realize the anticipated

development by ICT." The alternative to technologically enabled development was the

exacerbation of regional exclusion: Turkey would fall further behind the competitive world

economy.

Regardless of the representational techniques that produced the globalizing

spatialities and progressivist temporalities of the information society, the *Strategy* also

positioned state leadership as central to the national goal of transformation to an information

society and imagined to be a development with national contours. The figure below, taken

from the *Strategy,* visualizes what the document presents as the "holistic strategy." In the

figure, a single, mono-directional arrow runs up from a block representing professional ICT-

related activity at the national scale, toward the realm of the nation-state.

It is remarkable that the figure completely erases the complexity of cross-border and global connections: flows of finance and commodities (import, export, venture capital, investments in ICT for Development programs); skills (brain drain of Turkish professionals going abroad, foreign consultants and expats coming in); knowledge (promoted by the EU's 7th Framework Program for collaborative knowledge production, yet limited through, for instance, Intellectual Property [IP] law); as well as legal and policy influence (EU's Lisbon strategy, WSIS, Trade Agreements). These erasures and the cartographic imagery help portray the transformation toward the information society as a development taking place at the scale of the nation-state, a development with national contours and local actors.

By emphasizing the national contours of development, the "holistic strategy" integrated various dynamics of Turkish society. Rather than focusing on advanced ICT industries selectively, the strategy emphasized the overall social transformation of the population. The *Strategy* (22) declared: "Transformation into an information society is a holistic phenomenon which involves not only a change in traditional mechanisms of the economy but also social and cultural change" In a personal interview, the head of the Information Society Department at the State Planning Organization in Ankara, Emin Aydin, argued that the holistic approach responded to the fact that Turkey encompassed significant differences within its borders: "We need a holistic strategy. When you go to the East, you see villages very similar to India, but when you are in Istanbul, Ankara, or in public agencies, there are state-of-the-art IT systems, delivering every kind of service online, many e-commerce [online commerce] services."[11] The holistic strategy envisioned the transformation toward an information society as an integrated development among the government,

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[11]Personal interview, Ankara, June 8, 2010.

(committed to necessary public investment and policy-making), populations (digital skills training and distance learning), and local ICT industries and businesses enhanced by ICTs.[12] The *Strategy* sought to create a "network effect" in Turkey "by constructing the relationship between and within the government, the citizens, and the businesses based on the ICT" (5). Through interaction and effects across these three segments, Turkey would be able to "reinforce her position within the economic and social networks emerging on a global scale" (ibid.).

By appealing to a holistic approach and to the need for coordinated and planned networking at the scale of the nation, the *Strategy* produced a position of responsibility for state agencies. It emphasized the role of *local* actors, both governing bodies and, as the next section will discuss further, governed populations. As Mr. Aydin at the Information Society Department in Ankara argued, the state bore final responsibility for the transformation toward the information society. It had the task of overseeing and coordinating its partners, including NGOs and ICT companies involved in corporate social responsibility programs as well as supranational governance agencies such as the EU. Mr. Aydin argued that "people are telling their needs to the government, the executers [the executive branch]," who would be "responsible for executing and managing" public policies and who had to "respond to public demand."[13] However, Mr. Aydin admitted that actors external to the Turkish state did influence policy-making and that ICT companies influenced governance practices related to the information society. He said: "I am not sure if that cycle is very healthy in Turkey." The

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[12] For instance, the *Strategy* focused on public investments that would provide access and motivate populations as well as ones that would support the local ICT sector. In return, local populations committed to "effective usage" of ICTs would give "economic and social benefit" (22, 23). The informatization of businesses and the advancement of the national ICT sector would yield "global competitive power" (37) and contribute to the sustainability and growth of the Turkish economy.

[13] Personal interview, Ankara, June 8, 2010.

danger was a "top-down" approach in which Turkish policy-makers would simply follow "some good examples in the west implementing this [or that] kind of internet facilities, [or] online content." Although not realized fully in practice according to Mr. Aydin, the Turkish state had final responsibility over the information society project. The state was accountable to local populations, who needed to be served and understood in their particular needs.

The discourses and practices of governance articulated by *The Information Strategy 2006-2010* staged a series of contradictions. On the one hand, it integrated Turkey with an EU-dominated socio-technical zone of governance and a "global" informational realm by using technical apparatuses of representation, measurement, and comparison that align trajectories of technological development in Turkey with those elsewhere. On the other hand, the holistic strategy presents the transformation toward the information society as a development with national contours and local actors. Moreover, despite the technological determinist vision of development through ICTs, the *Strategy* appointed the state as an actor with political responsibilities and decision-making power, even though, as Mr. Aydin argued, the circumstances limited this power.

At stake were two contradictory apparatuses of planning and development. First, the state-led project relied on expert discourses and planning techniques that depoliticized the information society. Timothy Mitchell (2002: 242) argues that "development discourse wishes to present itself as a detached center of rationality and intelligence." It creates a distance between ideas, expertise, and reason on the one hand and the object to be managed on the other. As a discourse of external rationality and consciousness that develops the object in accordance with the latter's true destination, development literature "can never describe its own place in the configuration of power." *The Information Strategy 2006-2010* presented a

strategy of development that had to integrate Turkey with the "global" space. The document

normalized the role of foreign and supranational expert institutions by portraying the

transformation toward an information society as a purely technical affair. The determinist

belief in the capacities of ICTs rendered invisible the political impact of those expert

institutions with which the *Strategy* declared alliance and which it followed in its use of

indexes and measurements of "development." Moreover, by adapting the conceptual

framework of foreign experts, the *Strategy* relied on and reproduced a "detached center of

rationality and intelligence." The *Strategy* itself was commissioned from the international

consultancy firm Peppers & Rogers. Local ICT elites complained about the role of foreign

expertise in the planning process and the lack of participation by local parties. Three

prominent non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Informatics Foundation of Turkey

(*Türkiye Bilişim Vakfı*, TBV), the Informatics Association of Turkey (*Türkiye Bilişim

Derneği*, TBD), and the Informatics Industry Association of Turkey, (*Türkiye Bilişim

Sanayicileri Derneği*, TÜBİSAD) published a report on the e-transformation of Turkey. This

report *(*Türkiye Bilişim Vakfı, 2004: 6) argued that what the state presented as the "national

information society strategy" in fact lacked strategic vision and reduced the planning process

of e-transformation to a "professional business" that could supposedly be outsourced to a

foreign consultancy firm. However, as the report claimed, effective planning required the

input of all relevant parties, foremost the NGOs that represented the local ICT sector and

worked on social transformation in Turkey. The report (7) posed the rhetorical question:

"How and according to which criteria can the e-transformation project be formed if not by

deciding on strategic goals on a truly national basis, namely with the participation of all the

relevant parties? " As the report suggested, the state's had a habit of adapting abstract

concepts from abroad that prescribed what an information society should look like and how it was to be achieved. Yet this was not a method that could effectively shape local conditions, according to them. While contested, the *Strategy* relied on expert discourses and planning techniques that tended to follow foreign models and depoliticize the information society. Hence, local ICT elites criticized the fact that the *Strategy* evaded a participatory process of decision-making, relying too much on foreign concepts and models for the transformation and development of Turkey.

Second, the project of the information society was the object of techno-monumentalism. Brian Larkin (2008: 47) argues that in (post)colonial contexts governing regimes use technological projects as monuments to testify to their sovereignty and power, while alluding to the universality of the "modern" and reworking binaries of sameness and difference. In this case, I see the state's positioning of itself as the responsible agent of development as a form of techno-monumentalist pride. Techno-monumentalism further informed the imagination that much more was at stake in the transformation toward an information society than simply an expansion of infrastructure or interoperability; at stake was Turkey's entering into a universal modernity and its recognition as a producer of the highest civilizational values. In the foreword to the *Strategy*, Prime Minister Erdoğan (2006: i) highlighted the importance of information for the advancement of modernization and civilization: "Information is the most important element of civilization. As the development of civilization can only be possible through continuous regeneration of information, the indispensable prerequisite for progress and development is access to information and its effective and appropriate usage." Erdoğan further related the "level of prosperous civilizations" to "the capacity of producing and using information" (ibid). The transition

toward an information society would signal Turkey's inclusion within and contribution to a shared civilization and a common global modernity. Turkey had something particular to contribute that would complement the universality of the civilization built on and through information gathering and exchange. Erdoğan stated that the aim for Turkey in transforming into an information society was "not only to become a society using technology, but also to create an asset for both her citizens and for all humanity, and to make new and solid contributions to accumulation of universal civilization" (i). While Erdoğan echoed the ideal of an information-based modernity as a universal *telos*, he made a demand for a truer realization of this ideal: "Information supported with science, ethics and universal values needs to become an asset belonging to the whole humanity, and should be set free of the monopoly of narrow circles and should be made accessible to wider social segments." In its foreword, *The Information Strategy 2006-2010* symbolically brought into play the universality of modernity and meanwhile politicized technological development and power configurations underpinning the global operations of information capitalism. Rather than regarding the project of the information society as a purely technical matter, Erdoğan's foreword politicized the governance of the global space of information through a critique of the "advanced nations" and their privileged position within information capitalism. Appropriating originally cyberlibertarian discourses of free flow (Liu, 2004: 257), Erdoğan argued that if narrow interests kept limiting the free exchange of information, this would hinder universality. At the same time, Erdoğan claimed a role for Turkey in contributing to universal civilization and the accumulation of "information supported by science, ethics, and universal values" (Zaman, 2010).

If a depoliticized (yet contested), presumably "purely" technical approach to the information society stimulated socio-technical trajectories along the lines of the foreign and supranational governance and expert institutions, techno-monumentalism allowed for a degree of politicization of socio-technical development. By politicization I mean that human actors with particular identities and interests became visible agents stirring such development. Politicization resided in critique of the "advanced nations," visibility of the state as a proud agent of technological development, and the strong presence of the state in ICT-related spheres of society and life. The fact that the state aimed to put its mark on socio-technical development influenced the relations between governing bodies, populations, and the ICT-supported informational realm. Techno-monumentalist pride and politicization played a role in the integration of ICT applications with technologies of governance. One striking example is the national search engine e-Çelebi. According to state officials, this national search engine would prevent data traces of Turkish users of search engines such as Google and Yahoo from becoming the property of these foreign companies. The project title refers to the famous 17th-century Ottoman travel writer, Evliya Çelebi, who produced an oeuvre of 10 volumes documenting his journeys through Ottoman lands and beyond. Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, Binali Yıldırım, framed the need for a national search engine in terms of national security. He argued that governments "around the world" were disgruntled about the fact that data regarding their populations ended up in foreign hands: **"**The U.S. claims it owns the internet because it invented it, and a huge quarrel is underway" (Karaca, 2012). The Minister expanded by posing the question: "How can we be certain that we will not run into [serious trouble] when we encounter a problem [in terms of the security of this information]?" For similar reasons of security, Dr. Tayfun Acarer, who

was the president of a state agency called Information Technologies Authority (*Bilgi İletişim ve Teknolojileri Kurumu*, BTK), suggested that Turkey's local search engine would yield interest from surrounding countries. He stated: "I think that our local search engine will be popular among Turkic Republics and Islamic countries and that these countries will trust our search engine more [than the American ones]." Acarer further revealed that next to the local search engine the state was working on the Mainmail Project [*Anaposta Projesi*], which provided an email account with 10 gigabyte storage to every citizen of Turkey. From birth on the email address would be registered in the identity card of the citizen. He added: "A mobile network will be established in which the Turkish identity card numbers of 70 million people will be linked to each other." He also thought that the Turkic Republics and Islamic countries he had referred to earlier would find these email accounts more secure and that the Turkish email infrastructure would include these countries into an international communication network.

These examples of techno-monumentalist pride and politicization integrate ICT applications with technologies of governance by positioning the state as the principal provider of services to the population. Besides improving national security, these applications mark the ICT-supported informational realm as a national territory and they structure relations between governors and governed. Rather than "netizens" and consumers in the global realm, the users of search engines and email services as citizens who are both served and controlled by the state. There have been no comments thus far on how privacy and data property will be arranged for users of the national search engine and email accounts. Further questions are how this search engine will include and exclude as well as prioritize and rank information coming from different resources, including state ones, commercial links,

information critical of the government, and non-Turkish resources (see Rogers, 2009). The

initiative of the search engine, like other initiatives to be discussed in this chapter, signals

that governors imagined the state to be responsible for producing particular ICT applications

and services that addressed the needs of the populations. Meanwhile, emergent socio-

technical trajectories, whether desired or not, bear on the futures of technology *and* of

government. The next section shows how the project of the information society structured the

relation between governing bodies and populations and introduced particular technologies of

governance, deployed at the site of and through ICTs.

Spaces of Popular Transformation

The Information Society Strategy 2006-2010 noted that in terms of the demographical

structure, Turkey had "remarkable opportunities for transformation into an information

society in the medium term." Turkey had a very young population, with 54.9% under the age

of 30. Investing now in social transformation would guarantee "that the employed in this age

group will create the highest value added in tomorrow's knowledge economy." Therefore,

skilling populations, informatization of the education sector, and bridging the digital divide

were high on the agenda. While the information society project sought to transform

populations, the project introduced new spaces and technologies of governance. In the

following, I discuss the FATIH project conducted at schools together with municipal

initiatives to provide public internet access points. I look at these projects in terms of spatial

relations and patterns across both online and offline, physical and abstract spaces that were

articulated by moral and epistemological discursive frameworks. The spatial analysis leads

me to a discussion of how the project used "technologies of the self" (Rose et al., 2006). I

argue that state actors emphasized the importance of particular morally inspired behaviors and lifestyles in relation to ICT use as key to the social transformation to an information society. The mobilization of morality corresponded to a particular vision of the "kernel" of development and progress, now situated in Ottoman history instead of western-oriented Kemalist, republican history.

During the election campaign in Summer 2011, television channels broadcasted recordings of Prime Minister Erdoğan waving an electronic device above his head that he called an e-book [*e-kitap*]. While his voice resounded over the sea of supporters and their waving AKP flags, he promised the distribution of this device to all the school children of Turkey, rich and poor. He commented that if American and German children were presented such opportunities, they should also be available to Turkish children.

The distribution of these devices, which were later more properly termed tablet PCs, was a key component of the FATIH project. FATIH is an abbreviation for Movement for Increasing Opportunities and Improving Technology [*Fırsatları Artırma ve Teknoloji İyileştirme Hareketi*] and refers to sultan Fatih Mehmet who conquered Istanbul in 1453, when it was the capital of the Byzantine Empire. Including the hardware, software, and personnel trainings, the estimated total cost of the project was 8 billion Turkish Lira (USD $4.4 billion). While the short-term goal of this project was increasing ICT use in schools, the project stood in the light of the broader goal of facilitating life-long learning through online education. The pages about FATIH on the website of the Ministry of Education stated the ambitious goal that "One out of three individuals in society should benefit from e-education facilities through the effective usage of the Internet."[14] Distance learning and e-education

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[14] Translation by Ministry. See http://fatihprojesi.meb.gov.tr/tr/duyuruincele.php?id=17 , accessed on July 1.

curricula were already rather widespread for vocational high-school and at the college level. By introducing e-education to school children, FATIH prepared them for a future of online learning, while also promoting this type of learning as an important component of the educational system in general.[15] While 2-hour weekly ICT lab sessions acquainting students with computers had been common in many schools, FATIH would make ICT an integrated part of education. It would provide free tablet PCs loaded with educational content to every student, smart blackboards in classrooms, and special websites.

In a personal interview at the Ministry of Education with the General Manager of Education Technologies, Mahmut Tuncel, I was informed that FATIH was about not just intensified but more qualified and selective use of ICTs. Children would not just increase their familiarity with ICTs but their capacity to use ICTs "effectively" and toward the "right" purpose, principally education and self-learning.[16] When I asked whether—either in addition to or instead of providing common access points in school—it would be important to make computers and internet connections affordable for individual use in the private setting of the home, my respondent answered that "at this stage" the kind of public service centers that the schools offered were better:

> If you provide computers to people freely, I am sure that they don't know anything about the computer. At the moment, they don't know how to use it effectively and they don't know why they should use these kinds of tools. That is why it its very early to provide these kinds of things [individual use in private settings].[17]

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[15] Personal interview, Ankara, June 10, 2010.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

The bureaucrat said that in the past his Ministry had succeeded in building a large number of smart classrooms in a relatively short period of time, only to discover that neither students nor teachers used the equipment efficiently. Apparently, not just access but *behaviors* mattered.

My interviewee's conclusion that behavior matters in addition to access is in line with a shift in academic and policy discourses on the topic. There is much to argue against a digital divide discourse that measures "penetration rates," "speed," and "infrastructures." As Nederveen Pieterse (2005: 12) reviews, "Some discussions argue that connectivity should be addressed not as a technological fix but as part of a capabilities approach and in terms of social capabilities." Instead of focusing merely on access and infrastructure, the discourse of the information divide takes into consideration "softer" criteria including skills and digital literacy (Nakamura, 2007). Along the lines of such a comprehensive approach, Sorj and Guedes (2005: 37) note that "the effective value of information depends on the user's ability to interpret it."

The Ministry of Education preferred to design ICT-enhanced classrooms and centers as well as online environments and software programs in such a way that they could guide and control ICT usage. Indeed, the tablets distributed as part of FATIH had limited internet access, achieved through filters, and came loaded with special educational software. Together with administering digital spaces, the Ministry designed offline settings, namely classrooms. These offline settings embedded or "framed" the digital, online experiences of users by overseeing and guiding online behaviors. In doing so, the FATIH project (which is currently in its initial phase) complemented the public computer labs and internet access points already implemented by municipalities. As of 2010, the metropolitan municipality of Istanbul had 53

Internet Houses [*İnternet Evleri*] (Afacan et al, 2010). Istanbul's district municipalities also had Information Houses [*Bilgi Evleri*], Youth Houses [*Genç Evleri*], and Cultural Centers [*Kültür Merkezleri*]. The district municipality of Ümraniye, about which I will talk more, had by itself 23 Information Houses. The Internet and Information Houses, situated in city centers as well as residential districts, were not just public internet access points but also centers of guided learning where users would develop habits that would guarantee the "effective" and "right" use of the internet.

The question is how "right" and "efficient" use were defined and through what technologies of governance such uses were stimulated. As I will argue, the ways in which the state advocated and implemented the social transformation toward the information society mobilized governmental technologies working on the body of the population in the name of its wellbeing and development (Foucault, 1991). They involved notions of ethics and morality as "technologies of the self" through which individuals come to perceive, and act upon, themselves "within certain regimes of authority and knowledge, and by means of certain techniques directed to self-improvement" (Rose et al., 2006). FATIH and the public internet access points alike mobilized governmental technologies that worked on the bodies and minds of participants by integrating online and offline environments. In order to better understand the workings of these spatial arrangements, I want to map the associations, dissociations, and oppositions among an array of sites, a topology, that mediated control. By describing the topology of the information society project, I focus on the institutional modality of space (Grossberg, 2010). According to Lawrence Grossberg (2010: 276), institutional spaces have well-defined boundaries, producing varying degrees of confined territories. They are regulated by "technologies of power – systems of rules, norms, and

standards, all 'designed' to control behavior and regulate interaction; and they are marked by elaborate cultural regimes of significance and signification producing shared worlds of meaning, importance, and desire " (276). The topology that I will map includes the online environments deemed to constitute the "beneficial" or "safe" internet, the physical buildings of the Information Houses and FATIH's smart classrooms, the inner space of the soul, the archival space of "true" knowledge, and, finally, the communal space of the nation.

Both FATIH and the Houses promoted the use of software that was deemed educational and beneficial. FATIH's software was directly integrated with the school curricula. The computers available at the Houses provided access to specially designed and administered web portals. In the Internet Houses, the "Tulip Garden" [*Lale Bahcesi*] portal offered information about topics such as health, local news, family and child. Moreover, the digital library offered stories, encyclopedias, documentaries, world classics, and novels (Afacan et al.: 2010). Information Houses in Ümraniye municipality had a portal, called Bilgievi.gen.tr, which was open for use by children inside and outside its district and promoted on the website of the national Safe Internet campaign. One of the features of the portal was that it provided sharing applications to be used by registered members with their own profile as a replacement for commercial social media.[18] As a staff member at one of the Information Houses told me, the monitored social media environments of this portal would stimulate more selective exchange of, and exposure to, online information. Furthermore, the e-learning program "dersh@net" provided extra schooling for students as a cost-free alternative to the paid schooling that they received at private institutions. This schooling offered the necessary preparation for the exams that determine at various points of a student's

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[18] See http://www.bilgievi.gen.tr/ , accessed on July 1, 2012.

career the particular school he or she may attend as well as eligibility for university entrance.[19] The Internet and Information Houses were always staffed with qualified educational personnel and some of them offered computer literacy and web design courses. The manager of the library services in Ümraniye told me about the Information Houses that her municipality had started. They were environments for learning where children would find role models to show them "the way" both online and offline.[20] Part of stimulating ICT usage in the "right" and "beneficial" way was providing limited and selective access. Importantly, the computers at all the Internet and Information Houses had filter programs which were part of the Clean Internet initiative by Istanbul's metropolitan municipality. This initiative was followed by the national Safe Internet campaign, which I will describe below.

As the discourses by politicians in the media suggested, there were two options: either the internet presented a "space of eternity and accumulation, as in the case of libraries and museums" (Foucault, 1967) or it presented a space of abjection, uncontrolled desire, danger, and a rather "sinful" waste of time and potential. At the opening of fifty of these Houses and also quoted on the municipality's website, the mayor of the metropolitan municipality of Istanbul, Kadir Topbaş, remarked that thanks to the internet all knowledge was within reach "within a second." Reaching "true information in the shortest time" obviously was something very desirable. Yet, Topbaş warned, "[i]f you cannot select information, then it is a catastrophe. Internet information is both very beneficial and very dangerous."[21] The downside of the internet was that "If there is no filter, people with bad intentions can do

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[19] See http://www.akillidershane.org/haberoku.php?hid=40 , accessed on July 1, 2012.

[20] Personal interview, Istanbul, April 21, 2010.

[21] See http://www.ibb.gov.tr/tr-TR/Pages/Haber.aspx?NewsID=14571 , accessed on August 1, 2012.

anything by provoking our youth so that our country collapses in the future." As the introduction of a publication by the Family and Social Research General Head Office at the Prime Ministry, *Safety on the Internet* [*Internet'te Güvenlik*] said, the internet is a "handy 'servant' that connects large distances, renders information accessible, and helps you take care of various issues at the comfort of your house. But it is also a dangerous weapon and a monster in the corner of your house" (quoted in Binark & Sütçü, 2008: 126).[22]

The two alternatives of reaching truthful information and benefitting from it or being exposed to unwanted contents and danger were contingent on how the user would use the internet. ICTs and the internet held the promise of self-learning and self-development. While both the FATIH project and the public internet access points targeted children and youth especially, they were supposed to make an impact across society. The fact that the project sought to trigger an overall transformation becomes clear in a report on internet safety available at the section dedicated to FATIH on the website of the Ministry of Education. The report indicated that FATIH, by starting with the children, also includes educators and families. Noting that many of the web pages address families rather than only school children, the report stated that a social movement should be mobilized "in order to give knowledge and awareness to families—who constitute the majority of the population—regarding the use of IT tools and the Internet." As the project title suggested, FATIH supposedly is nothing less than a *movement* for increasing opportunities and improving technology. Envisioning the mechanisms of this social movement, the report continued: "Seminars and meetings may be organized. Technologies such as radio, TV and mobile phones can be put to work to this end" (Kula, 2012). Similarly, the public access points especially welcomed school children to do their homework under supervision, yet other segments of the population could also use them.

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[22]Translations from Turkish are mine.

The head of ICT affairs at an Istanbul district municipality, who was, like many municipality employees whom I encountered during fieldwork, a highly educated woman wearing a headscarf, described the Internet Houses as "clean" and "decent" environments. She argued that housewives would come in with their children in order to help them with their homework. Yet because the homework for the children was so difficult, the women would themselves learn as well. According to her, the information society project intended to stimulate the multiple generations of the population to acquire computer skills as well as to become more "cultured." For her, these were parallel developments.[23]

While the projects promised self-learning and self-development through ICTs, the latter generated also a second set of potential effects. Discourses marked the unprotected internet as a place of deviation "in which individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed" (Foucault, 1967). Prime Minister Erdoğan, as featured on another municipality webpage dedicated to the Information Houses, remarked: "We especially have to protect the spiritual and mental health of our young population. Protecting the children and youth, who are the holders of our future from all sorts of disinformation [*bilgi kirliliği*] and bad habits is both our conscientious responsibility and constitutional duty."[24] The dangerous unruliness of the unprotected internet corresponded to a danger on the inside: the "unruliness" of the soul, especially of the young soul. Those who would seek to enter the realm of information, the internet, beyond the boundaries of the "safe" and "beneficial" were potential enemies of the nation and rendered suspect in terms of their morality. At the very least, they were marked as individuals wasting their time and being

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[23] Anonymous personal interview, Ankara, 28 July 2010.

[24] See http://www.belnet.com.tr/baskans.html , accessed on July 1, 2012.

possible addicts of online entertainment, rather than being studious and working hard towards their own development as well as that of the nation. In an address to internet journalists and media, Erdoğan stated that family, education institutions, and self-control were necessary both to prevent the monstrous potential of the internet from being realized and to ensure use of the internet as a means that is "beneficial to the highest degree." As he pointed out, "We are obliged to with self-control prevent that the internet turns into a monster and into a harmful condition" (Zaman, 2010). Erdoğan added that he saw it as his personal responsibility as prime minister to guarantee the cultivation of "an understanding that respects our traditions and the moral values of society" (ibid). Yet he expected "self-control, self-censure." The responsibility was "everyone's" including internet content producers and consumers.

The municipality's website praised the Internet Houses as places that were clean, smoke-free, well-lit, and spacious. The description constructed a link between the quality of the environment and the online experience that they presumably provided. The representations of these buildings, together with the spatial aesthetics and sensory experience they promised, linked to the epistemological and moral field of "true" knowledge. Turkish language allowed a "beneficial" and "safe" internet to be described as "clean," whereas an unfiltered internet could be described, as Erdoğan did in the quote above, spoilt by "knowledge pollution" [*bilgi kirliliği*], or disinformation. Indeed, the campaign by the metropolitan municipality of Istanbul focused on the "Clean Internet" [*Temiz Internet*]. The Information Houses were presented as public access points, yet contrasted the unruliness of public spaces "in the wild," such as urban streets, internet cafes, and indeed the virtual world of the uncontrolled internet. Negative judgments especially applied to visitors of internet

cafes, which were portrayed as zones of darkness and filth, disinformation and terrorist propaganda, where men watched porn and gambled.

The portrayals of internet cafes corresponded little to the actual spaces of internet cafes, although there were differences between internet cafes partly depending on the location and the hour of the day, which mattered in terms of the audiences they attracted. As I noticed during visits to different internet cafes in residential neighborhoods in Ümraniye, internet cafe owners often did everything possible to contest the prejudices and keep their businesses attractive for various segments of the population. Especially in residential areas, internet cafe owners accepted it as their task to act as de facto school teachers by monitoring groups of children who shared computers and for whom online gaming and playing with their friends next to them formed integrated activities. Internet cafe owners also often helped older customers navigate the e-municipality websites to which they were referred to make hospital appointments, etc. Parents developed relations with cafe owners (and entrusted their children to them while they went out shopping). But internet cafes were social environments for other age groups as well, as Mutlu Binark and Günseli Sütçü (2008) report. These authors further note that since 2003 when the Ministry of Internal Affairs made it compulsory for internet cafes to have a filtering program, the association of internet cafe owners, TIEV, had been working on a locally produced filter software program where they manually enter "harmful" content. TIEV also published a report introducing a rating system reflecting the number of computers, the square meter size of the café, and the operation hours, and evaluating the lighting and air conditioning, and practices of blocking of harmful material. Yet rather than embracing these initiatives, the state introduced its own report system and controls for internet cafes, including filter programs, obligatory security cameras, and, as some owners

told me, frequent inspections by municipal police during which customers were asked to present their identity cards.

Providing, regulating, and guiding internet access formed another aspect of the information society project through which the Turkish government strengthened and structured relations between governing bodies, populations, and the online informational realm. At stake were spatial patterns, a topology, constructing oppositional relations between the spaces of the "wild" internet and the "safe" internet, the internet cafe and the Information House, the soul of the corrupt subject and the soul of the self-disciplined and moral subject. With regard to the regulations of access and content that affected internet cafes, Binark and Sütçü conclude (2008: 140): "Legal regulations based on protectionism should be seen as a result of the strategic and structural operations of the new rightist and conservative politics that are expending their space of sovereignty in everyday life." While I subscribe to the conclusion that ICT practices were a site of state control over individuals and populations, I want to supplement the restrictive thesis of protectionism with one of development. I want to emphasize that the protected internet and guided access also encompassed a vision of development. In 2008, the Ministry of Women and Family presented the Safety on the Internet campaign and, according to the promoters of the campaign, its advice and methods were technologies of *permission* in support of development, rather than restriction and prohibition. Minister of State Nimet Çubukçu pointed out that the aim of the campaign was to inform families about internet security and raise awareness on the subject. She emphasized the fact that the internet provides opportunities and information for the youth: "Families that are concerned about the proper use of the Internet by their children should not think that the proper solution is prohibiting the[ir children from using the] Internet. It is possible to be

protected from the harmful aspects of the Internet by using it in the right way and with awareness" (Hürriyet, 2008).

Moreover, state discourses placed the initiatives to produce a "safe" and "clean" internet and to stimulate "effective" usage in a discourse of development and productivity. Mayor Topbaş as well as the municipality employees cited above emphasized that using the internet "properly" and "efficiently" was about developing oneself as much as developing the country. As stated, governmental technologies, at the site of and through ICTs, worked on the body of the population in the name of its wellbeing and development (Foucault, 1991). Following Andrew Barry (2001: 3, 4), in a technological society the expectations citizens face and the perceived duties of citizenship revolve around the need to "possess and develop one's knowledge and skill" and to cultivate "a mind and body" that are able "to be informed and updated." For Barry (4), in such definitions of citizenship the matter is further that "productive" citizens will meet the demands of changing types of labor and flexible work routines. National, organizational, and individual capacities are judged against measures that include factors such as intellectual productivity or property, skill, and digital literacy. The information society project in Turkey deployed governmental technologies for development and productivity. Yet, in this case, morality and a particular, albeit vaguely defined, set of ethics intersected with the citizenship duties Barry describes. State discourses involved morality and ethics as "technologies of the self" through which individuals come to perceive, and act upon, themselves "within certain regimes of authority and knowledge, and by means of certain techniques directed to self-improvement" (Rose et al., 2006). As Yıldız Atasoy (2009: 110-111) argues, AKP adapted discourses of "human capital growth," popularized by the World Bank, in order to integrate them with Islam, which became revalued as a resource

for stimulating such growth. Under AKP moral principles, loosely based on an Islam-inspired conservative lifestyle, became integral to national strategies of "asset building": individuals and groups were to be empowered with the help of culture. Endowed with an Islamic ethos and morality, they would attain discipline, self-reliance, and self-realization leading to the capacity to fully manage their conduct in society. In other words, articulated as a liberal freedom and practiced in the form of technologies of the self, culture would secure economic growth for the country.

Vaguely formulated Islamic morality as a technology of the self, articulated to citizenship duties in the technological society, generated the following relation to technology and "modern" life. While the Turkish economy underwent a period of strong (yet unequally distributed) growth allowing consumer technologies to become much more widespread, officials expected Turkish citizens to participate in the information society and enthusiastically join "modern" life. My fieldwork participants defined a modern lifestyle on the basis of consuming and using the latest and fanciest ICTs. On the other hand, while joining "modern" life, Turkish citizens were not supposed to become uprooted "netizens" or "natives of the web." In that sense, the state's informational project was not one directed at making Turkey part of an undifferentiated, universal modernity. Instead, it indicated the search for a technological modernity that in some ways was different from Euro-American modernity, yet no less "modern," innovative, competitive, and forward-looking.

Narratives and symbols framing culture and identity as resources for development complemented the efforts to produce such a modernity by providing a sense of the future in relation to a collective past. FATIH's introductory film, which was broadcast on television and circulated on the internet, introduces a vision of development stemming from the

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Ottoman past. The film elaborates a relation between the Ottoman past and technological advancement through the figure of Sultan Fatih Mehmet II. The introductory film presents a medium within a medium: the first shot that takes us "inside" the tablet PC to immerse us in a scene that is staged in the filmic style of popular media spectacles showcasing life at the Ottoman courts. The aesthetics of hypermediacy and immediacy (Bolter & Grusin, 1999) point to mediation and signal technological splendor. In the film, a dialogue evolves between a young boy, who is dressed in historical garments yet holds a tablet PC in his hand, and the sultan, whose identity is unknown to the boy. The disguised sultan inquires about the device that the boy was so preoccupied with that he failed to bow his head to the sultan as a gesture of respect. The boy answers that the device is his tablet PC and that thanks to this device everything he would ever want to know is "at the touch" of his finger. The sultan playfully asks the boy whether his knowledge tool also makes mention of him, Fatih Mehmet. The boy promptly researches the facts that have not yet happened but that are already documented by his device and learns that the man he is talking to will enter history as the sultan who "knew how to use technology best," "spoke seven languages," and "had conquered Istanbul [from the Byzantians in 1453]." After the exchange with the sultan, the boy turns to the camera and challenges the viewer of the film by asking "Now, are you ready to conquer your future?" A town crier with a drum declares the beginning of the Movement for Increasing Opportunities and Improving Technology.

The introductory film promotes technology as primal site of invention, innovation, and progress while associating it with conquest of land as well as the future, hence victory and mastery of space as well as time. The fact that the film, and likewise the project title, commemorated Fatih Mehmet and appealed to Ottoman glory is remarkable. Throughout the

Republican era in Turkey, the figure of the founder of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk,

had been associated with modernity, technology, and progress, while the republican elite

depicted the sultanate as a "backward" institution, immersed in past traditions that the

Republic had to break with by means of western-oriented modernization.[25] Likewise, the

FATIH section on the website of the Ministry of Education made use of the familiar set of

Kemalist symbols that express state-led development and thereby still alluded to a

Republican history and modernity. The website portrayed the charismatic leader Atatürk

looking up and into the distance. Next to his black and white photograph appeared the

interchanging slogans "Let's discover our future today" and "Toward 21st century

Education."[26] However, FATIH's introductory film hailed Turkey's Ottoman past as the root

and kernel of technological modernity and grandeur and it suggests that imperial grandeur

will be redeemed through investment in technology.

In redeeming the Ottoman past, the film reworked binaries of east and west, in

addition to those of culture and technology. Following Brian Larkin (2008: 47), in

(post)colonial contexts governing regimes use technological projects as monuments to testify

to their sovereignty, allude to "the modern," and rework binaries of sameness and difference.

Although the Turkish case is not strictly (post)colonial, articulating Ottoman heritage to

monumentalist display created a relation between technological modernity and development

on the one hand and an Ottoman-based "Turkish" identity on the other— a relation that was

unconceivable from the point of view of Kemalist traditions dominant until recently (see

Introduction). The film presented the double recoding of the Ottoman past as 1) national

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[25] Columnists writing for the online independent communication network Bianet made a similar observation. See Cinmen, 2012.

[26] See http://fatihprojesi.meb.gov.tr/tr/index.php , accessed on July 1, 2012.

heritage and foundation of national identity, and 2) the seed of technological development and modernization. This double recoding made it discursively possible that a field of morality, ignored by Kemalists and others yet demarcated by the ruling party AKP and its base, could appear as not just compatible with technological development and modernization but also a resource for such development. Besides underpinning a more or less clearly defined set of values and distinctions between "beneficial" and "harmful" contents and behaviors, morality functioned as a technology of the self in the FATIH project (as well as the related initiatives I discussed). In that sense, FATIH's introductory film supported the national strategy Atasoy discussed of asset building through Islam-inspired lifestyle and morality. Morality here related to the promise of personal and national development and structured relations between formations of state power, populations, and ICTs or the online informational realm.

Keyboards and Door Keys: Unlocking Everyday Life

In order to understand the workings of governmental technologies in the physical, online, and inner spaces of the information society project, I will indicate the directions of a complementary line of research that is highly necessary as it points to important dimensions of Turkey's political conjuncture. My analysis above of the institutional modality of space looked at how governmental discourses oppose the spaces of the "wild" internet and the "safe" internet, the internet cafe and the Information House, the soul of the corrupt subject and the soul of the self-disciplined and moral subject. The question is, however, how people inhabit these spaces and how they negotiate moral and epistemological discourse as well as technologies of permission, that is, permission conditioned by restriction. Therefore, I want

to give an illustration of how everyday life functioned in relation to the spatial patterns articulated by the information society project. In doing so, I will explore the positions of agency, which I argue amounted to experiences of empowerment and newly won freedoms for my interviewees (see also Grossberg, 2010; Grossberg, 1993, quoted in Wiley, 2010).

One of the fieldwork interviews that I hold dearest was with two women, whom I had met at the computer courses offered by the municipality of Ümraniye in Istanbul, formerly a peripheral *gecekondu* district[27] that was being quickly developed. This municipality offered women-only computer courses at a beginner's level in the Information House in the district center. The municipality also operated a mobile computer center—a bus in which a dozen small tables and PCs were installed, along with a projector. The bus was painted pink and, celebrating Ottoman glory, carried on its side the name "Information Sult@na" [*Bilgi Sult@n*]. On scheduled days of the week, the bus went into the poorest and most disconnected neighborhoods to offer computer courses to housewives, who were rather confined to their immediate surroundings, illiterate women, and also young, unmarried women. Often the women attending these courses did not have computers at home or, if they had access to a computer, their husbands, children, and male neighbors would seldom allow them to use it. For many, it was their first time working with a computer and getting used to the keyboard and the mouse. The atmosphere at the computer courses was full of excitement, mutual encouragement, and intimacy as participants brought home-made food to share. Occasionally they went for picnics altogether, for which the municipality arranged transportation.

When setting up the appointment with my interviewees—whom I met when I was invited to one of the picnics—I had passed the phone on to my partner to get directions as he

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[27] *Gecekondu*, literally "arrived overnight," refers to informal squatter housing, built by migrants to the city.

knew the district better. Then my interviewees assumed that my partner would join our meeting. Since it would be improper for them to receive a male guest at their house in the absence of their husbands, they decided to meet at the newly built Ümraniye branch of IKEA, an environment that promised access to global consumer goods and modern, urban lifestyles to previously excluded segments of the population. When I met them at a bus stop and understood we were actually heading for the IKEA, we laughed because I had brought a box of pastries, in accord with more traditional Turkish conventions. Sitting down in the yellow-blue cafeteria, the conversation with my interviewees started out with narrations of their early marriages, the children they gave birth to, and for one of them, experiences of domestic violence and repression (my terminology), culminating in severe depression. That is where the computer courses came in. My interviewees attended the courses in the Information House, where they also took Arabic and sewing courses. Attending these courses made part of a quite large-scale self-development project that they had planned out and that included distance-learning for a vocational high-school degree, piles of literature, psychotherapy (for one of them), and getting a driver license (for the other). The university was a much desired "dream" for them that they however deemed unrealizable, one of the barricades being the fact that they would not be able to enter the universities without taking off their headscarves.[28] The computer courses were exactly the right thing for them however. One of them claimed that the computer course gave them access to so much knowledge and information and that it opened up a new world for them: "They taught us everything, every format. You know the Information Era, they showed us the limits of it and they also showed what we can do in this era." She continued: "[W]e try to do our best to develop ourselves, but

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[28] At the time of the conversation, universities were still protected as lingering bastions of laicism. Although still contested and not recognized as a right by the Turkish constitution, the solid hegemony of the conservative-Islamic AKP made it recently possible for women to enter university with their headscarves.

what we took from there, and how much, is up to us. Only going to a course doesn't mean anything in terms of developing yourself, you need to struggle to develop yourself." My interviewee also claimed that she joined the computer courses to meet new people whom she otherwise would not have met, somewhat surprisingly counting me among these people (that is to say: in her enthusiastic narration, she exaggerated the odds of a foreigner, a rather "lost" graduate student in search of a research focus, arriving at the municipal computer courses in Ümraniye…).

For these women, access to protected internet offered through the municipal services provided mobilities, freedoms, and forms of empowerment. In their bodily and discursive practices, my interviewees carried and reproduced the institutional discourses and technologies of control of the municipal ICT initiatives. For instance, they saw it as a great service that there were women-only courses provided by the municipality, in clean environments, where the internet was protected by content filters. These women replicated state officials' rhetoric by saying that they wanted to learn computer skills in order to become "better" mothers to their children, help them with homework, and control their internet practices, once they would be able to afford a computer at home. In that sense, the forms of agency that became available to these women through the ICT-supported self-development "program" they had embarked on stood in relation to the topology that I mapped out above: institutional spaces that had clear boundaries inscribed by significations of "good" and "evil," "beneficial" and "wasteful." Restrictions and protectionism conditioned the social permission and personal desire of my interviewees to enter new spaces and embark on a path of learning and self-development. Their "struggle to develop" themselves implied continuous attention to morality in order to separate the "good" and "beneficial" from the "harmful."

The topology of the information society project provided certain forms of agency to these women *and* conditioned these forms. However, the effects of these women acquiring new forms of agency were not reducible to, or contained by, the institutional apparatuses of control. For my interviewees, the complex spatial practices of everyday life (Grossberg, 2010) featured negotiated agency, experiences of freedoms, and relatively minor events that had the potential to challenge the normal order. I think such an event took place while we were sitting down at IKEA. During our conversation, the cell phone of one of my interviewees rang three different times. Two of her three sons and her husband had come home, but none of them had keys to the house since they all expected my interviewee to be at home to open the door for them. Yet this time, they found the door closed. I did not get the impression my interviewee was in a hurry to go home and open the door.

Auto-Control or Automated Control?

In 2011 the government announced the Safe Internet initiative, which followed up on existing projects such as the open access points in Istanbul and the Safety on the Internet campaign. I argue that although this new project focused mainly on awareness raising through conscious consumerism and "auto-control" technologies of the self, it simultaneously employed forms of what I call "automated control" through state filtering and blocking of websites. In what follows, I argue that in an effort to guarantee "effective" and "beneficial" ICT use, slippage between these two forms of control created an atmosphere of state protectionism and coercion.

The state's Safe Internet initiative intervened in a history of judicial regulation of internet access and content. In 2007, the AKP instituted an "internet law," Law No. 5651,

which outlined different categories of prohibited content. These categories were:

encouragement of and incitement to suicide; sexual exploitation and abuse of children;

facilitation of the use of drugs; provision of substances dangerous to health; obscenity;

gambling; and "Atatürk crimes" (offenses against Atatürk and/ or the Turkish nation)

(Akdeniz, 2009: 14; Deipert et al., 2010: 348). [29] What was most remarkable about Law No.

5651 was that it authorized a bureaucratic state agency to replace the judiciary in making

decisions regarding internet content and access. The law gave the Telecommunications

Communications Presidency (*Telekomünikasyon İletişim Başkanlığı*, TİB) the authority to

send out requests for content removal as well as to close down websites (Akdeniz &

Altıparmak, 2009: 114, 115). The transfer of decision-making capacity from the judiciary to

this agency enabled administrators to block orders *ex-officio*, without a court ruling.

Administrative blocking presumably was a precautionary measure against internet crimes

(Akdeniz & Altıparmak, 2009: 29-31, 38). However, in practice the court rarely reviewed

precautionary blockings, which thus became permanent (Akdeniz & Altıparmak, 2009: 117-

119).

The Safe Internet initiative was to a large extent the responsibility of the Information

Technologies Authority (*Bilgi İletişim ve Teknolojileri Kurumu*, BTK), which operated under

TİB, the Telecommunications Communications Presidency.[30] BTK was in charge of the

introduction of the Safe Internet initiative's filter system. The system allowed users to choose

between four different profiles for use in private homes, whereas in public access points the

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[29] However, certain crimes such as the dissemination of terrorist propaganda (Articles 6 and 7 of the Turkish Anti-Terror Law No. 3713), or crime of 'denigrating Turkishness', (Article 301, Criminal Code), or hate crimes (Article 216 of TPC) 68 are not included within the scope of Article 8.6

[30] BTK further cooperated with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Transportation, Maritime Affairs and Communication

profile was standardized. The available profiles included a child profile (a strict protection

enabling access only to approved websites judged suitable for children for didactic purposes),

a family profile (providing access to a wider selection of websites including social media and

games), a Turkish-only profile (that allowed access only to addresses ending in ".tr"), and a

standard profile (that would apply a central filter system but would not close off access to

any websites beyond those already blocked by court and administrative decisions). As part of

the central filter system, the state also forwarded a list of 138 keywords to be banned from

Turkish domain names to web-hosting companies and internet service providers. Among

these keywords were the Turkish words for stepmother and sister-in-law, the English word

"mature," and the German word for forbidden. The press freedom non-governmental

organization (NGO) Reporters Without Borders (2012) argued that the prohibition of the

words "free" and "pic" may have eliminated "countless references to freedoms and the latest

news photos." However, mass demonstrations in mid-May 2011 against the installation of the

centralized filter system made the government step back. Protesters were especially

concerned about the ambiguous inclusion of those who did not want a filter yet were

nonetheless obligated to settle for the standard profile. In response, the government replaced

the four-tiered system with two voluntary filter profiles, one of which was a white list of

accessible websites exclusively consisting of sites that were deemed suitable for children and

the other was a black list of inaccessible websites deemed unsuitable for families. Filters

became optional for use in the private sphere of the home, but they were still standard in

public spaces such as schools, access points such as the Internet and Information Houses, and

commercial internet cafes (Akdeniz, 2009: 6; Akdeniz & Altıparmak, 2009: 26).

In attempts to, rather dishonestly, refute critiques of censorship and violations of freedom of expression and right to information, AKP government officials and municipal employees showed themselves as opponents of banning websites at the expense of liberal rights. They argued that banning demonstrated the lasting influence of the legal framework inherited from the junta rule, which was installed after the 1980 military coup.[31] They also opposed court decisions based on the highly disputed Law No. 5816, effective since 1951, which criminalizes ridicule, disrespect, and threats directed at Atatürk. In a personal interview, AKP Deputy Chairman Research & Development Reha Denemeç said, "Unfortunately I cannot say there is 100% freedom of speech in Turkey."[32] He referred to past laws he thought were "not easy to change," especially not for his party. Given that criticizing Atatürk was still taboo in Turkey, the opposition party often accused AKP of "being against Atatürk." Denemeç summarized AKP's stance as "We are not against Atatürk, but just for freedom of speech or something like that."[33] President Abdullah Gül showed himself to be a "friend" and "fellow user" of the internet when, in June 2010, he chose the medium of a *tweet* from his personal account to publicize his disapproval of the bans on Youtube and certain Google pages (The Guardian, 2010). At a meeting with internet journalists and content producers I mentioned before, Erdoğan distinguished censorship from what he called "auto-control" and "auto-censure," presenting the latter as compatible with democratic values and with "the freedom, transparency, and openness" inherent to the internet (Zaman, 2010).

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[31] This argument was made by the offcial speaking on the television show Sosyal Medya episode 35. Available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjjJcEWTqZE&feature=related, accessed on July 1, 2012.

[32] Personal interview, Ankara, June 7, 2010.

[33] Ibid.

While criticisms of the filter system continued, the Safe Internet initiative articulated internet filtering to a discourse of freedom of choice. When entering BTK's online Hotline [*İhbarweb*], at which internet users could complain about websites or their content and report them to be blocked, a pop-up message proclaimed that "Choosing is Freedom." The pop-up window featured the Safe Internet initiative logo and provided the web address where users could download filters. An animated mouse arrow moved toward the web address, suggesting that users click the link. The initiative's discourses imagined consumer choices as a form of freedom because 1) the filters increased available consumer options and served the demands of a certain consumer group that was otherwise unattended, and 2) the filter packages were entirely voluntary. There was no repression or coercion, because anyone was free to use the service offered by BTK or not.[34] In the national newspaper Milliyet, BTK's president, Dr. Tayfun Acarer, said the decision to apply one of the two filters was completely contingent on the preferences of the individual consumer: "Let them choose [whatever they want], no one is blocking [their access] presently." He further added: "I believe, [having the option of a filter] is a consumer right" (Milliyet, 2012). Framing once more filters as a consumer freedom and right, the Safe Internet website proudly reported that Dr. Acarer was awarded the Service Prize by the Minister of Customs and Trade at the 15th Traditional Consumer Awards Competition—an award that recognized the efforts of companies (and also apparently state actors) to foster consumer awareness or otherwise attend to consumer rights and demands. [35]

Government officials represented internet filters as services that met the needs and demands of the "Turkish people." In doing so, they deployed discourses of culture and

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[34]See again Sosyal Media, epsiode 35.

[35] See http://www.guvenlinet.org/tr/haber,detay/10-haber.html , accessed on July 1, 2012.

Turkish-ness, constructing a moral community. Official commentaries on the Safe Internet

initiative invoked the "Turkish community" to suggest that Turkish people had *particular*

needs that needed to be addressed through services not offered by governments elsewhere, in

the first place in Europe. Dr. Acarer argued in a national newspaper that his institution had

become aware of a particularly "Turkish sensitivity." According to their statistics, the

Turkish population reported more websites than the average of European populations by a

factor of 21. Turks were filing 210,000 complaints about internet content per year, suggesting,

to Dr. Acarer, a particularly "Turkish sensitivity" [*Türk insanının internet içeriği konusunda*

çok hassas olduğunu]. Similarly, in a rare media appearance on a television show dedicated

to news and opinion on social media and ICTs, Dr. Turgut Ayhan Beydoğan, second

president of BTK, claimed that his institution had started to offer the filters in response to

consumer demand for such a service.[36] Although BTK opponents used the same statistics to

claim that demand for filters was low rather than high, for BTK the fact that more than

600,000 people downloaded the filters in the four months following their launch in 2011

proved this sensitivity (Milliyet, 2012).[37] During the television show, Beydoğan described

BTK's filter system as an "interactive" application, since it took input from users to be

applied in the processes of blocking access to websites. Since the filters were the product of

crowd-sourcing, they would be built in accordance with the people's demands. Similarly, by

notifying BTK's Hotline, İhbar Web, users could assist BTK by informing them of any

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[36] See again Sosyal Medya, episode 35.

[37] By July 2012 the national newspaper Zaman (2012) reports that the subscriptions to the filter packages by private users had gone up to 1,5 million on a population of 74 million. These numbers can be considered in relation to the following data. By April 2011, 42,9% of Turkish households had internet access. See http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=8572, accessed on July 1, 2012. In 2011, 40.5% of the population used internet last within a period shorter than 3 months. See http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?alt_id=60.

websites that were somehow improper, did not comply with the 2007 internet content law, or that were evading court blocks (if, for example, the banned website had reopened with a new domain name). The complaint forms available at İhbar Web also incited peer surveillance as they asked internet users to notify the agency about communication taking place over chat, instant messaging, email, P2P applications, or particular newsgroups. In addition to the hotline, email, telephone, and SMS-generated user input strengthen the reliance of access and content regulation on user activity (Akdenizle, 2010: 47).

I want to point to two contradictory tendencies underlying the state's approach to governance in relation to ICT practices by consumer-citizens. First, governmental discourses and technologies addressed the self-disciplined and self-controlling subject, for whom morality served as a resource for being responsible and "productive." As was the case with the FATIH project and the public internet access points, the Safe Internet initiative targeted the morally aware and informed subject. A survey of discourses and technical features of the Safe Internet initiative website indicates the importance of technologies of the self through which subjects become "effective" users of the internet. As stressed by officials speaking about the public internet access points, the Safe Internet website emphasized the importance of self-regulation and confirmed that the campaign sets out to "inform" and "create awareness" [*bilgilendirmek*, *bilinçlendirmek*].[38] It also highlighted the double objectives of supporting "effective" and "beneficial" methods of use as well as warning the community of "dangers."

However, it is hard to argue that the filters mobilized self-reliance. The filters were supposedly tools for the self-regulating subject, the "aware" consumer who is capable of, to use Erdoğan's words, "auto-control" and "auto-censure." Even though the discourses of the

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[38] See http://www.guvenliweb.org.tr/?Pg=1, accessed on June 15, 2012.

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Safe Internet initiative appealed to concepts of informing and awareness raising, the filters *automated* decisions about "beneficial" and "harmful" online content and activities by making them on behalf of users. Lev Manovich's (2001) critique of "interactivity" is applicable here, as internet users were implicitly asked to recognize as their own thought processes the steps and actions they were compelled to go through by interface designs. Accordingly, the initiative's website included an interactive test designed to help users select the most suitable filter profile and settings.

The website offered also a short film. The film revolves around a shocking, unexpected encounter with the personified bodies of internet criminals and other "dangerous" cyber world characters who invade the private space of the home. In the film, a mother and her daughter are home alone as the latter is contacted by a pedophile during an online chat session. The pedophile asks where the girl lives and whether her family is home. Just when the viewer gets the sense that the girl is endangering herself, a heavily armed police team stops in front of the house and interferes. While mom and daughter stand by haplessly and watch, the police team forces the online pedophile--who has appeared physically in the house—and some other internet criminals and "indecent" cyber-world creatures, out of the house. In the film, the main focus is on the danger of sexual assault, while the police attain a heroic role in rescuing woman and daughter. The police presence promotes state protectionism and coercive power in relation to ICT practices. While the film promises protection with regard to the "innocent" but also "vulnerable" and "dependent" citizens, especially female ones, it assures the use of violence and coercive means with regard to those who form a threat. The condition of the young girl, whom we saw cast one dark and malicious grin while she replied to the pedophile's chat, supposedly demanded both

protection and control, which the mother had failed to provide. The film functions as a text that legitimizes and normalizes state interference in the form of protective filters that automate decision making as well as more coercive measures including banning websites and arresting people. The film reinstates direct state interference, rather than technologies of the self and governing at a distance (Rose, 1999; 2006).

Similarly, the contradictory set of discourses and applications on the Safe Initiative website demonstrate slippages between *auto-regulation* and *automated regulation.* By advocating awareness and stimulating informed consumer choice, the Safe Initiative campaign used discourses and technologies of the self to constitute self-reliant consumer-citizens. However, because the state claimed responsibility for designing filters, blocking websites, and controlling users, the campaign simultaneously normalized coercive and protective apparatuses to regulate these citizens.[39]

Within the scope of the Safe Internet campaign as well as beyond it, the state deployed an array of techniques and technologies of governance, including normative discourses of morality and efficiency, filter applications, banning websites, and arresting suspects. These different technologies did not operate separately from each other. The judicial apparatuses and the discourses and practices of "service" operated together in order to produce the moral community as an exclusive public. As state officials claimed, the Safe Internet campaign set out to serve a need and popular demand grounded in particular moral preferences and tastes. BTK's hotline İhbar Web collected complaints of users who experienced online the shock and offense of the improper. At the same time, the website

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[39]The plot and staging of the film were modeled after a German internet awareness campaign film. Yet the little differences are rather remarkable. The German film has no role for the police but only points to the responsibilities of the mother and it problematizes a wider array of media effects, foremost that of excessive violence in online games.

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familiarized users with the categories of prohibition of Law No. 5651 and asked users to, by filing their complaints and notifying BTK, assist in law enforcement. However, by encoding intolerable speech (for instance, obscenity and offenses at Atatürk and/ or the nation) in law, the state promoted social norms that were backed up by state institutions. As Judith Butler (1997: 133) argues, formulations of censorship in the law are a productive form of power: the regulation of speech according to implicit and explicit norms constitutes subjects by demarcating the social domain of speakable discourse and including or excluding particular subject positions with regard to this domain. In the case of BTK's hotline, the formulations of the prohibited categories and the wider discourses about them belied the claim that all that the state agency did was registering and answering already existing needs and demands. In fact, BTK's discourses helped produce the "sensitivities" through which it legitimized its actions. According to Nikolas Rose (1999: 186), the moral community as a technology of government is prone to engender tensions stemming from its central paradox: the moral community supposedly exists "outside" politics, in the natural bonds of the self-organizing community, yet at the same time it is a political project that requires regulation. In the case of the Safe Internet initiative, while state officials referred to the community as an authentic social entity bonded by traditional morals and sensitivities, outside the field of politics, their discourse, backed up by law, set out to produce this community. It interpellated individuals as "decent" Turkish citizens and members of the national community.

Refusing the interpellation as a member of the moral community could have consequences and lead to an encounter with coercive and repressive state apparatuses. As critics of the state's access and content regulations pointed out, such apparatuses were mobilized in the case of politically contested websites. Next to many erotic and porn

websites, the 2007 internet law led to the blocking of news sites dealing with issues in south-eastern Turkey and presumably pro-Kurdish politics, such as Özgür Gündem, Keditör, and Günlük Gazetesi (Akdeniz, 2009: 2). According to Akdeniz & Altıparmak, several alternative media and leftist websites—including anarsist.org, devrimciler.com, Indymedia Istanbul, and Fırat News—faced systematic blocking (Akdeniz & Altıparmak, 2009: 109, 110). Gabile.com and Hadigayri.com, which together formed the largest online gay community in Turkey with approximately 225,000 users, were also blocked, but were re-opened after only six days, following intense domestic and international media coverage. The court also blocked evolutionist Richard Dawkins' website (richarddawkins.net).[40] Whereas state officials blamed censorship practices on outdated legislation that they did not approve of, as Akdeniz and Altıparmak (2009: 109) conclude, "It seems that the application of Law No. 5651 is no exception to this traditional approach." According to Reporters Without Borders (2012), Safe Internet initiative filters blocked even more politically contested websites, including Yaşam Radyo, an online radio station that broadcasts cultural programs on minorities.[41]

Moreover, coercive state apparatuses targeted users who supposedly had exceeded the boundaries of tolerable speech, or who, given their comments and their clicking "like" on social media platforms, were suspect of having terrorist affiliations. In 2011 the national newspaper Radikal reported the investigation of 113 internet writers who were active on the urban dictionary Ekşi Sözlük. The complaint against them was blasphemous libel. The investigation was executed under the scope of Turkish Criminal code Article 216 (Öğünç,

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[40]Tests conducted by Reporters without Borders (2012). See also Akdeniz (2009) and Akdeniz and Altınparmak (2008: 74, 75, 82, 83).

[41]See also Bianet, 2012.

2011). Radikal again reported on the arrest of more than 60 people, many of them young activists involved with environmental and anarchist causes. During the questioning at the police headquarters, some of the arrested youth faced questions such as "Why did you 'like' that anarchist video on Facebook?" and "What is the real name of the such and such person who uses such and such nickname on Facebook?" The article discussed the supposed failures of juridical apparatuses and the inconsistencies in the police's reasoning which held the arrested responsible for some attacks at shop windows and ATMs of banks in Istanbul during the May 1st celebrations of 2012 (Öğünç, 2012).

The Safe Initiative campaign advocated awareness and stimulated informed consumer choice, which suggests that technologies of the self constitute self-reliant consumer-citizens. At the same time, the state claimed responsibility for designing filters, blocking websites, and controlling users. The contradictory set of discourses and applications on the Safe Initiative website demonstrate slippages between *auto-regulation* and *automated regulation,* which created an atmosphere of state protectionism and coercion. The exclusive moral community as a technology of governance intersected with coercive state apparatuses. The latter targeted parties with identities excluded from the moral community or with seemingly oppositional political agendas. Discourses of safety and morality contributed to such parties being rendered improper and / or suspect.

From Nation to Community

In the first section of this chapter, I argued that the transformation toward the information society was imagined and designed as a development with national contours and that the state appeared as the agent of this development. In what follows, I argue that in the

process of transforming populations "the nation" transmogrified into an exclusive moral community, while the state found a role in providing selective services to this community. This section will reflect on these transitions from the perspective of Turkish activists and critics.

The paradoxical coding of access restrictions as permission and of state regulation as freedom should be understood in the context of Turkey's political conjuncture. The invocation of "Turkish sensitivities" reworked long-standing ideological struggles between Kemalism and popular opposition movements that found legitimacy in the appeal to "authentic" Turkish-Islamic culture. While BTK was not mistaken in claiming that a particular segment of the Turkish population agreed with its moral definitions, the state agency made this particular public into *the* "Turkish" public. Its services attended to the needs of this community, while ignoring others' needs. In May 2011, critics affiliated with the Alternative Information Association [*Alternatif Bilişim Derneği*], including the author I quoted before, Mutlu Binark, argued that the Safe Internet initiative constituted a moral panic that reproduced hegemonic values and excluded "others." The critics complained about the discourses of safety related to the Safe Internet initiative:

> Another question we cannot help but raise is why this hegemonic discourse does not include nor even mention the need to protect children from the extremely racist hate discourse against certain religious and sectarian groups, sexual identities, political ideas and foreigners? This discourse naturalizes all sorts of discrimination, creates a lynch regime, and lays the groundwork for hate crimes in our society. [We find the protection of children from this hate discourse] just as much if not more important than protecting our children from "excessively obscene" and "pornographic" content. (Keleş, 2011)

According to these critics, the Safe Internet services by BTK and the appeal to safety created a moral panic that marginalized "others" instead of creating a society inclusive of diverse populations and identities.

Other critics complained about the arbitrary character of access and content regulations. These critiques hinted at the ways that the service to the moral community implied the emergence of new regulative principles and practices. Although legal discourses abounded in state discourses, moral judgment as foundation of the decision-making processes mobilized concepts and mechanisms of "participation" in access regulation, "proximity" to the community, and "trust" in its presumed defenders. As I explained, the "interactive" mechanisms of reporting content and websites supposedly helped the moral community attain a voice and participate in decision-making regarding access and content regulation. Moreover, TİB, which made *ex-officio* decisions on the blocking of websites, situated itself as the defender of the interests of this supposed community and it demanded to be trusted in its role of acting upon the sensitivities and needs of the community. Participation, proximity, and trust complemented and substituted principles of Turkey's civil code: distance, objectivity, and expertise (however compromised such principles may be in practice).

For critics, moral judgment in access and content regulation amounted to situations of arbitrary decisions, either on the basis of political bias or rather random ones. Advocating the need for some kind of objectivity, critiques accused TİB of ruling arbitrarily [*keyfi*] and of abusing the mechanisms of the law by not sticking to clear definitions. The manifesto of the activist collective Censorship to Censorship [*Sansüre Sansür*] problematized the ill-defined concept of "obscenity" and demanded that the law would be "clear" and "without room for personal interpretation." The broad categories and definitions in the current law left the task

of interpretation to BTK as the agent of morality and the guardian of the community. The manifesto of Censorship to Censorship contested the qualifications of the involved state agencies for dealing with access and content regulation. It argued that Turkey was in urgent need of "members of the judiciary and court experts, who are knowledgeable about the internet."[42] Similarly, internet activist and professor in Information Systems at Bilkent University in Ankara, Mustafa Akgül problematized what he saw as a lack of expertise on the side of TİB and BTK. According to him (2010: 293), "decision-making by bureaucratic staff independently, as if they were judges, is against the Constitution and universal principles of law." Professor in Law and activist Yaman Akdeniz problematized the ways that precautionary judgment and weak norms for proof compromised the procedures of decision-making with regard to website blocking. As he (2009: 8) claimed, the fact that TİB or the court only needed to have "sufficient suspicion" of a crime against the prohibitions of Law No.5651 further enabled unfounded decisions.

In order to refute critics who argued that the filter packages were a form of state censorship that violated the freedom of expression and right to information, the propagators of the Safe Internet initiative appropriated a discourse of freedom. Yet, even though BTK and its critics both embraced a discourse of freedom, the two antagonists spoke about freedom from different registers. BTK invoked choice and consumer rights. Critics, however, appealed to protection of freedom of expression, the right to information, and to principles of equality and citizenship. The critics affiliated with the Alternative Information Association stated: "In the Internet environment, we are citizens and not consumers!" They invoked the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to claim "fundamental rights based on 'being human.'" These rights had to do with freedom of expression and that

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[42]See http://www.sansuresansur.org/manifesto/ , accessed on June 15.

were realized in "access to information, documents, ideas and opinions in order to establish […] judgment through […] free will." By referring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, these critics introduced imaginations of political legitimacy and rights that challenged the state's construction of the ICT-supported informational realm as a national territory.

Conclusion

I began this chapter by analyzing the contradictory set of spatialities and agencies involved in the assemblage of the state-led information society project. The technological determinist approach of the *Information Society Strategy 2006-2010* stimulated Turkey's integration with global information spaces and socio-technical trajectories designed by foreign and supranational governance institutions and experts. However, to the extent that the state-led project was the site of techno-monumentalism, it generated possibilities for the imagination and production of socio-technical trajectories not prescribed by the examples of the "advanced nations." The *Strategy* constructed the state as the responsible agent of development. Structuring relations between governors and governed through and at the site of ICT practices, several concrete projects that targeted social transformation exploited particular sets of moral and epistemological discourses. Morality as a technology of the self related to the promise of development at both personal and national levels. Mobilization of this technology supported a national strategy, as Atasoy (2009) suggests, of asset-building through human capital growth. The mobilization of this moral framework was integral to new imaginations of Turkey's future rooted in a celebratory vision of the Ottoman past. Re-orienting collective memory, official discourses promoted the Ottoman past as the kernel of modernity and technological innovation. Rather than arguing that the information society

project was hijacked by conservative forces, I tried to illustrate how technologies of control and restriction rendered promises and experiences of newly won freedoms, development, and progress.

The imagination of the transformation toward an information society as a national project related to discourses of the moral community that needed to be both served and protected by the state. These discourses promoted filtering and blocking of websites ambivalently as public service that responded to the particular needs and demands of the Turkish population *and* as a judicial matter. The contradictory set of discourses and applications of the Safe Internet initiative introduced slippages between *auto-control* through technologies of the self and *automated control* through state coercion and protectionism. These slippages created an atmosphere of state coercion and protectionism. While the *Information Society Strategy 2006-2010* outlined a transformation with national contours, concrete governance practices reconfigured "state" and "nation." Within the scope of the Safe Internet initiative, the nation transmogrified into an exclusive moral community; the state into a provider of selective services. Activists and critics discussed the impacts of these transitions in terms of moral panic, a lack of protection of citizenship rights, and judicial shortcomings. Among those who felt excluded or negatively affected were in fact the relatively privileged segments of the population, including university youth and segments of the secular middle-class.

NGO MEDIATION IN THE "INFORMATION SOCIETY"

Introduction

Chapter 2 noted that even though state officials claimed responsibility for, and control over, the "information society" project in Turkey, this project was not led solely by the state. The current and the following chapter attend to the information society project as envisioned and enacted by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Turkey. Both chapters focus on the activities of the NGO Habitat Center for Development and Governance (*Habitat Kalkınma ve Yönetişim Derneği*, HKYD), which worked on social transformation by implementing digital literacy and community empowerment programs. HKYD worked on two fronts: free or low-cost skills training in information and communication technology (ICT), ranging from basic digital literacy courses to vocational training for "network experts"; and self-governance at the local level through participatory community councils. According to the NGO, these two fronts were connected because ICT skills training people would increase their abilities to participate in communal self-governance and to impact local and national policy-making.

HKYD mediated between global ICT companies, supranational institutions such as the United Nation (UN), and local populations. HKYD's skills trainings were part of corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs that revolved around the use of "ICT for

development" (ICT4D). (I will use the acronyms "CSR ICT4D" to refer to these programs, reflecting the fact that they were a composite of corporate governance agendas as well as NGO visions of social change and development.) While HKYD arranged volunteer trainers, ICT companies such as Microsoft, Cisco, Intel, and Vodafone provided software and what they called "knowledge" (by which they meant some kind of expertise in ICT skills training, data management, or ICT-based communal self-organization). The community empowerment programs were part of a collaboration with the UN's Local Agenda 21 (LA-21) project. The LA-21 project targeted "the development of a new 'local governance' model in Turkey whereby public institutions, local authorities and civil society organizations are forming the triangle of the local-decision making processes" (Emrealp, 2011: 6). HKYD described LA-21 as a democratization project that "reflects a decentralized approach based on collaboration and communication between equal partners. The project's basic decision-making and executive mechanisms at the local level are the stakeholders organized under City Councils."

The mediation between different governance actors and scales by HKYD took place through a multi-stakeholder governance model. This model, also named network governance, comprises "interdependent yet autonomous actors engaged in institutionalized processes of public governance based on negotiated interactions and joint decision making" (Sørensen & Torfing). This chapter, in conjunction with the next chapter, asks in what ways the NGO-led "information society" project, which was enacted through multi-stakeholder network governance, generated new sites and forms of governmental control as well as political authority articulated as "participation." NGO-led governance was promoted as a move toward decentralization of political authority and empowerment of local, self-organizing communities. However, rather than taking the rise of NGO-led governance as a move toward

democratization *per se*, I explore how its practices produced particular socio-technical organizations involving new modes of control as well as particular political possibilities. The current chapter argues that CSR ICT4D tended to reinforce capitalist accumulation and governmental control by inhibiting politicization of Turkey's course of development, including the implementation of the so-called "information society." The following chapter, Chapter 4, argue that this inhibition—or depoliticization of social and technological development—stands in sharp contrast to what NGO-led governance promised at the local level: governance experiments in support of "skilled" and "participatory" communities that would be able to co-determine local and national affairs. Running through Chapters 3 and 4 is the theme of the contradictory combination of practices of governmental control and invocations of participatory politics. I analyze and map the socio-technical and spatialized organizations that underlie the contradictory approaches to governance inherent in the NGO-led "information society" project.

First, this chapter explains how the ICT-led information society project differed from the state-led project (see Chapter 2) and, indeed, how it sought to undermine some of the latter's key elements. I point to an informational-technical discourse that informed a particular political imagination of networking. By appealing to new principles and models of governance—which presumably were "networked," "participatory," and "horizontal" —this discourse invoked local communities as social entities that enjoyed political authority. While the state constructed the informational realm supported by ICT as a national territory, HKYD and other ICT NGOs working on the so-called information society claimed this realm as a global space of connectivity and networked exchange between *global* and *local,* but not necessarily *national,* actors.

The following section looks at the practices enacting the "network governance" model and explores what I argue is the contradiction between HKYD's political promise of local self-governance and the ways in which it introduced ICT companies as governmental actors. Although the NGO advocated for the political authority of self-governing local communities, it simultaneously participated in governance mechanisms that instituted ICT companies as key governance actors. Through what I call a "politics of transparency," which constructed relations of transparency and accountability, hence supervision and control, with regard to companies and corporate investors but not people receiving CSR programs, the HKYD governance networks enabled ICT companies to decide what constituted "societal good" as well as manage the course of Turkey's development trajectories. Meanwhile, local populations had no say in these matters and were subjected to governmental regimes.

Third, I argue that besides governmental control, CSR ICT4D facilitated information-capitalist control by stimulating dependencies on proprietary software. I note that CSR ICT4D programs enacted particular "skill geographies." These geographies emanate from spatialized strategies that enact globally varying degrees of connectivity and that allow particular groups and individuals varying degrees of engagement with, and control over, ICTs and the trajectories of technological development.

Finally, I discuss the "values of volunteerism," where I argue that CSR ICT4D projects operated on the basis of volunteerism and networked exchange among communities. While open to information-capitalist exploitation, these elements of CSR ICT4D's operation also introduced potential challenges to, and disruptions of, the logics of information capitalism.

Decentralization: the Global and the Local

During a personal interview, HKYD Chair Başak Saral told me about the NGO's

history. It was founded in response to the lingering effects of political repression in the wake

of the military coup of 1980. The junta that ruled country between 1980 and 1983 banned

the right to associate, forbade the civil society activities as well as the formation of political

parties. The prohibitions and restrictions hit youth movements especially hard, since the

constitution drafted by the junta approached the youth as a potential threat to the nation. As

Ms. Saral said, after the laws changed and the political atmosphere somewhat relaxed, the

NGO had to "build the organization of youth from scratch." [43] Through its partnership with

the UN, HKYD maintained an agenda of state reform by decentralizing governance

mechanisms and platforms. Following the UN's Habitat II Summit in Istanbul in 1996, the

UN's LA-21 program was adapted to Turkey. LA-21's civil platforms, the City Councils,

gathered civil society institutions; un-organized citizens; special councils addressing the

concerns of particular segments of the population such as youth, women, and the disabled;

and working groups addressing particular topics of interest. HKYD mediated and translated

between "local" and "global" actors and scales. While "local actors" included these self-

governing local communities as well as Turkish NGOs, the "global actors" were ICT

companies and supranational governance institutions. In 2011, HKYD had partnerships with

Microsoft, Intel, Cisco, and Visa. Further partnerships existed with the United Nations

Development Program (UNDP), United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and West

Africa Section (UCLA-MEWA), the Turkish Ministry of Development, Unicef, and a series

of Turkish NGOs. HKYD was a member or partner of several international platforms,

including the UN Economic and Social Council, UN-HABITAT Best Application Committee,

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[43] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 2, 2010.

Telecenter European Network of Information Centers, TOBB Young Entrepreneurs Committee, and WALD, the World Local Governance and Democracy Academy.

HKYD worked on two fronts: free or low-cost skills training in information and communication technology (ICT); and self-governance at the local level through participatory community councils. For the NGO, the two fronts were related. ICTs were tools to reach democratic participation of young people and empower them. Ms. Saral called the NGO's approach to the ICT sector "rights-based." She said, "IT is a tool for us. It is not the target, but it's a tool to reach democratic participation of young people." Information rights had a special place among HKYD's other agenda points because the NGO saw ICT-supported access to information as the basis of awareness about any other kind of right or struggle for social change. An HKYD project website advocated the right to information and to attaining ICT skills for youth and other groups "in accordance with their needs" [*kişilerin internet ihtiyacları doğrultusunda*]. The project website further invoked rights to content and applications that are user-friendly [*elverişli*] for diverse users, including illiterate people, as well as the importance of a multi-lingual internet.[44]

This emphasis on rights was also reflected in my interview with Eda, an HKYD volunteer "master trainer" who trained volunteer instructors for the ICT skills trainings. She told me that these trainings had to do with rights because by knowing how to navigate information sources, people would be able to get to know their rights:

> The reason why we started the computer training courses is the fact that using a computer is the easiest way to reach new information. *I google everything* [original in English]. By using a computer [participants] can learn about all of their rights in the shortest period of time, because information changes really quickly.[45]

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[44] See http://www.bilenlerbilmeyenlerebilgisayarogretiyor.net/tr/Page.asp?id=94 , accessed on June 15, 2012.

[45] Personal interview, Istanbul, July 9, 2011.

In this statement, being "connected" and "informed" includes being informed about rights and hence being an aware and participatory citizen.

In addition to stimulating ICT use, the NGO also spread information-technical discourses in order to describe and legitimize political imaginations of networking (see Barry, 2001). While HKYD pointed to the relevance of ICT access and skills, the NGO mobilized a discourse of "networking." This discourse informed a governance model and political imagination in which participatory, local communities were central. Discourses of networking were relevant especially in relation to City Councils, the civil platforms established under the LA-21 project by HKYD and the UN. These councils were portrayed as information and communication platforms. By law, the councils were entitled to receive assistance from the municipalities, ranging from facilities for meetings to budget support. Municipal assemblies were also required by law to consider the recommendations made by the councils regarding local matters. However, the guidebook for these councils, *The City (Citizens') Council: As a Participatory-democratic Governance Model Developed in Turkey* (Emrealp, 2011), stated: "It is becoming increasing[ly] recognized and acknowledged that the real strength of the City Council is not associated with having a legal personality, but come[s] from the synergy of its constituents via joining forces to constitute a 'common wisdom' that embraces the whole city." Key to the mechanisms of this governance model were "networking, communication and collaboration within and amongst the City Councils" supported by "technical know how" (8). In the process, decentralizing and participatory processes made use of "the unlimited opportunities provided by information and communication technologies, some of which displaying remarkable examples of local 'e-

democracy'" (39). The book presented community websites as "basic tools in promoting and strengthening the networking, communication and collaboration within and amongst the City Councils" (57) and for sharing experiences and "best practices."

In a personal interview, Sadun Emrealp, who was an advisor to HKYD, the LA-21 project coordinator employed by the UN, and author of the abovementioned guidebook, said that the LA-21 Program encouraged cities to establish their own "networks," consisting of working groups and councils. He emphasized: "There is no center in our organization, everything is done at the local level and only reporting to the UN is done from here." He further noted that LA-21 rejected any kind of forced institutionalization of organizational structures: "We are not going around like 'you should do this or that kind of thing.' When we first started out, we didn't have any plans for establishing city councils or similar mechanisms."[46] Demonstrating the experimental, "bottom-up" character of LA-21, Mr. Emrealp's account rendered open questions, for which he did not provide definite answers, about how to start participatory communities and stimulate direct democracy.

Part of HKYD's LA-21 "good governance" training that I observed during my field research a slideshow entitled, "Lobbyism Education." As the slideshow emphasized, direct democracy differed from representative democracy. In the latter governance model, an overarching body [*üst organ*], the state, was legally assigned the role of exercising government on behalf of constituencies. Instead of representative democracy, the City Councils, as platforms of self-government, promoted the principles of "ownership" over one's city, "active participation," and "cooperation toward solutions." The goal was further to form a "common intellect" [*ortak akıl*] that would incorporate all stakeholders, young and old, organized and not. In references to the "common intellect," "information sharing,"

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[46] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 27, 2011.

"participation," and "horizontal" organization, information-technology discourse resurfaced

and conveyed an imagination of political authority.[47]

The political imagination of networking was articulated to mechanisms of horizontal

accountability. During the interview, Mr. Emrealp argued that direct democracy had to do

with networked relations of accountability, starting with the production of knowledge:

> Accountability is not only upwards but downwards and sideways also. All groups should be accountable not only to their superiors but to the people at large. And mechanisms should be developed; they should not just say "we are transparent*" et cetera* but really put their accounts on the internet, shar[ing] them with the people, mak[ing] information accessible and understandable by the people. These kinds of steps should be taken in order for networks to function. [They should not just be] sending emails to employ each other, but to get essential information for decision-making processes. […] A lot of the participation is made through complicated mechanisms of networks. But each constituent should have a stake in networking, not just getting information, but also discussing and converting this information to valuable knowledge.[48]

I will return to Mr. Emrealp's description of transparency in the next section in order

to analyze the mechanisms of "transparent" governance practices. For now, I want to note

that HKYD's discourses on networking were articulated to "good governance" principles

advocated by several ICT NGOs. The cited guidebook by Mr. Emrealp promoted

transparency, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence, arguing that each of

these principles "contribute to the development of 'more democratic governance'" (13).

HKYD's discourses complemented the discourses by other prominent ICT NGOs working on

the transformation toward the information society. These discourses, which again deployed

information-technical discourse to compose a political imagination, challenged the state's

construction of the ICT-supported informational realm (see Chapter 2). I will argue that they

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[47]See http://www.ulusalgenclikparlamentosu.net/dokumantasyon/ulusal-genclik-parlamentosu/sunumlar.html.

[48] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 27, 2011.

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claimed the informational realm as a global sphere of connectivity and exchange between *global* and *local* actors, eclipsing the role of national actors. In this NGO-led information society project, HKYD mediated between these local and global actors. By assigning political authority to the "local community," the NGO also legitimized its own role as a mediator between global and local actors.

Governing Global Connectivity

As mentioned in Chapter 2, three prominent non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Informatics Foundation of Turkey (Türkiye *Bilişim Vakfı*, TBV), the Informatics Association of Turkey (*Türkiye Bilişim Derneği*, TBD), and the Informatics Industry Association of Turkey, (*Türkiye Bilişim Sanayicileri Derneği*, TÜBİSAD) published a report on Turkey's e-transformation. Opposing what the ICT NGOs identified as state centralism, the report argued that effective planning required the input of all relevant parties. These parties included the ICT NGOs themselves as they were institutions that represented the local ICT sector and worked on the information society project in Turkey. The report assured that the "e-transformation strategy" could not be implemented "unless active participation and governance are accepted both as governing principles and as indispensable components of the strategy." In the ICT NGOs' discourses, the inevitability of technological development toward global networks is concomitant with necessary failure of state-centered governance. As the TBV Board Chairman argued in the foreword to the White Book (vi), "Since [the] Internet has a decentralized, global, and limitless structure, […] modern States cannot regulate the problems arising from [the] Internet effectively by themselves." He added that for that reason, "States must change their traditional way of thinking." Discursively and

materially, these ICT NGOs challenged the state's construction of the ICT-supported informational realm as a national territory by framing this realm as a global space. This globality had to do with associations between "networking" or network governance and smooth connectivity and flow of information, interoperability, and multi-scalar organization.

ICT NGOs introduced a discourse of networking that undermined state-centered governance by pointing to the supposedly fundamental incompatibility between "the state" and the emerging global realities of ICT-supported networks. One fervent advocate of a new model of governance, Özgür Uçkan, mobilized information-technology discourses to describe and legitimize political imaginations of networked governance models (see Barry, 2001). A professor of Knowledge, Network Economy and Information Management at the private university Istanbul Bilgi, Uçkan advised both TBV and TBD. According to him, the transformation toward an information society would involve social and cultural capital, namely the capabilities of individuals, institutions, and society overall (Uçkan, 2009: 25, 26). His critique was that the state's information society project did not enact such a fundamental transformation. Uçkan (16) conjured up the image of the state as an industrial, and thereby "outdated," machine: the state conceived e-government "as a mechanical modernization project." Switching to information-technical discourse, Uçkan advocated "policy convergence" and "interactivity" as governance principles. According to him (9), governance following such principles had no center but relied on horizontal coordination: "The new administrative paradigm of the 'Information Age' is decentralized, multilayered, participatory, shared network governance, alternatively referred to as e-governance."

Uçkan cited the UN's "E-government Survey: From E-Government to Connected Government" (2008), which states that "connected" or "networked governance" engages the

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creative efforts of all segments of society. He followed the UN survey in attributing importance to the "active and effective consultation and engagement with citizens" and the "greater involvement with multi-stakeholders regionally and internationally."

While discourses of networking associated with good governance and multi-stakeholderism abounded, they also had different emphases and implications in their multiple contexts. For TVB, TBD, and TÜBISAD, global spaces resulted from the interacting forces of networked technical formations (ICTs), "good governance" principles, and market dynamics. For instance, TÜBISAD, which had more than 200 active member companies that governed an economic volume of $30 billion USD annually in Turkey, stated its primary mission to be to "foster ICT in becoming the fundamental sector contributing to Turkey's economic growth," while abiding by "universal values." TBV formulated its very first objective with regard to the transformation toward an information society as increasing "the share of IT [information technology] investments in the overall economy." While committed to market goals, TBV published a White Book that propagated globalized standards of good governance and rights. The Book appealed to "self-organized networking" and multi-stakeholderism according to principles of "good governance" identified by supranational governance institutions, including the EU and the World Bank. This Book further aligned itself with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights. Responding to the condition of access and content regulation by the Turkish state (see Chapter 2), the White Book stated that these core documents "explicitly protect freedom of expression and privacy without regard to borders, a phrase especially pertinent to the global Internet" (2003: 14).

TVB, TBD, and TÜBISAD adhered to a cosmopolitan project that conjoined

facilitating market dynamics and good governance standards as equally globalized

formations. HKYD complemented these discourses by positioning the "local community" as

the source of political authority within the good governance formations invoked. HKYD's

list of good governance principles constructed "locality" as a scale of organization that was

"foundational" to its activities." While manifesting itself as a NGO invested in social change,

HKYD constructed "the local" as the scale at which social change and democratization

would take place. Partnerships with supranational governance institutions and global ICT

companies, implemented on the basis of good governance principles, would assist them in

this effort.

While contributing to the construction of "locality," the NGO mediated and translated

between local communities and global ICT companies and supranational governance actors.

HKYD constructed its own legitimacy as a governance actor again on the basis of discourses

of community and locality. In partnerships with global ICT companies, the NGO was

responsible for the "localization" of global initiatives. Their role in the process was

legitimized (to global partners) on the basis of the claim that they would know "the needs of

youth" and other local populations. Ms. Saral summarized the process as follows:

> [W]e know the needs of youth and meet with institutions and then we develop their
> projects with local youth councils. For example, I sit down with Visa and they ask
> what can we do? We work with the national youth parliament and then we develop a
> project and if it's within the interests of the institution, the partner, we establish the
> project.[49]

Ms. Saral emphasized how important it was to differentiate ICT training and curricula

per country in accordance with local needs and expectations: "It is not one model for all."

When I asked whether what was at stake was some kind of imperialism that would manifest

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[49] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 2, 2010.

itself in the power of global companies to enforce certain lifestyles for populations in Turkey, she rejected the plausibility of such an interpretation by referring to the particularity of the local. The implementation model itself was, according to her, inevitably different from country to country. Explaining the need to localize, she argued: "[I]t is very important that you [as global actor] partner with local civil society and that there is this freedom to differentiate and work on the training curriculum according to each country's expectations." She also said: "We have implanted [ICT4D] in Turkey through volunteerism. We had Turkish volunteers, who live in proximity with the people who participate in the training course." Things would have been entirely different had, for example, Cisco representatives been responsible for the implementation and execution of the project. Companies were nevertheless eager to find globally streamlined measures for implementation. Ms. Saral said that when Cisco started to work in Africa they brought in computers only to find the implementation mechanisms lacking. Cisco asked HKYD to help them train individuals in Africa to be volunteers and "active" citizens. Yet, according to Ms. Saral, such instantaneous engineering of societies was not possible; the turn towards participatory citizenship was a long-term process.

While HKYD acted by mediating between different scales and actors, it is important to remember that it did not "represent" constituencies as representative-democratic state institutions do, even though it may gather and mobilize people (see Anderson et al., 2006: xxii). The legitimacy of HKYD was not build on the basis of a system of elections, but constituted through appeals to transparency, accountability, and above all, being in close contact and having dialogue with local communities. In the following, I focus on HKYD's CSR ICT4D efforts and explore the ways in which good governance practices positioned

local communities and global ICT companies in relation.

The Politics of Transparency

The following section analyzes the practical workings of good governance principles by exploring how "transparency" operated as a technology of responsibility and accountability. Transparency has a politics. In the case of governance practices related to CSR ICT4D, transparency underpinned the relation between HKYD and partnering ICT companies but not the NGO's relation with the local communities that participated in ICT4D programs. Despite the NGO discourse of local empowerment, HKYD was accountable not to local communities but to ICT companies, which in turn were accountable to their corporate stakeholders.

As cited above, the UN employee coordinating LA-21, Mr. Emrealp, described accountability as a principle of good governance that informed the relation 'not only to […] superiors but to the people at large." He suggested that this included putting "accounts on the internet, shar[ing] them with the people, mak[ing] information accessible and understandable for the people." At stake was the assumption that transparent governance would enable participatory communities to convert information into "valuable knowledge" for participating in decision-making. In line with Mr. Emrealp's conception of "transparency," on the HKYD website there were many reports and bulletins on LA-21 community empowerment activities. There were even comprehensive transcriptions of the panel sessions and talks from the national meetings of the LA-21 councils that seemed to include every word said and question raised. As Emrealp suggested, the NGO was transparent about its community empowerment activities and presumably gave others the opportunity to intervene and participate.

Remarkably, in contrast to the community empowerment activities, the HKYD website offered no reports whatsoever that addressed CSR ICT4D and e-governance projects. The website offered some statistics on the basic ICT skills trainings sponsored by Cisco. This "Project Impact Analysis" revealed the percentage of participants who continued to use the computer actively in their daily lives after the course period; the percentage of them who thought the trainings benefitted their employment opportunities (although no data were given on how many found employment and to what extent the trainings had contributed to this achievement); and the percentage who thought they had gained the skills to express themselves better in communicating with others. On the project website, there were some reports, yet it was clear that the reporting efforts facilitated transparency and accountability only with regard to certain actors, namely the partnering ICT company.[50] While reports reflecting community empowerment projects were in Turkish, the ICT4D reports appeared only in English and not in the native language. The overall reports were rather short and did not provide much data beyond the numbers of participants in online and offline trainings, the number of newly enrolled volunteer ICT4D course instructors, and, if any, openings of new training centers. The links to external evaluation and budget spending were not publicly available. The reporting template asked for data on media coverage related to the ICT4D projects in local and national newspapers, magazines, websites, and radio programs. It also asked the NGO to share up to three photos to illustrate their activities so that the company could use them in their communications regarding grant programs and activities. One wonders to what extent the NGO's ability to generate and publicize "success stories" was a measure of its performance for the ICT companies partnering with HKYD. In any case, these reports did not conduct any systematic analysis and evaluation of CSR ICT4D, which would

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[50] See http://www.bilenlerbilmeyenlerebilgisayarogretiyor.net/tr/Page.asp?id=71.

ideally consider failures or shortcomings as well as larger contextual dynamics of ICT4D.

Following the circuits of reporting on ICT4D, "transparency" structured the relation between NGOs and ICT companies and generated a process of deference and displacement of accountability. Although both HKYD and the partnering ICT companies claimed to empower communities, their own governance practices related to ICT4D programs deferred NGO accountability away from local populations to companies and, ultimately, from companies to their stakeholders. Globally, the practice is that CSR accomplishments by companies are taken up in indexes that measure "responsibility" comparatively, such as the Global Compact Index (GCI) by the UN and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). These indexes do not address general publics that include recipients and target populations of CSR programs, but an audience of corporate stakeholders and global governance actors. The GRI website welcomed visitors with the announcement that GRI "connects opinion makers and thought leaders worldwide."[51] In the foreword to the annual GRI Report, [52] the Chief Executive, Ernst Ligteringen, claimed that there was "a growing sense of urgency around sustainability reporting." Reporting would enable "comparison and benchmarking, analysis of trends and increased competitiveness." Identifying the range of users of "sustainability performance data" who according to him would engage in such comparison and benchmarking, Ligteringen included the following groups:

> investors and financial market analysts as well as different organizations concerned with the public interest in our social, environmental and economic sustainability, and the ever-increasing number of peer organizations that produce sustainability reports. Audiences also include governments, stock exchanges and other policy makers. (4)

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[51] Ibid.

[52] See Global Reporting Initiative, 2011.

The CSR indexes, as well as the individual companies submitting CSR reports, aimed at meeting the needs for information of particular circles of corporate stakeholders and governance actors. The Microsoft Citizenship Report, which complied with the reporting guidelines of the GRI index, was composed in such a way as to address certain partners and fulfill only *their* demands for information.[53] The website said that the Citizenship report covered issues as far as they seemed relevant "based on internal assessments, ongoing engagement with stakeholders ranging from socially responsible investors to our own employees, and requests for information by corporate responsibility rating agencies." According to the website, Microsoft conducted "gap analysis" between the information provided by Microsoft's previous Citizenship Reports and incoming requests for information from stakeholder. Such an analysis presumably optimized Microsoft's ability to provide relevant information and be transparent. The website highlighted the company's concern regarding "transparency," yet the formulation makes clear that this concern merely pertains to meeting the expectations of a particular group of stakeholders.

In debates about CSR, critics of CSR reporting practices have inserted a whole other set of expectations that they found wanting in the activities of the companies engaged in CSR . For instance, writing on CSR ICT4D in China, Lisa McLaughlin (2005) notes that there were very few efforts to monitor or evaluate the Cisco/UN partnership Cisco Networking Academy Program (CNAP). The content of CSR reports was selective, focusing exclusively on "success stories" and "best practices" but not on shortcomings and contextual analysis. Moreover, McLaughlin (2005: 56) argues about CSR indexes, taking the UN's GCI as an example, that the corporations that have signed on to them "would have refused to do so if required to agree to mandatory reporting and monitoring of their activities or to supply

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[53] See http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/en-us/reporting/about/ , accessed on June 1, 2012.

indicators of the success of their initiatives that extend beyond 'best practices.'" By consequence, CSR indexes allow for selective disclosure of data and restricted circulation of information. Such reporting practices construct "transparency" as a tool for reputation management that offers a balance between the value of openness (indicating responsibility and accountability to stakeholders) and the risks of exposure. Companies treat "transparency" as something that, by affecting their brands, potentially could enhance relations of trust, but that also made corporate identity vulnerable.

The global CSR indexes simply addressed one particular segment of decentralized CSR governance networks and this segment was composed of company stakeholders and global governance actors but not the recipients and target populations of CSR programs and services. HKYD did not cultivate any apparent relation to these indexes. It neither referred to them in its external communication nor provided any hyperlinked connections through its website. Not once during my interviews with NGO or UN employees, volunteers, public authorities, or even the CRS representatives of companies did these indexes come up, although I always asked about mechanisms of reporting and evaluation.

Principles and mechanisms of good governance mediated a particular scalar distribution of disclosures and withholdings of information, of connections and disconnections. HKYD reported to companies and companies to stakeholders. "Transparency," to the extent that it provided any potentially meaningful information and operated as a technology of accountability, worked in two phases, whereby the first already prefigures the second. Transparency underpinned the relation between the NGO and the partnering ICT companies, which, as Microsoft did, asked the HKYD for data on the NGO's performance and evidence in the form of "success stories." Second, transparency

underpinned the relation between the ICT companies and their stakeholders, and here the global CSR indexes played a role. Accordingly, transparency generated first supervision and control by the company over the NGO and, second, supervision and control by stakeholders over companies.

Interestingly, the quote above by GCI's Chief Executive Ligteringen argued that the GRI index addressed "organizations concerned with the public interest," which belonged to the category of users of "sustainability performance data." Apparently, the index did not address the "general public" itself: it did not invoke such an open-ended, inclusive public.[54] Looking at practices of reporting, the principle of "transparency" in the CSR governance networks did not continue the norms of publicity that pertained to the bourgeois public sphere. Foucault (1978) recognizes the aim for a "transparent" and completely visible society without any "dark corners" in 18th-century panoptic apparatuses that followed Bentham's prison model as much as in the journalistic practices that generated the bourgeois public sphere. Dilip Gaonkar (1994: 549) argues that it was Bentham himself who traced a "regime of visibility" that stood in a "complex and enabling relationship to both public opinion and the doctrine of popular sovereignty." Discontinuing such regimes of visibility aimed at a society fully visible to the general public, "transparency" in CSR networks was a norm underpinning merely the communication between select groups of actors. Indeed, this uptake of transparency was not about popular sovereignty but instituted certain groups as governance actors who would attend to matters of "public interest," as GRI's Chief Executive formulated it. Accordingly, "transparency" in the HKYD governance networks did not facilitate platforms for political processes through which publics, including those that were actually directly impacted by CSR ICT4D programs, would form and negotiate their

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[54] My formulation refers to Michael Warner's (2002) theory of publics.

interests. Hence, transparency, simultaneously as a technology of accountability and as a

politics, instituted ICT companies as governance actors, supervisors, and decision-makers,

rather than the local communities that CSR ICT4D projects promised to empower with

political authority.

Corporate Constructions of Societal Good

While CSR ICT4D projects promised the empowerment of the "community," they in

fact deferred and displaced accountability away from local populations. In the following, I

argue that one of the consequences of the organization of "good governance" in CSR ICT4D

governance networks was the rise of governmental regimes that situated populations as

recipients of CSR services and programs, while allowing ICT companies to decide upon

"societal good."

In an anonymous interview, a CSR representative at the Turkish outpost of a global

ICT company highlighted the issue of the intentions behind CSR. My informant said that

people often expressed suspicion about her company's motives to engage in CSR and invest

in Turkey, giving out technology "for free."[55] She countered these suspicions by testifying to

her own goodwill and those of other people in the company. She argued that "under my hat"

(deep in heart) she was nothing like a "sales person," by which she meant somebody

interested in selling as much as possible and making profits. She added that even the sales

persons were in fact "not like that," whereby "that" stood for a pure interest in gain for the

company and a lack of commitment to the needs of Turkish society. Throughout the

conversation, my interviewee used "we" in both corporatist and national senses, correcting

herself when stating "investment we made for our… *the* country" [italics added]. The

[55] Personal interview, June 7 2010, Ankara.

flexibility with which she switched between and combined these "we's" may indicate

something about her shifting and overlapping alliances as an employee of a global company

and a Turkish citizen. Arguing that her loyalties lay with the country and the people rather

than with any particular company, she reasoned: "I might work for [this company] today and

tomorrow for Intel, or for Oracle, or such and such a company. It doesn't matter. But the

people that are living here are the same. They are still unemployed and they are still illiterate

sometimes." While this informant felt rather indifferent toward corporate identities, "the

people" was a category that mattered to her. She said, "It doesn't matter where the money

comes from." The irrelevance of the source of investment stood in sharp contrast with the

obvious and intrinsic value of the goal of the investments. My interviewee restated her

comment: "It doesn't matter where the money comes from, as long as your unemployed, your

teachers get educated. We have to develop this country somehow."

My informant argued that her company needed to make government elites aware that

companies were "not only product companies." Instead, they had a "social approach to the

country" oriented to making an "investment in the country." Challenging the critical and

popular assumption that CSR would be merely about corporate interest and reputation

management, my informant prioritized the stakes of "society." Companies presented

themselves as "model" citizens who are responsible, dedicated to communities, and socially

aware. Along such lines, Cisco, Intel, Microsoft, and Vodaphone referred to themselves as

"corporate citizens" initiating "citizenship programs." The Vodafone Turkey Foundation

webpage stated that the Foundation's mission was to "contribute to the development and life

quality improvement of Turkish society."[56] It declared that the Foundation demonstrated

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[56]See http://www.turkiyevodafonevakfi.org.tr/about-us.php , accessed on June 1, 2012.

"Vodafone's commitment to be[ing] a responsible global citizen and integrat[ing] with the communities in which we operate."

Emphasizing that companies were dedicated to "society" and "societal good," CSR discourses assumed that defining "societal good" would somehow not be a political question. Such discourses of corporate responsibility promote acceptance of the proposition that companies would be able and authorized to decide about societal good and determine desired trajectories of development for the country and its populations. In that sense, it was quite an understatement by global companies to refer to themselves as local "citizens"; they act more like governors.

The CSR ICT4D governance networks were organized in such a way that the responsibility for administering certain issues fell to partnerships between ICT companies and NGOs. This undermined the question of the politics of the information society project. If companies carry a responsibility to society, this also institutes them as actors with a particular form of agency derived from the fact that they are "responsible for" society. In certain scholarly literatures on CSR, the question is how to improve CSR by propagating guidelines for reporting. In *The Corporate Social Responsibility Reader* (Burchell ed., 2008), improving reporting practices that are incorporated in the GRI index is described as a process of "continual learning within and outside the corporation" that will "strengthen trust between the reporting organization and report users." Trust then is said to fortify "report credibility" which is a key goal of GRI's reporting framework (Global Reporting Initiative, 2008: 148). By insisting on improved implementation of GRI guidelines for reporting, the document calls upon companies to act more "responsibly." Yet it does not provide measures that would re-politicize CSR by prioritizing accountability to general publics and especially target groups

of CSR programs. Looking at CSR ICT4D projects and their enactment of "good governance" practices from a more critical perspective, however, the question is whether companies assume *too much* responsibility, instead of too little!

The social responsibility representative I quoted above argued that Turkish people were very keen on having the latest technologies. She continued, "But ask me how efficiently they use [technology] or how well-purposed they use it. We have a very young and bright population and we love to have the latest […] But we don't use it with the proper aim and we don't use it very efficiently."[57] Discussing "proper" aims, she distinguishes between entertainment on the one hand and self-education, training, and "social interaction in the proper way" on the other. Turkey's potential remained unrealized due to a lack of awareness: "[i]n Turkey, people have capacity and potential to absorb more, we have the technologies in the country, but we don't have the goodwill and awareness to develop ourselves and our country." Isolating Turkey in her assessment, she was convinced that in other Western or far-Eastern countries the promise of ICT was fulfilled better. CSR ICT4D had to teach people how to use ICTs.

For my informant, Turkish populations were inherently "young" and full of "potential," yet there was also need for correcting them in how they used ICTs. I want to consider the claim about Turkey's unfulfilled potential in relation to the trope of the "youthfulness" of the nation that not only here, in the argument by this informant, but remarkably frequently complemented it.[58] The appeal to the youthfulness of the country was part of the claim that there was a natural inclination to adapt new ICTs quickly in Turkey.

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[57] Personal interview, June 7 2010, Ankara.

[58] As argued for instance in the state's *Information Society Strategy 2006-2010* reviewed in Chapter 2, more than 50% of the Turkish population was under the age of 30; hence the country would be very "young," dynamic, and full of potential.

This capacity to adapt would in turn stimulate Turkey's development. Yet the "flip side of the coin" of Turkey's supposed youthfulness was the assessment that populations, in conjunction with the country, had to be further "developed." That is, the trope of youthfulness simultaneously served to deprive Turkish people of the political authority inherent in citizenship and legitimized governmental interventions by agencies that would look after target populations.

As this section argued, CSR ICT4D generated governmental control. Multi-stakeholder partnerships, where corporate governance actors played a key role, decided on the societal good and the desired trajectories of development for the Turkey. These depoliticized processes did not generate accountability to people who formed the actual target groups of CSR ICT4D programs, but subjected populations to governmental control. Partha Chatterjee (2004) notes that individuals and groups appear as "populations" in the classificatory schemes of governmental knowledge, which follows a rationale of "costs and benefits in terms of economic, political, or social outcomes" (136). In contrast to citizens, who can exercise political authority, populations "do not bear any inherent moral claim" (ibid). Instead, they are merely "looked after by governmental agencies" that provide services to them. Chatterjee's distinction between the "lofty political imaginary of popular sovereignty" and the "mundane administrative realities of governmentality" (36) finds a parallel in CSR ICT4D governance networks: despite allusions to citizenship empowerment and support for communities with political authority, CSR ICT4D projects treat individuals and groups as "populations" that are the recipients of skills training and developmental programs. The "mundane administrative reality of governmentality" refers to the ways in which CSR agencies and NGOs pursue multiple policies of development that target the

transformation of populations according to planned schemes together with the advancement

of the technological and economic conditions of the country. The next section explores how

CSR ICT4D co-generated governmental and capitalist control by calculating and managing

ICT capabilities for differentiated individuals and groups.

The Power-Geometry of Information Capitalism

In the following, I explore CSR ICT4D programs in terms of certain logics inherent

in the process of skills training. I analyze the socio-technical assemblages of CSR ICT4D

including technical infrastructures, "skill geographies," and capitalist and non-capitalist

regimes of value. Both ICT companies and HKYD advocated CSR ICT4D programs in terms

of the social inclusion and empowerment of disadvantaged populations. Yet while advocated

as such, CSR ICT4D programs were also oriented toward skill training individuals and

populations selectively and differentially. They reproduced the power-geometry (Massey,

1994) of information capitalism by enacting a spatialized organization through which

particular groups obtained varying degrees of engagement with and control over ICTs.

In a talk addressed to Microsoft representatives that Microsoft later publicized on its

website, HKYD's Honorary President Sezai Hazır argued that access to information and

communication helps "the youth to play an active role in Turkey's transformation" by joining

local decision-making mechanisms.[59] Explaining why the HKYD was invested in the

partnership with Microsoft, Mr. Hazır said:

> We aim to speed up the formation of social networks and to accelerate information
> sharing among these networks. The mastering of technology by the youth means
> their gateway to producing knowledge and sharing new ideas. (ibid)

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[59] See http://www.microsoft.com/turkiye/basinodasi/2009/PR0707001.aspx , accessed on June 1, 2012.

He continued by assuring that, according to his organization, the CSR ICT4D project was "not simply a project toward increasing computer literacy. Rather it was an "activity that strengthens our other activities by triggering social change."[60] In HKYD discourses, ICT skills training was important to support inclusive social change and, as emphasized in the above quote, the democratic production of knowledge by target groups such as youth.

ICT companies also deployed discourses of social change when they promoted CSR ICT4D initiatives, typically showcasing "success stories." The Cisco Networking Academy Program (CNAP) website advertized many such stories, which were divided into three categories: "student impact and career paths," "promoting economic development," and "academy best practices." Selecting the first category from the option menu on the website, we would learn about CNAP students and alumni who had "applied their networking skills to advance their careers and make a difference in their communities." One of the success stories was about a former student from Istanbul, who became a volunteer trainer for HKYD. The story quoted him saying: "The volunteer training contributed a lot to my personal development." The former student argued that he "continued to learn along with the participants" and that together they "solidified" their knowledge.

As a genre, success stories stage the individual as the heroic protagonist, who, aided by technology, improves her own conditions or those in her community. By working toward social and economic change at the individual or communal level, these ICT-enabled agents were supposedly "making history," as the CISCO website suggested. The narrative form of the success story had an ideological function. Remarkably, the stories did not evoke the context of the events they documented, such as the particular conditions that enabled them, or

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[60] See http://www.microsoft.com/turkiye/basinodasi/2009/PR0707001.aspx , accessed on June 1, 2012.

(structural) limitations. Instead the stories presented singular cases, standing by themselves. Regardless of the isolated character of each success story, the website suggested that the change made thanks to ICTs would extend from local to global scale: the website listed many success stories from all over the world, suggesting a phenomenon spreading globally. The narrative form of the success story of the ICT-enabled hero, an entrepreneur *cum* ICTs, was a mechanism that attributed agency to the entrepreneurial subject. Moreover, while the personal photos and the stories of change and transformation supported the claims about ICT4D (in the absence of any systematic evaluation), the representation of the entrepreneurial subject also served to interpellate and incite the website visitor, who might be the next person to elaborate social change.

Both the company and the NGO argued that CSR ICT4D had to do with social inclusion and change. Microsoft's Unlimited Potential initiative, which is part of its Corporate Citizenship program, offered "people of all ages and abilities free or low-cost access to resources that enable them to learn about computers, use the Internet, explore new careers, further their education, participate in community activities, and develop job-related technology skills" (Badshah, 2010). Alluding to the diverse ways that the projects operated in radically different places, the Microsoft's senior director of Global Community Affairs said that the projects ranged "from a single computer setup in a cave dwelling in northern China to fully equipped training facilities in urban centers of both developed and developing countries" (ibid). The CSR representative whom I quoted above referred to the alleviation of digital divides that had repercussions on all aspects of life. As she said, there are kids "who don't go to school because they live in a rural area" and there are farmers "who don't have

the ability to contact the chamber of farmers or the veterinarian."[61] Explaining that ICT4D among others attended to rural populations, this representative added that "If there was no teacher in the village, the programs would seek to include the local imam," who would be often the most educated person in a Turkish village, to open up computer sessions for villagers. The discourses of inclusion suggested that the spread of new information technologies would help alleviate regional disconnection and rural underdevelopment.

Yet while companies cast ICT4D in a discourse of inclusion, this does not prevent individuals and populations from being included on different terms. Despite allusions to inclusion, non-discrimination, and equality, corporate responsibility projects engaging in ICT4D train populations selectively and differentially. In Turkey, the array of available programs illustrates this differential inclusion.

Sponsored by Vodafone, the No One Will Remain Digitally Illiterate program (*Bilgisayar Bilmeyen Kalmayacak*, BBK) reached out to disadvantaged youth, especially women and girls below the age of thirty, to close the "digital gap." In its first phase in 2007, it attracted over one million participants across Turkey. Its curriculum focused on Microsoft applications, awarding participants with an EU-recognized certificate called the European Computer Driver License.[62] The project was realized with the support of volunteer trainers, partly recruited through a system of peer instruction in which former students become instructors themselves. Another CSR ICT4D project, the Digitally Skilled Teach the Unskilled (*Bilenler Bilmeyenlere Bilgisayar Öğretiyor*, BBBÖ), shared this peer-instruction network with BBK, and had reached more than 130,000 participants by 2011. The BBBÖ

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[61] Personal interview, June 7, 2010, Ankara.

[62] See http://www.bilgitoplumu.net , accessed on June 1, 2012.

program in Turkey fell under Microsoft's global Unlimited Potential project. BBBÖ offered

four different courses, the first two of which were general introductions to ICT for a duration

of 25 and 35 hours, respectively. Students were taught Microsoft programs and skills for a

"digital life," including e-government applications, online shopping and banking, job

searching and application processes, and security. The other two courses, for which there

was a selection process, were about web design and programming.[63]

Rather different from BBBÖ and BBK, Cisco's Networking Academy Program

(CNAP) did not aim for broad inclusion, but targeted the future "workers" of the information

society. As such, ninety-two percent of CNAP's participants were university students and

graduates (Sungurlu and Benli, 2008). The full curriculum comprised four blocks over a

period of two years. Upon completion of the four modules participants became certified

"network experts." Speaking about this project, a representative of the ICT NGO TBV

commented that CNAP's efforts targeted the creation of qualified network experts to fill the

shortage in expertise.[64] Similarly, Intel's the Technology and Entrepreneurship Program had

a much more select target group of career-oriented youth who would be trained in topics such

as **"**Technology Literacy, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, [and] Entrepreneurship."

In an impoverished historical inner-city neighborhood in Istanbul, I encountered a very

different kind of social responsibility pilot project, which was not related to HKYD or any

other ICT NGO. (I did not get permission from the project's initiator to disclose its name.)

The project, which ended prematurely, trained groups of neighborhood youth to become

smart-phone testers. The online description of the project stated that the company had a

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[63]See http://www.bilenlerbilmeyenlerebilgisayarogretiyor.net/tr/Page.asp?id=57 accessed on June 1, 2012;
http://www.bilenlerbilmeyenlerebilgisayarogretiyor.net/tr/Page.asp?id=94, accessed on June 1, 2012.

[64] See http://www.cisco.com/web/TR/news/press/archive/2006/news_70.html , accessed on June 1, 2012

"fresh approach" that would answer the needs of both universities and the ICT industry by integrating university students into the education of larger groups of non-academic trainees. The students, who acted as supervisors, and their trainees, who did the smart-phone testing, would attain the "invaluable experience" of working with concrete products instead of "text book examples." Despite the rhetoric of education, the set of skills that participants attained was very narrow and indeed only applicable to specific products— particular phone brands and models. It is hard to argue that this kind of training in preparation for a job as specific as smart-phone testing for particular brands is education at all. When I visited a workshop meeting of the project, a different set of rewards seemed to motivate participants. The supervising university students got some payment. The trainees, mostly children of primary and middle school age, got free breakfast and some got a vague promise of health insurance. The university students and older participants were also promised the possibility of job placement at a well-known Turkish communication service company. This CSR project blurred the boundaries between education and underpaid, noncontract labor. I learned during following visits to the neighborhood that the project was discontinued and that promises for health insurance and job placement had not been fulfilled.

These examples show not only the variety of ICT4D projects, but also demonstrate how differentiated ICT4D schemes were. In some projects, populations were to become workers with computer skills, "e-citizens," and "e-consumers," while in others participants were to become experts and innovators. Training populations *differentially* has implications for the divisions of power among classes and regions. In the following section, I will explore these divisions of power.

BBBÖ and BBK taught digital literacy strictly by familiarizing participants with Microsoft Office applications, such as Word®, Excel®, PowerPoint®, and Outlook®. Training participants in these specific programs created dependencies on Microsoft products. In addition to digital literacy training, some companies also donated specialized software to groups— such as farmers, the unemployed, and teachers—that faced specific issues and problems. These groups were supposed to first attain a sufficient level of computer skills and then use the provided software for professional development and to streamline work processes. As one corporate social responsibility representative remarked, her company provided "solutions" from which people could benefit: instruments that help people solve their everyday and professional problems. The goal was to show and tell these groups that "see, you can use the internet in this way, you can use ICT in that way."[65]

While ICT4D programs claimed to support empowerment, skill training populations might be at the same time a matter of de-skilling them by creating dependencies on systems over which they have little control.[66] It is exactly the user-friendliness and ready-to-use qualities of software packages that have bothered critics. The fact that software is black-boxed does not allow users to attain much insight and control (Liu, 2004). Bernard Stiegler (2010: 162) uses the Heideggerian concept of *Gestell* to suggest that contemporary service

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[65] Personal interview, June 7, 2010, Ankara.

[66] Braverman (1998: 295) is concerned with the level of insight and oversight that workers have with regard to the labor process versus the fragmentation of this process:

> The more science is incorporates into the labor process, the less the worker understands of the process; the more sophisticated an intellectual product the machines becomes, the less control and comprehension of the machine the worker has. In other words, the more the worker needs to know in order to remain a human being at work, the less does he or she know.

According to this perspective, getting skilled and trained to use particular ICT products, which however remain "black-boxed" and which render unintelligible operational processes, implicates a relative loss of skill. Following Harry Braverman (1998), skilling in CSR ICT4D might be a form of deskilling that creates the kind of dependencies of workers on technologies that allow a capitalist class to advance control.

industries, including ICT companies, are de-skilling humans, who do not know how to work or live in other ways than those facilitated and prescribed by the commercial technologies that have become pervasive in everyday life. Being enlisted or enrolled in socio-technical networks that are "short-circuited" means being added to a pre-constituted, non-negotiable system. Stiegler argues that "to undergo the effects of a service industry is in fact to have one's existence transformed without participating in the transformation" (Stiegler quoted in Stephan Barker, 2009).

Moreover, the variety of ICT4D curricula that I reviewed suggests differential inclusion and graduated distribution of skills according to spatialized strategies. CSR ICT4D played a role in distributing capacities and skills and hence in producing certain knowledge and *skill geographies*. These geographies reproduced inequalities on national and global scale. Nationally, all of the ICT4D projects tended to be developed in big cities first. As I learned during an interview at HKYD, by the time of my fieldwork Istanbul seemed "saturated" and not as much in need as smaller cities and rural areas.[67] Yet rural areas, if incorporated in ICT4D projects, were included with a time lag. Targeting educated participants, CNAP's expert programs focused on urban areas that had higher education institutions. Globally, CSR ICT4D is implicated in the centralizing tendencies of information capitalism (see also Schiller, 2007). Lisa McLaughlin (2005) suggests CSR ICT4D operates on a North-South divide "where research and development mostly remain in the Global North" while "vocational education is utilised in order to provide low- and semi-skilled labourers in the Global South." CSR ICT4D projects are unlikely to subvert the larger power-geometry (Massey, 1994), in which Turkey, to the frustration of local ICT professionals,[68]

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[67] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 9 2011.
[68] Personal interview, Istanbul, April 8 2010; Personal interview, Ankara, June 11, 2010.

functions by and large as an import economy of software and new "knowledge-based" applications, and not as a producer and an exporter. Critics argue that instead of facilitating social change CSR ICT4D tends to reinforce the pre-existing inequalities and power relations in which ICTs are implicated. Hence, "efforts to bridge the digital divide may have the effect of locking developing countries into a new form of dependency on the West" (Robert Wade, 2002: 443, quoted in Nederveen Pieterse, 2005: 14).

The perspectives of McLaughlin and Nederveen Pieterse resonate with Saskia Sassen's (2005) thesis about the centralizing forces through which globally networked economies operate.[69] CSR ICT4D follows centralizing patterns to the extent that knowledge (gradually distributed) and decision-making (done by companies and influential NGOs) is concentrated in selective urban centers of command. In other words, "decentralization" as the dissemination of skills and computational power through ICT4D peer instruction networks at the same time provoke "centralization." Multi-stakeholder partnerships between HKYD, global governance actors such as the UN, and ICT companies did not challenge centralized control to the extent that they instituted particular, networked centers producing powerful governmental knowledge, for instance ICT companies engaged in CSR and the UN. These centers collided with or maintained close ties to the centers of ownership over resources and productive forces (Marx), for instance ICT companies enjoying property rights over rather standardized ICT applications and software programs (see also Fuchs, 2008).

Values of Volunteerism

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[69] According to Sassen, transnational corporations (TNCs) rely on resources including talent and infrastructure that are concentrated in global cities. In order to facilitate global processes of production and distribution, global cities— and the business districts within these cities— exert a centralized command function.

In the following I will explore the ways in which volunteerism is articulated into the CSR ICT4D assemblages that include capitalist and noncapitalist regimes of value. I discuss the various ways in which volunteerism produced value for ICT companies by means of sustaining brand-loyal user communities and forming a counterforce against piracy. Although I deem it unlikely that HKYD employees and volunteers would directly, attack those profiting from proprietary software and other patents on "knowledge," allusions to the benefits of "free" exchange of information and to information rights potentially destabilized economies based on proprietary principles.

HKYD's mission page stated that "volunteerism" was a fundamental principle for all its activities and operations. Similarly, the project website for one of HKYD's peer instruction networks, named Information Youth Movement (*Bilişimde Genç Hareket*, BGH), advocated volunteerism as a key principle. It stated the expectation that by familiarizing participants with the principle of volunteerism, ICT4D would support the development of social consciousness. Participants would develop capacities to become actively engaged citizens and community leaders. [70]

In Marxian terms, volunteering is a form of "extra surplus labor" and opens up the possibility of overexploitation, where the value of the product is below its social value because wages are below average employment costs (Fuchs, 2008: 157). Volunteerism as a key element of CSR ICT4D in Turkey created value in the following ways. Lisa Laughlin (2005) argues that Cisco's CSR ICT4D program CNAP benefits the company by developing "brand-loyal customer base" of more than a million college graduates and hundreds of thousands of enrolled students worldwide in addition to tens of thousands of instructors.

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[70]See http://www.bilisimdegenchareket.com/hakkimizda , accessed June 1, 2012; http://www.bilisimdegenchareket.itu.edu.tr/Icerik.aspx?sid=1547 accessed June 1, 2012; http://www.habitatkalkinma.org/en/html/1069/About+Habitat/ , accessed June 1, 2012.

Although the initial use of software is free in the ICT4D labs and training centers, volunteers

help create customers who are likely to buy the same branded software afterward, including

updated versions later. There is a social and communal dimension to the brand loyalty

generated by ICT4D. Similar to the attachments to online peer support platforms for software

(Fuchs, 2008),[71] instructors and participants of CSR ICT4D programs form communities,

online and offline, on which participants rely for help and to which they grow attached in

multiple ways.

Indicating the attraction of peer support and communal attachments, the website This

Is Your Story [*Bu Senin Hikayen*] facilitated communication between ICT4D participants

and volunteer instructors from all over Turkey.[72] The website offered "information

education:" instructional videos, explanations, and practical tips regarding ICT applications

and procedures. Moreover, the website collected voluntary statements from participants of

various ICT4D projects in Turkey. The home page invited "everyone who believes that

information has changed their life" to share their stories. As an online platform, This Is Your

Story mediated and stimulated attachments to offline ICT4D communities in Turkey.

Comments by former participants often thanked the volunteer instructors for their efforts,

dedication, and patience. One comment by a former participant also included HKYD and the

partnering company: "I thank Youth for Habitat [former NGO name of HKYD] and

Microsoft that supported such a wonderful project in the age of technology. I also would like

to express my gratitude to [name of teacher], who volunteered to be our teacher in this

project, for her contributions." The last line was addressed to anyone exerting themselves for

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[71] Christian Fuchs (2008) sees these platforms as "communities produced by one corporation," increasing brand loyalty and the market position of these corporations.

[72] See www.bilisimhikayeleri.com , last accessed on June 1, 2012.

the goals of education, computer literacy, and mutual support: "I would like to thank everyone who supports education in all spheres and stages of life and who works toward educating many people in issues such as computers [use], literacy, and solidarity."[73] Participants sending in their statements encouraged others to join the ICT4D programs. One former participant said, "You're never too old to learn, just join the BBBÖ courses and you will see the benefits."[74] The website was also used to generate publicity. The stories by participants telling how ICT4D had impacted their lives received ratings from readers on the site; some of them were filmed and broadcast on the weekly television show Information Wind (*Bilişim Rüzgarı*) produced by the national public broadcaster Turkey Radio Television (*Türkiye Radyo Televizyon*, TRT).

CSR ICT4D mobilized a moral economy revolving around voluntary labor and the "gift" of CSR. As the messages on This Is Your Story suggest, participants of the free or low-cost skills trainings were extremely grateful for the opportunity. By way of a brand strategy, companies aimed to associate the values primarily ascribed to volunteer-subjectivities with their corporate identity. Establishing a moral economy related to the brand had a specific objective in the case of Turkey's ICT4D CSR. The HKYD volunteer instructor Kaan explained that software companies like Microsoft were eager to engage in social responsibility projects in order to appear "likeable" [*şirin*].[75] This volunteer said that building such a reputation was necessary to fight piracy, which undermined corporate profits in Turkey. Indeed, according to the International Intellectual Property Alliance's (IIPA) 2011 report on Turkey, the illegal use of software through piracy by corporate end-users was as

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[73] See http://www.buseninhikayen.com/default.asp?L=TR&mid=218&hid=141 , accessed on June 1, 2012.

[74] See http://www.buseninhikayen.com/default.asp?L=TR&mid=218&hid=136 , accessed on June 1, 2012.

[75] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 11, 2010.

high as 62% and that number did not include all forms of piracy (International Intellectual Property Alliance, 2011). According to the Entertainment Software Association, Turkey placed 15th in the world in terms of the number of connections by peers participating in illegal file sharing on peer-to-peer networks, International Intellectual Property Alliance, 2012). Appearing dedicated to Turkey and gaining sympathy from local populations, as my interviewee suggested, was part of the efforts of making Turkish populations brand-loyal consumers who would not opt for piracy.

Theorists of network economies have explored the ways that commercial internet platforms and software developers rely on user activity and, in doing so, mobilize extra surplus labor.[76] In some ways, CSR ICT4D followed network economies in generating value on the basis of user activity. CSR ICT4D projects that operated on the basis of networks of peer instruction did not create finalized products or contribute directly to paid services. Yet volunteers generated value by fuelling with their energy and efforts the "ephemeral" product of peer instruction and support communities.[77] As I argued, value creation resulted from volunteers stimulating attachments to corporate brands in rather unique ways; from volunteers sustaining supportive, enthusiastic, and intimate user communities; and from volunteers stimulating sets of skills related to particular proprietary software programs.

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[76] Providing a thesis of network cultures and network economies, Richard Barbrook (1998) famously argued that voluntary and unpaid work the arrival of a gift economy. The work was undertaken by the open-source community and others who were sharing information without that the exchange was mediated by price and money. Ten years later, Christian Fuchs (2008) argues that Barbrook overlooked the ways in which this kind of networked production is "subsumed under and exploited by capital." His conclusion is that what Barbrook saw as intrinsic features of "anarcho-communism" on the Net have come to be appropriated by corporate capital. On the basis of such developments, Fuchs (2008, 145) concludes that in network economies "free access and commodification are not mutually exclusive but are antagonistically intertwined."

[77] Discussing various instances of "prosumerism," Tiziana Terranova (2004: 91) argues that user communities, where people provide technical support to peers, or chat rooms that people volunteer to administer (such as America Online's), generate value for respectively internet-based industries while there are no labor costs. As Terranova claims, in network economies, commodities are often not fixed products but "ephemeral:" value creation takes the shape of a continuous process of communicating, informing, updating, etc.

Following Marxian and other critical perspectives that I referred, CSR ICT4D enacts a series of passages between opposites: *decentralization* (the dissemination of skills and computational power) is a matter of *centralization* (the controlling of resources), and *empowerment* (attaining capabilities) is a matter of *disempowerment* (becoming dependent on black-boxed technologies). However, it would be reductive to argue that CSR ICT4D is bound to only advance information capitalism. Although I think the passages of decentralization into centralization etc. were dominant, CSR ICT4D also opened up rather contradictory space. Even though any straightforward attack by HKYD on partnering ICT companies that profit from proprietary software and content seems rather unlikely, the two partners also had different values, interests, and goals. The centralizing tendencies inherent in CSR ICT4D that produced capitalist control were potentially disrupted by the moral economy of volunteering; HKYD's appeals to social justice and rights; and networked exchange among communities. In the following, I briefly discuss contradictory tensions inherent in CSR ICT4D that arose from recurring allusions to noncapitalist regimes of value and from reliance on participants' active engagement and creativity rather than solely their passivity (as Stiegler's concept of *Gestell* assumes).

Without mentioning contested political themes such as censorship, piracy, or open-source software, HKYD incorporated information rights as part of their mission. On the BBBÖ project website, one of the slideshows available presented the "right to sharing scientific and cultural resources." The slideshow ended with the claim that information rights are part of human rights [*insan hakları sözleşmeleri ile korunmalıdır*] and that it is the task of decision-makers to support awareness-raising regarding information rights and access.[78] As

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[78]See http://www.bilenlerbilmeyenlerebilgisayarogretiyor.net/tr/Page.asp?id=94 , accessed on June 1, 2012.

the last slide suggests, information rights were not absolute, meaning that they were not codified in law, but they needed to be invoked, appealed to, and lobbied for in order to come into being. By mobilizing discourses of information rights, HKYD contributed to this process of creating awareness about information rights among the populations.

The volunteer instructor Kaan further said that knowledge is something expensive nowadays and that people should not have to pay money for accessing knowledge. Without that he explicitly referred to illegal peer-to-peer sharing and piracy, he argued that "in one way or the other," people should get knowledge from others, "left and right around them."[79] The idea that knowledge should be shared freely related to principles of social justice and inclusion: disadvantaged groups especially should not have to pay in order to benefit from knowledge. Speaking in terms of a personal ethos, Kaan said, "I also share whatever I know." Kaan's discourse and practice suggest the possibility of ICT4D resulting in forms of sharing and networking that disrupt capitalist control by ICT companies and content industries. ICT4D practices generated allusions to networking and sharing, doing good, personal development, and social change. Thereby, they also unleashed imaginations of alternative economies and of ethical principles of equality and the "right to information." Kaan thought not only that his labor had to be free, but also information and knowledge: being a volunteer he became the double of the (ideologically motivated) pirate.

Conclusion

This chapter started out by distinguishing the NGO-led information society project from the state-led project (see Chapter 2). Focusing on CSR ICT4D governance networks and practices, I argued that the information-technical discourse of networking informed a

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[79] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 11, 2010.

political imaginary. By appealing to new principles and models of governance—which presumably were "networked," "participatory," and "horizontal" —this discourse constructed the informational realm supported by ICT as a global space of connectivity and networked exchange between *global* and *local,* but not necessarily *national,* actors.

A particular political imagination of networking, which underpinned the dual focus of HKYD on ICT skills training and community empowerment, endowed the local community with political authority. Yet at the same time, local populations were subjected to depoliticized governmental technologies of development as well as information-capitalist control. To the extent that CSR ICT4D reinforced the power-geometry of information capitalism, *decentralization* (the dissemination of skills and computational power) was a matter of *centralization* (the controlling of resources); and *empowerment* (attaining capabilities) was a matter of *disempowerment* (becoming dependent on black-boxed technologies). However, it would be reductive to argue that CSR ICT4D was only bound to advance information capitalism. Although I contend that the shifts between decentralization and centralization were the dominant trend, CSR ICT4D also instigated rather contradictory tendencies. The reason for this was that CSR ICT4D assemblages included capitalist *and* noncapitalist regimes of value. CSR ICT4D projects in fact relied on volunteerism and networked exchange among communities. These elements of the projects' operation, together with the moral economy of volunteerism and appeals to justice and rights by HKYD, potentially disrupted the logics of information capitalism.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOCIO-TECHNICAL CONTRACT OF ICT4D

Introduction

As the previous chapter argued, a particular political imagination of networking, which underpinned the dual focus of HKYD on ICT skills training and community empowerment, endowed the local community with political authority. Yet at the same time, local populations were subjected to depoliticized governmental technologies of development as well as information-capitalist control. This chapter investigates emerging contradictions between sovereignty and governmental and capitalist control in the CSR ICT4D governance networks. It argues that these were settled on the basis of a socio-technical arrangement that constructed the global and the local as two separate zones of governance, approached through distinct techniques of governance: governmental control and participation.

First, I look at how NGO employees and volunteers defined skilling in a much broader sense than preparing populations to meet demands of information capitalism. NGO affiliates saw skill training populations as an open-ended processes empowering populations by acquiring skills to participate and contribute to society. Although this alternative definition of skills expresses the NGO's commitments to participatory self-governance, I note that, like their other CSR ICT4D governance partners, the NGO promoted concepts and mechanisms of participatory life and democracy exclusively in relation to local affairs.

Second, I explore the consequences of the contradictory fact that ICTs were supposed to benefit participatory democracy yet that they were themselves not produced through such participatory politics. I focus on the multiple workings of "e-democracy" discourses which claimed an intrinsic relation existed between ICTs and participatory democracy. On the one hand, I argue, these discourses were myths, in Roland Barthes' sense, that eclipsed the actual experiences with so-called e-democracy applications and in doing so forestalled the development of more "inventive" technologies. On the other hand, not as myths but as specters, these discourses were appropriated by HKYD and LA-21 affiliates for claiming political authority for local communities and opening up new political spaces.

Third, I focus on the LA-21 City Councils as political spaces situated within the organizational structure of "network governance." These Councils, although to some extent designed by the partnership between HKYD, the UN, and corporate partners, operated rather outside the purview and control of these governance actors. I highlight the ways that the designation of local communities as social entities with political authority triggered developments irreducible to either corporate control or NGO policy-making.

Skills for Life

According to the NGO volunteers and employees working on ICT4D, their programs targeted everything but the simple expansion of markets and consumer bases. The volunteers and employees at HKYD claimed the training participants were not just trained to become consumers or narrowly skilled workers, but that they developed themselves in ways that were empowering and enriching. The ICT projects coordinator, Bora, who was employed at the NGO after having volunteered for it, emphasized, "We are not an institution that offers

telecommunication skills; we are a civil society institution." He added, "I am here because this is a social responsibility project."[80] His words reiterated Sezai Hazır's statement that CSR ICT4D was "not simply a project toward increasing computer literacy" but an "activity that strengthens our other activities by triggering social change."[81] Similarly, master trainer Eda suggested that "our main goal is not only related to the use of computers, we are also trying to increase the consciousness of young people in Turkey, which we find to be even more important. It is a social project."[82] She pointed out that upon completion of the course, participants only received a certificate of participation [*katılım belgesi*], and not a test score that would measure and prove specific competencies. In other words, participants were not just prepared to become consumers and workers who had valuable skills according to regimes of value of information capitalism.

Similarly, volunteer instructor Kaan, quote above, argued, participants and instructors were offered opportunities to develop themselves by attaining skills for critical thinking and the capabilities to be autodidacts in the future.[83] Kaan suggested that the actual goal of the trainings was not just teaching people a limited set of skills, but stimulating self-learning. Kaan's approach suggested something of an open-ended capacity for learning and transformation. Discussing "learning" in this sense, he argued that people nowadays were able to be self-reflective and critical [*özeleştiri yapmayı bilmesi gerekiyor*] and that the goal of the NGO was to trigger such potential so that self-awareness, self-development, and

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[80]Personal interview, Istanbul, June 9 2011.

[81] See http://www.microsoft.com/turkiye/basinodasi/2009/PR0707001.aspx , accessed on May 23, 2012.

[82] Personal interview, Istanbul, July 9, 2011.

[83] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 11, 2010.

progress would become possible.[84] This open-ended transformation would not be only an individual process but also a knowledge creation process. When Kaan described his job as a volunteer, he corrected himself to claim that his job was not just "providing" education and knowledge but "sharing" knowledge. He thereby made a distinction between the centralized, institutional dissemination of authoritative knowledge and networked sharing, which would be about circulation and exchange of an open-ended body of knowledge. Kaan argued that in return for sharing knowledge, his students gave him new perspectives and he received a "positive energy" from them. Instead of focusing only on digital skills, HKYD worked on a broader set of skills, mentalities, and "awareness" that, according to the NGO, were important capabilities for "participation."[85] As Ms. Saral explained, besides the ICT4D programs, the NGO provided a variety of trainings that mostly focused "on human rights and youth rights." Further trainings and programs covered an array of topics from documentary making to reproductive health, diversity, and financial literacy. According to the NGO, these trainings helped people, primarily youth, to gain awareness of their rights and to get involved in whatever social and political issues mattered to them. The NGO's interest in ICTs had to do with political imaginations of networking, reviewed in the first section, according to which information access and exchange were fundamental for participatory governance. Through the LA-21 program, which claimed legitimate political authority for local, self-governing communities, HKYD promoted participatory citizenship and social change. As LA-21 coordinator Mr. Emrealp said, the LA-21 program encouraged local populations in cities to establish their own "networks," consisting of working groups and councils, to decide

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[84]Personal interview, Istanbul, August 14 2011.

[85] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 11, 2010.

their own interventions and activities.[86] These platforms of self-government promoted the principles of "ownership" over one's city and "active participation."

As discussed in the previous section, Bernard Stiegler (2010: 162) uses the Heideggerian concept of the *Gestell* to critique socio-technical networks that are "short-circuited"—that enlist us by incorporating us into a pre-constituted, non-negotiable system. Stiegler (2010) also envisions networks that are "long-circuited," which disrupt the socio-technical networks sustained by service industries that limit capabilities and lock consumer-citizens in. The unanticipated outcomes of enrolling subjects in such long-circuited networks of sharing knowledge and transferring skills consist in the generation of new and deviant knowledges and skills. Such "long-circuited" enrolling would constitute not a narrow set of technological skills, but *savoir faire*: capabilities to live in participatory ways and to co-determine socio-technical trajectories and developments. NGO affiliates clearly had this latter concept of individual and communal learning and acquiring skills in mind. Both corporate discourses and critical literature (including, for instance, Sassen 2005) on the digital divide tend to measure (the lack of) skills, in terms of "talent." However these approaches reconsider "skill" in relation to possibilities for participation in a much broader sense. [87]

The redefinition of skills by NGO employees and volunteers expresseses their commitment to participatory self-governance. However, it is rather striking that, along with

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[86]Personal interview, Istanbul, May 27, 2011.

[87] Somewhat similarly, the notion of mass intellectuality by autonomist theorists comprises "an ensemble, as a social body" that is "the repository of the indivisible knowledges of living subjects and of their linguistic cooperation" (Terranova, 2004: 87, 88). Importantly, mass intellectuality is not about knowledge workers, as exclusively those involved in a specific set of professions. Mass intellectuality is a "quality and a distinctive sign of the whole social labor force in the post-Fordist era" (Paolo Virno, quoted in Terranova, 2004: 88). The concept refers to a "general propensity of the post-Fordist proletariat and not of some 'recomposed vanguard or leading sector'" (Virno & Hardt, quoted in Dyer-Witheford, 1999: 231).

the other CSR ICT4D governance partners, the NGO promoted concepts and mechanisms of participatory life and democracy exclusively in relation to local affairs. I argue that the NGO consented to a particular socio-technical arrangement that constructed the global and the local as two separate zones of governance, approached through distinct techniques of governance: governmental control and participatory self-governance. At stake was what I call a *socio-technical contract.* This informal "contract" was unspoken, yet it had practical relevance. The contract enabled the multi-stakeholder partnerships between HKYD, the UN (LA-21), and ICT companies by establishing common grounds between them, aligning their interests, and organizing their governance practices. This contract implied that all partners consented to participatory, local communities having political authority in relation to *local* affairs. However, while they promoted concepts and mechanisms of participatory democracy on the local level, such political authority was absent with regard to affairs that were destignated to be not of a local or national but of a global nature, including the standardization of software and ICT devices, information capitalism as a mode of production, and the mechanisms of global governance through which the CSR ICT4D project was planned and implemented. As a consequence of this socio-technical contract, sovereignty and citizenship were not just graduated (Ong, 2006), but also relative to certain spheres of life and scales of social and technical organization.

The following section will explore further the emergent contradictions of the combination of governmental control and political authority articulated as participation in relation to "e-democracy" discourses and ICT applications in community empowerment projects.

Bringing "E-Democracy"

For HKYD, as stated before, the connection between the ICT4D efforts and the efforts targeting community governance, part of the UN's Local Agenda 21, resided in the expectation that training populations by familiarizing them with ICTs would increase their ability to participate in self-governance as well as impact local and central policy making by state authorities. Meanwhile, ICT companies were invested in producing "e-democracy" applications and, as part of their CSR ICT4D efforts, providing these to participants in community empowerment projects. In the following, I explore the consequences of the contradictory fact that ICTs were supposed to benefit participatory democracy yet, as tools, they were themselves not produced through participatory- political processes. While hailed by CSR ICT4D governance partners as tools for empowerment, participants of community empowerment projects were not convinced of the e-democracy applications, and ICTs in general, being key to their own empowerment. However, "e-democracy" discourses, I argue, functioned both as a *myth* that empowered ICT companies and as a *specter* that empowered the participatory community.

The stimulation of ICT-based self-governance and participation was especially targeted through the project Strengthening Youth Networks in Turkey (*Türkiye'de Gençlik Ağlarının Güçlendirilmesi Projesi*, T-GAG), conducted between 2008 and 2010. This project was a collaboration between HKYD, Cisco, Teachers without Borders, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). On the HKYD website, the project was announced as one that focused on using ICTS to increase the capacities of the LA-21 Youth Councils, which were a component of the City Council. The project centered on the web portal of the national youth council, www.ulusalgenclikparlamentosu.net. This virtual platform was

supposed to function as a database to make self-organization among the Youth Councils all over Turkey more effective.[88] In 2009, T-GAG received the UN World Youth Award in the category "Create Your Own Culture," competing in different categories with 612 projects from 101 different countries.[89] However, this celebration of the web portal as an instance of e-governance and e-democracy stands in contrast to the experiences narrated by participants and NGO employees. Through interviews with UN and NGO staff as well as with representatives of local youth councils in the national youth parliament, I learned that the experiment with e-governance and e-democracy, in general and with regard to the web portal in particular, was not at all a straightforward success. Ms. Saral (at HKYD) told me that the NGO had experienced some technical problems with the T-GAG website. One of them was that the platform was not set up to realize a network that would expand to include new members, other groups, and unorganized youth. After two years, the executive board of the national youth parliament decided to abandon the web portal of the award-winning T-GAG project and use Facebook instead. Speaking more generally, Mr. Emrealp, the LA-21 project coordinator, told me that he was rather disappointed with the ICT-based practices of the City Councils' youth platforms. Results fell below the expectations of e-democracy applications, even though, as Mr. Emrealp saw it, everything was available: "the networks are there, the communication channels are there, and we collaborated with a number of agencies specialized in technologies, calling them [the communication channels and platforms] e-democracy." [90] He continued:

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[88] See http://www.habitatkalkinma.org/tr/html/1125/Turkiye_de+Genclik+Aglarinin+Guclendirilmesi+Projesi , accessed on June 10, 2012.

[89] See http://www.habitatkalkinma.org/tr/html/1135/Odullerimiz/, accessed on June 10, 2012.

[90] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 27, 2011.

We believed that cell phones could be used as an effective means of interaction and conveying your ideas to the city management and participating in the process. The channels were put in place, yet their actual use is very feeble in fact. Most of the channels were used to announce things in a one-directional way, like "the Mayor is there and there" or "is on television."[91]

Commenting on the expectation that ICTs would facilitate an inclusive, participatory democracy, he argued, "When you look at our numbers this is a disillusion. Facebook has gathered around 4,000 youths all around Turkey. This should be happening in a small city of less than 600,000."[92]

Admittedly, one particular HKYD campaign, which targeted lowering the minimum age for members of parliament, had been very successful in mobilizing people by using ICTs as a means for outreach and attracting attention from the established, "old" media such as the Turkish press (Saral, 2011: 102). HKYD often used it as an example of what ICTs could mean for "bottom-up," democratic politics. However, the more daily experience of community self-governance did not confirm the advocated relation between ICTs and participatory democracy. When I visited a national meeting of the Youth Councils, I got the opportunity to conduct a focus-group style interview with about 15 participants and Ms. Saral. I tried to ask the volunteers and youth council members about their experience of the relationship between technology and democracy. After an initial silence and lack of mutual understanding, Ms. Saral jumped in and reformulated my question to the group as follows:

If you look at this moment, do we use Facebook? For instance, when we had our meetings, we met with a range of parliamentary candidates and parties over Facebook. Do we get to see them only face-to-face, or can we use Facebook and other social sharing platforms—not just written and visual media but especially the

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

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internet—in order to also make other youth active and to strengthen the youth movement? To my understanding, the question is something like that. [93]

After another brief silence, the dry-humored answer by one of the participants was: "We didn't use them," whereby "them" referred to online sharing platforms. When I asked why they did not do so or what the obstacle was, another participant replied, "We are better with face-to-face communication. We can explain ourselves better in this way. We can convey ourselves and our opinions better, whatever we want to explain." Participants argued that social media in general were used for entertainment and that their "serious" calls and information would not be able to attract the attention of their peers in these environments. The participant quoted last added: "That's why I need to reach out in a direct manner. I always prefer face-to-face communication over that [Facebook] with regard to this topic."

All in all, there were clear discrepancies between, on the one hand, the discourses by participants and NGO workers and, on the other, the discourses that the NGO used to address ICTs companies and that these companies themselves used in external communication. For instance, the discursive discrepancies regarding T-GAG formed another dimension of what I identified earlier as the "politics of transparency" common in multi-scalar, multi-stakeholder governance: the construction of decentralized networks that host disparate spheres of communication and information as well as selective patterns of disclosure and withholding.[94]

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[93] Focus group, Istanbul, June 11, 2011.

[94] As discussed in the previous chapter, good governance practices of multi-stakeholderism often substituted "success stories" and "best practices" for systematic evaluation of CSR ICT4D projects. Complementary to this trend was the recognition of local partner organizations with awards. Among the awarding organizations were the EU and the UN, which decided what would count as a best practice, and ICT companies, which awarded "outstanding partners." Among the receiving organizations were the local NGO or the entire group of collaborating partners on a particular project. Awarding functioned as a technology of building trust and reaffirming accountability between particular actors in the governance networks. Hence HKYD was careful to dedicate a webpage to its awards. At the same time, awarding formed an occasion for generating publicity about CSR projects and therefore pleased the partnering companies.

The disparate discourses and addressivities, directed at different audiences and constituting

different governance objects, were far from innocent. For one, they provided an *alibi*

(Barthes, 1972) that obscured the control that global companies exercised by acting as

governance partners in CSR initiatives. That is, they sustained the power-geometry of

information capitalism. Through discourses that suggested an intrinsic relation between ICTs

and participatory democracy, ICT companies managed to avoid appearing as "alienating"

forces of globalization that disempower local populations. Instead, they could showcase

themselves as supporters and facilitators of the supposedly self-organizing, grassroots, and

local communities that benefitted from the e-democracy applications they provided. However,

rather than taking into account the actual experiences and opinions of communities,

discourses of e-democracy reproduce the myth that citizens attain "voice" and participation

thanks to ICT applications.

Because this myth of e-democracy purported that existing ICT applications were

already greatly useful for democratic practices, there was no quest for new technological

applications that would actually strengthen such practices. What Mansell (2002) and Couldry

(2007) describe as a rights-based approach to new media technologies that empowers citizens

in a globalized world was forestalled. In Stiegler's (2010) terms, "long-circuiting" was

arrested: participatory and open-ended trajectories in which technological formations and

human skills develop simultaneously and generate new knowledges, skills, and technological

usages. The myth of e-democracy, which was literally sponsored by ICT companies, worked

to suppress any unanticipated outcomes of enrolling people in circuits of knowledge sharing

and skill transfer. Following Andrew Barry (2001), I argue that while there may be

technological innovation and product development by companies, there was no technological

inventiveness that could lead to a transformative intervention in the socio-technical order, making new imaginations and actions possible. While invested in social change and participatory democracy, HKYD did not seek the kind of "inventiveness" Barry and the other above-mentioned scholars are invested in

Second, however, the myth of e-democracy helped naturalizing the "community" as the ordering principle of society and as a source of political authority. In HKYD discourses, ICTs were instruments that could be used in order to externalize meaning and political "will." Ms. Saral and other HKYD employees and volunteers conceptualized ICTs as "tools" for rights-based struggle. In doing so, they were not very attentive to questions of how communication technologies *enable* and *shape* human thought and action through processes of mediation (Hayles, 2005; Stiegler, 2010); or, following James Carey (1989: 64), of how changes in communication technology alter the "forms of community in which experience is apprehended and expressed." Rather, HKYD affiliates reproduced the assumption that ICTs as "tools" that merely support communication as "the process of moving messages from sender […] to receiver" (see for a critique, Grossberg et al, 2006: 18), while "community," "experience," and "political will" supposedly exist prior to and outside of processes of technological mediation.

However, the e-democracy myth advancing the notion of the technologically enabled and empowered "community" also functioned somewhat as a *specter*: a promise that, while not fulfilled, lingered on and was revived by multiple hopes and investments. The promises of democratization on the local level through ICT-supported practices strengthened discourses of the community as a social entity endowed with political will and authority. E-democracy discourses as specters contributed to the emergence of the "local" as a distinct

scale of governance and to the construction of local communities as agents with a political voice. If the NGO consented to keeping the "global," the techno-spatial order that serves information capitalism, as somehow "beyond" politics, it in certain ways politicized the "local." While important questions about the nature and politics of development were often not raised, political possibilities emerged nonetheless on the local and national level. The next section explores constructions of the participatory, local community and the dynamics of local governance pertaining to LA-21 City Councils.

Council Complexities

This section argues that while "locality" and "community" as ordering principles were promoted by the multi-stakeholder partnership between HKYD, LA-21, and ICT companies, the actual political spaces of the community were complexly shaped by struggles between different forces. I present three brief case studies of City Councils in Istanbul that each manifests a different uptake of the discourse of community, while they share a sub-narrative of Istanbul as a global city. The case studies reflect the answers I received during my fieldwork when investigating the (im)possibilities of becoming a "participatory community" and of "owning one's city." I conclude by considering the politics of these City Councils in relation to the "good governance" practices of networked, multi-stakeholder partnerships.

On several instances when I intentionally adapted the LA-21 discursive framework and asked City Council participants what it meant to form a "participatory community" and to "own one's city," I encountered reluctance against adopting this framework. This reluctance corresponded to a widespread sensitivity regarding discriminatory and

assimilatory practices through which Istanbul's (ex-)migrants with rural backgrounds were distinguished from the more "urbane" and "civilized" inhabitants of the city (see Öncü, 1999). The secretary-general of one of the Councils, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, vehemently dismissed having any personal or institutional expectations regarding a particular type of citizen-subjectivity to be met by district inhabitants. Taking such an expectation to be a sign of "top-down" interference and arrogance, he argued: "I am not the type of person who is going to reflect his own vision on other people. [...] I just want people to love the district they live in."[95] As the secretary-general seemed to suggest, any kind of expectation regarding urban citizenship would have an assimilatory dimension.

My question of what being a "participatory urban citizen" meant received similar responses when I visited the Youth Council of the peripheral and poor district Sultangazi.[96] The participants of Sultangazi's Youth Council, like the secretary-general I quoted above, rejected the process of assimilation that they assumed was necessary in order to become an "urban citizen." However, in doing so, the participants in this district rejected much of the conceptual framework that LA-21 propagated, including the emphasis on "local" belonging and ownership over one's city. One participant argued that Istanbul was a city of migrants who had settled there not voluntarily but "out of necessity."[97] Therefore they stayed emotionally attached to the place of their family's origin. According to this participant, people in Turkey had developed a more fluid and mobile relation to space as a result of their family histories of migration:

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[95] Personal interview, Istanbul, July 7, 2011.

[96] In this newly established municipality, AKP governors carried out a governance agenda of urban renewal and improving municipal service. They also tried to overcome the district's history of political unrest, marked by deadly police attacks of Alevi protesters in 1995s.

[97] Migration took place since the 1950s for economic reasons. Since the 1990s it did because of the civil war in the South-East and the displacement of people whose villages got burned by the army.

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There is no one 'from Istanbul' in Turkey. […] Turkish people like to have different sides [*yön*]. It is not enough that I am from Sultangazi, I am also from Rize [a Black Sea province]. Turkish people even make the places they go for summer holidays their own and they say 'we are no strangers' [*yabancı değiliz*]. They think they contribute something to that place even if they go very rarely.[98]

"Having different sides" expressed a refusal to fix identity on the basis of spatialized ontologies according to which one would belong to one place only. Statements such as this one indicate the extent to which multiple modalities of belonging substituted for the fixities of locality and community that the LA-21 program deemed empowering.

In response to my question about how people could make Istanbul "their own," another participant explained the impossibility of such ownership by referring to processes of globalization that affected the city:

In order to become an Istanbulite [*İstanbullulaşmak*] it would be necessary to live in Istanbul just with people from Istanbul. But no one can live in Istanbul with Istanbulites. When I go to Eminönü [a central, touristy district], I can't enter the nicest places around the Bosphorus. People come from outside of Istanbul and take over those places. If you want to live in a city, the citizens of that city have to be together in both physical and mental terms. In Istanbul there is not such a thing, there is the upper class and the lower class.[99]

Reflecting on the increasing presence of foreign businesses and leisure industries redesigning urban spaces so that they excluded people like himself, this participant denounced the validity of LA-21's governance framework. Another participant opposed becoming an "urban citizen" by arguing: "My friend mentioned about the aunties [*teyzeler*] making their own jams on the stoops and this is still going on in the city. We prefer to stay

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[98] Focus group, Istanbul, July 20, 2011.

[99] Ibid.

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citizens *of the country* [*vatandaş*]" (emphasis mine).[100] What got the room united in loud

exclamations of approval was a remark deriving from a framework of identification

altogether different from what LA-21 offered. This remark reiterated the rather popular,

nationalist slogan "Turks don't have any other friends than Turks." Immediately, my position

as a foreigner was questioned yet the issue got resolved with the joke that I already had

become "one of them," "from Sultangazi." (Did I have "multiple sides" too?)

While participants refused to fix identity on the basis of spatialized ontologies

according to which they would belong to one locality only, they also claimed national

belonging and appealed to state territoriality against the mobility and flux of capital

reshaping the spaces of the global city Istanbul. The complex ways in which the participants

of the Youth Council invoked and defended certain rights to the global city did not easily fit

the LA-21 paradigm.

On the one hand, the participants of the Council undermined the institutional "politics

of presence" that provides agency and empowerment (i.e., "voice" and "visibility") to pre-

constituted identities (Newman and Clarke, 2009: 140) by refusing recognizable,

straightforward modalities of belongings. On the other hand, at many points in the

conversation, at stake was an identity politics in which nationalism became a vehicle for

resistance against globalization and the experienced pressures for assimilation to become an

"urbane" citizen. Somewhat ironically, the very community platforms that were initiated by

post-national governance networks and informed by their globalizing regimes of good

governance also functioned as sites from which emerged the critique of globalization and an

appeal to national identity and unity.

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[100]Ibid.

Whereas in Sultangazi the Youth Council opposed the global city, contrary tendencies could determine the political spaces of the City Councils as well. A working group affiliated with the City Council of Zeytinburnu played an unintended role in facilitating the transformation toward an exclusive global city. This case shows how the political space of the City Council could be appropriated and exploited in order to enable a non-participatory and centralized type of governance.

After the 1999 earthquake in Turkey, the City Council of Zeytinburnu started a working group related to earthquake readiness and urban renewal, comprising, among others, local urban planners and engineers. Besides preparing an advisory document regarding the renewal necessary to make the district earthquake-ready, this group also provided input on the draft of a national law on urban renewal. In both cases, the group emphasized the importance of participation, dialogue, and coordination between stakeholders. While some hailed the new national law as a product of participatory, community-led governance, this law enabled the exact opposite of what the working group had intended. As one of the working group members explained to me in a personal interview, instead of a participatory, community-based urban transformation, the law enabled metropolitan municipalities to act single-handedly, even bypassing the district municipalities that were more vulnerable to electoral changes and popular resistance. According to my interviewee, the decision makers who supported this new law had given up to pretend that there would be participation in urban governance:

> It is as if it [participation as a principle] doesn't exist at all. The law gave all the authority regarding the transformation projects to the metropolitan municipalities.[…] I don't think this was good, neither for the district, nor for the citizens.[101]

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[101] Personal interview, Istanbul July 11, 2011.

The case of Zeytinburnu's working group indicates how local "participation" was first simulated and then disempowered in order to facilitate Istanbul's transformation toward an exclusive global city.[102]

Having reviewed the rejection and the exploitation of the LA-21 framework, I will now show that there were also participants who believed in the possibility of participatory communities and urban citizenship. One participant of Zeytinburnu's Youth Council, I will call Ahmet, advocated for communal, participatory self-governance dedicated to "the common good." He contrasted the collaborative spirit of such self-governance to the "soccer game mentality" of party politics in Turkey, where people on all sides were equally incapable of seeing the failings of their parties, as they support them fanatically. My interviewee said:

> I dream of a political order in which I can share the same table with a socialist, a communist, an atheist …or even somebody who wants to build Kurdistan. That is what we should be doing. Instead of turning weapons at each other, I believe we can transcend [our seemingly unbridgeable differences] through negotiation.[103]

Ahmet wishfully speculated: "Nor something called the political left or the political right will remain in Turkey." For Ahmet, fundamental attachment to an ideology and being politicized in that sense stood for the unwillingness to negotiate positions, the lack of an open vision, and possibly an interest in perpetuating existing power relations. Arguing that the Youth Council evinced "bad" antagonisms, Ahmet gave a list of different identities and lifestyles presented in the youth councils: amongst others, there were people with headscarves and people with miniskirts; people with beards (a sign of Islamic-conservative

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[102] The switch meant that urban spaces were valued as a productive force in a capitalist mode of production (Lefebvre, 1991), rather than in terms of the various regimes of value inhabitants might deploy, as a more participatory process would do.

[103] Personal interview, Istanbul July 20, 2011.

affiliation) and people with long hair (which for males indicates belonging to a secular, subversive subculture). These differences co-existed but did not obstruct initiatives toward self-governance. Ahmet reasoned, "If you want to do a project together with me, I don't say 'you should be like me.' My concern is: what can we do together?" [104] Meanwhile, the more different "perspectives" there were, "the more knowledge we've got, and the more comprehensive [*kapsamlı*] our social responsibility project becomes." At stake seemed to be for this participant an ethos of depolitization that was at the same time a search for a different kind of politics and a reconfiguration of the spaces of politics, their actors, and mediums.

Enacting a politics of depoliticization, for Ahmet, participatory self-governance and service toward the "common good" were attractive substitutes for the "bad" antagonisms that according to him had seized Turkish society. The question is however when difference becomes recognized as a "bad" ideology; when expressions of critique and conflict mark "bad" and undesired politics; and when, under what conditions, difference will be treated with openness and dialogical rapprochement or with what William Connolly (2005) describes as agonistic respect.[105] Similar to corporations involved in CSR (see Chapter 3), City Councils appealed to notions of "societal good." In doing so, they however did not turn to governmental control, as I argued the corporations did. Instead, appeals to "societal good" by City Councils potentially lead to consolidation of the boundaries of the community through processes of deciding on difference that deserves to be met with dialogue versus difference that does not. I want to conclude that the so-called local, participatory

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[104] Personal interview, Istanbul, July 2, 2010.

[105] William Connolly (2005, 124) argues that in a culture of pluralism, it is important to cultivate "oblique connections across multiple lines of difference" and negotiate "agonistic respect between constituencies who embrace different final faiths and do not comprehend each other all that well." For Connolly, agonistic politics demand as a personal ethos not of liberal tolerance but of weakening one's believes and they unsettle existing constellations of identity. Moreover, agonistic politics introduce new sources of moral inspiration, while "throwing a wrench into the established code of obligation, goodness, identity, justice, right or legitimacy."

communities, promoted by LA-21 and HKYD, opened up new political spaces but these were not necessarily inclusive or democratic. They could also turn out being exclusive and repressive.

To come back to networking and multi-stakeholderism, while the NGO, the UN, and the ICT companies planned, evaluated, and reported governance projects outside the purview of local populations, these local communities also stayed to some degree outside the purview and beyond the control of these stakeholders. Earlier in this chapter I argued that disconnections of communication and information within the governance networks led to governmental regimes targeting the development of "populations" and determining their relation to ICTs. I conclude by identifying another dimension of the disconnections in governance networks, an outcome that was not intended by the politics of transparency of governance actors. As so-called local communities remained outside the purview of governance actors, they were not all that much exposed to any singularly dominant macro-political formation or apparatus of control. Rather, they were complex spaces, appropriated, exploited, and resisted by diverse forces and struggles. Contra to Nikolas Rose's (1999) claims regarding community-based governance, my case studies suggest that this type of governance did not necessarily generate control over the community as a social entity that is self-governing yet manageable. Instead, discourses of community were negotiated and re-appropriated contextually, facilitating various politics. On the one hand, they opened up new political spaces for experiments in self-governance; on the other hand, municipalities and other interest groups could exploit communities and their "participation."

Conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter has been to identify and describe a *socio-technical contract* that organized—although did not fully determine—the particular scalar and spatial distributions of two governing techniques: communal, participatory self-governance on the one hand and governmental control on the other. This informal "contract" was not explicitly formulated, yet it organized CSR ICT4D governance networks in practice by aligning the interests of the stakeholders as far as they were recognized (not the participants in ICT4D programs). The contract involved particular scalar and spatial distributions of participation and control. It implied that governance actors promoted concepts and mechanisms of participatory democracy in relation to *local* affairs. Discourses of the technologically enabled local community supported the endowment of participatory, local communities with political authority. However, such democratic political authority was absent in relation to spheres that were designated to be of a global nature and that facilitated the standardization of software and ICTs, information capitalism as a mode of production, and the formations of global governance through which the project was planned and implemented. By consequence, sovereignty and citizenship were not just graduated (Ong, 2006), but also relative to certain spheres of life and scales of social and technical organization.

Analyzing the participatory spaces created by the LA-21 City Council project, I noted various articulations of discourses of community and mobilizations of its political authority by Council participants. My three case studies respectively highlighted resistances to the "local community" by nationalist forces; exploitation of the community in the interest of city planning by the metropolitan municipality; and adaption of the discourse of community by City Council participants a politics of depoliticization. These case studies indicate that City

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Councils as governance spaces were appropriated by a variety of interests and forces. The fact that these spaces were minimally standardized by any singularly dominant macro-political formation or apparatus of control had to do with their remaining rather outside the purview and control of governance actors. I interpreted this disconnection in light of the model of multi-stakeholder, networked governance. In Chapter 3, I argued that the politics of transparency in multi-stakeholder governance was in fact a politics of disconnection that avoided maintaining relations of transparency and accountability to people actually targeted by CSR ICT4D as well as wider publics. This politics, I argued, facilitated governmental control over people's relations to ICTs and de-politicized questions of development and the future of the so-called information society. Yet simultaneously, as the current chapter showed, disconnection in networked governance rendered so-called local communities rather experimental governance spaces.

CHAPTER FIVE

NETWORKING AND ISTANBUL'S "CREATIVE CITY" PROJECT

Introduction

In 2010 Istanbul received the annually rotating title of European Capital of Culture (ECOC), which is awarded by the Council of Ministers of the European Union (EU) to selected European cities. Istanbul ECOC 2010 realized close to 600 projects and 10,000 events, including concerts, exhibits, publications, symposia, workshops, festivals, educational sessions, and launches of cultural centers and urban planning platforms. In addition, a huge and rather overdue investment was made in urban regeneration and restoration projects that secured Istanbul's placement on UNESCO's World Heritage list (Ernst & Young, 2011: 24). Istanbul 2010, as both the Turkish media and Istanbulites themselves named the ECOC project, promoted Istanbul's cultural wealth: the heritage that it had accumulated as a 'cradle' and 'crossroads' of civilizations. However, Istanbul 2010 did not just celebrate and 'sell' the city's heritage but also aligned 'culture' with the project of the creative city by commanding particular forms of networked transformation and production. Istanbul 2010 targeted the mobilization and integration of diverse knowledges, resources, and energies by stimulating and coordinating practices of networking between public institutions, civil society organizations, the cultural sector, and, importantly, 'participatory' citizens. Inspired by the paradigm of the creative city that was promoted by

the renowned author-consultant Charles Landry (2008), a wide range of governance actors shared the expectation that these new partnerships would start cycles of cultural exchange that resulted in cultural-democratic transformation as well as (potential for) economic growth (Comunian, 2011; Istanbul ECOC 2010 Agency, 2010).

This chapter focuses on socio-technical forms of governance that target Istanbul's transformation into a creative city, and especially on discourses and practices of 'networking'. Parallel to claims by others addressing what appears to be a continuing trend (Dean *et al.*, 2006: xvii; Law, 2000; Thrift, 1999), Andrew Barry states that discourses of networking that allude to information and communication technologies (ICTs) inform practices as varied as governance, business, and protest (2001:14). Barry argues that the interweaving of, on the one hand, technical discourses and practices and, on the other, political imaginaries and governance models, points to the extent to which technical change is the model for the facilitation of control but also political intervention (2001). Today, discourses and practices of networking play a principal role in organizing socio-technical realities and they contribute to particular diagrams of power. Barry highlights the diagram of interactivity that provides arrangements of bodies, instruments, and practices in excess of any technical functionality (2001: 19, 150, 151, 200).

In Istanbul 2010, assemblages of networking involved discourses of "exchange," "interactivity," "self-organization," and "interface" and articulated them with various actions, bodies, and passions. In what follows, I will look at the effects of these articulations in terms of how they produce specific socio-technical formations without ruling out possibilities for others. First, I will explore the ways in which Istanbul 2010 introduced "networking" to urban governance and imagined new relations between governors and governed and

arrangements of publicness. Second, I look at the ways in which networking in urban governance redefined the objectives and, as Bob Jessop (2004) would say, the 'objects of governance' that are made visible, modeled, and targeted by various (inter-)disciplinary approaches. I focus on articulations of "the cultural," which in the context of Istanbul 2010 became aligned with the project of the creative city and the paradigm of the knowledge economy. In the next chapter, I will ask in what ways discourses and practices of networking associated with the governance of the creative city "in the making" organized participation and belonging. I will inquire into networking as a diagram of power and the themes of exclusion and antagonism in relation to participatory network governance.

Context

As I reviewed in the introduction to this dissertation, I want to emphasize that networking is an *assemblage* that is *unstable, dynamic, and articulated contextually* (Wise, 2005).[1] In the light of this approach, I want to start out by indicating some dynamics of the political contexts Istanbul 2010 was articulated into. Istanbul 2010 mediated between forces that operated at various scales and that were complexly shaped by economic, cultural, and political ambitions. The project was ambivalently oriented toward, first, Istanbul's emergence as a global city in a multi-polar world (according to the conservative-Islamic ruling party, a revival of the city's imperial past); second, Turkey's eventual accession into the EU and prosperity for the country as a whole; and, third, the decentralization of the urban governance empowering local communities. Within this multi-layered context, emerging incompatibilities and the possibility of conflict put pressure on Istanbul 2010's governance networks. For instance, while the EU provided only 0.5% (€1.6 million) of the total budget of

Istanbul 2010, an astonishingly large part of the project's funding came from the Ministry of Finance and was generated through a special, nation-wide tax levy (Ernst & Young, 2011: 24). Nonetheless, the governance of Istanbul 2010 was hardly modeled after that of the welfare state, with a priority on the principle of safeguarding public interests. Increasingly, there were suspicions with regard to whom or what would benefit from the investments made: what relations of impact and responsibility did Istanbul 2010 construct between the global city and the rest of the country; or between differentially empowered segments of the urban population? Did the project support quality of life in any comprehensive sense, or did it merely advance the narrow economic interests of certain elites?

On the one hand, Istanbul 2010 facilitated the kinds of selective investments by the post-developmental state in metropolitan zones that serve to reconcentrate the capacities for economic development (Brenner, 2004; Ong, 2006). On the other hand, as Neil Brenner helps to underscore, urban governance projects that enact spatial strategies such as Istanbul 2010 do not extend from a pre-given functional unity, but are highly experimental and contested modes of governance (2004: 203, 211). Istanbul 2010 thus formed a site at which different apparatuses of government intersected. Analyzing the context-specific operation of Istanbul 2010's networking assemblages brings an understanding of the field of struggle as emerging from spatialized governance strategies and their specific arrangements and combinations of both *macro-politics* (institutional organizations of power) and *micro-politics* (capillary power operating through horizontal mechanisms of the control of behavior- see also Grossberg, 2010: 251).

The Entanglements of Network Governance

Communication supported by ICTs undeniably played an important role in Istanbul 2010. For instance, the main platform for communicating with audiences and participants was the official website. The website was not just a catalogue but also a variable database that was easy to update and expand, flexible in its categorization per type of event or project or per date, and linked to the websites of partnering organizations and sponsors.[2] The technical functionality of the website resonated with the multi-faceted, multi-actor, and project-based nature of Istanbul 2010. Moreover, the website, together with affiliated social media platforms, provided a vital space of communication beyond either the commercial domain of major media outlets or the formal, state-related public sphere.[106]

At the same time, Istanbul 2010 advanced a political imaginary around communications. It is significant that the section of the original bidding document that outlined the communications strategy featured right at the beginning the announcement that the double goal of Istanbul 2010 was: to "involve as many people and organizations as possible; and to use this opportunity to redefine relations between the people of Istanbul and the city administration in order to create a new mechanism for decision making" (Initiative Group, 2005: 143). This same strategy presented slogans like "Fire Up!" and played on themes such as mobilization, participation, feedback, and two-way communication. It described the use of multiple media channels, including "creative" and "alternative" ones, so as to constitute various networks and spheres of circulation. As I will argue through this chapter and the following one, the promotion and use of communications indicated the reliance on and promotion of a particular type of networked sociality and communicative exchange for popular involvement with Istanbul 2010.

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[106] Personal interview with Yeşim Yalman conducted on June 13, 2011, Istanbul. Anonymous personal interview conducted on August 12, 2011, Istanbul.

Discourses of networking, which integrated technical references, advanced the notion that positioned as an organizational principle networking would enable good governance. Networking urban governance promised a move towards "smarter" but also more inclusive forms of governance. One of the initiators of Istanbul 2010 and an Executive Board member of its coordinating Agency, Korhan Gümüş, stated that Istanbul 2010 had sought to establish new "interfaces" (*arayüzler*).[5] Gümüş deployed this term as a technically inspired metaphor that outlined a certain type of organization of communication between diverse actors. The task of these interfaces would be to enable knowledge production which, thanks to the investment in collaboration, would be multi-disciplinary, versatile, and multi-perspectival, and which would be independent not only from the repressive modern state and its homogenizing public sphere, but also from influential interest groups and the market. As Gümüş argued, the interfaces would constitute platforms for a form of urban governance and politics that would be participatory, pluralist, and more inclusive. By calling for interfaces, Gümüş hoped

> to strengthen a pluralist and intellectual space and hence to [create a form of publicness through which] different ideas of urban dwellers can surface; [a space which is] more competitive, [which] can address people's needs, [which] can especially incorporate those who are excluded from the political space of representation, [which] can question the established relationship to the periphery and show that [formal] politics is not representative, and [which] always problematizes the issue of political legitimacy.[107]

However, while testifying to the necessities of interfaces, Gümüş did not have just ICTs in mind as their technical support. In response to my question about which specific media he thought would serve as interfaces and would offer the right platforms for collaboration, Gümüş answered that this could not be decided in advance. The interfaces

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[107]Personal interview conducted on July 9th, 2011, Istanbul.

themselves would only be generated in and through interaction. For sure, he argued, there should be a multiplicity of interfaces, and they could all develop, change, or be abandoned and disappear in the process.

As repeatedly emphasized by involved parties, and as also retrospectively recognized by the selection committee of the Council of Ministers of EU (EU Selection Panel, 2006), Istanbul 2010 started out as a "bottom-up process." In 2000, upon reception of the news that EU candidate countries would become eligible for the ECOC title, The Initiative Group started the preparations for an application. This Group was comprised of multiple civil society organizations, including organizations focused on culture, on local governance and participation, and the professional associations of tourist investors, marketers, and textile and fashion exporters. In 2006, The Initiative Group handed over its ownership of the project to a coordinating Agency. In doing so, the NGOs strengthened and formalized the collaboration with local and national state institutions. Nonetheless, one of the members of The Initiative Group and later the Chairman of the Executive Board, Nuri Çolakoğlu, advertised the organizational model of the Agency and its decision making processes as the anti-thesis of state centralism. That is to say, it would work in an "anti-hierarchical manner" and by "sharing ideas freely" (2006: 38).[4] Promoting networking and informational exchange as key to good governance, Çolakoğlu hailed the Advisory Board as a "communication and sharing platform" for the exchange and generation of diverse and interdisciplinary knowledges (40).

While the Istanbul 2010 Agency itself was in fact a calculated mix of hierarchical organization and horizontal networking, its role was to facilitate and coordinate networking practices and communicative exchange among state institutions, NGOs, the cultural sector, and self-organizing local communities of "participatory" citizens. The organizational

structure of Istanbul 2010 followed the model of "network governance," commonly formulated in urban studies and public administration. This type of governance aims to mobilize and integrate the various knowledges, capabilities, resources, and energies of interdependent yet autonomous actors, including civil society organizations, expert groups, local public agencies, firms, and citizens (Davies, 2009; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). Primarily, network governance commits to negotiated interaction, joint decision making, and dialogue. While governance actors often deploy the language of consensus and evoke the possibility of a Habermasian dialogical rationality (Mouffe, 2005), the ambition is also to generate new knowledges and combine existing ones. Rejecting partial and segregated disciplinary perspectives, network governance encourages interdisciplinarity and multi-disciplinarity, because they generate different types of creativity and cultivate ambivalences that highlight the range of possibilities inherent in any problem or opportunity (Landry 2008: 17, 55, 77). As Bob Jessop (2004: 229) argues, the rationality, or perhaps anti-rationality, of this type of governance is "dialogic rather than monologic, pluralistic rather than monolithic, heterarchic rather than either hierarchic or anarchic." Knowing lies 'in the connection', in the in-between: it is located at the sites of exchange through which new ideas, energies, and collective bodies emerge that feature properties not displayed by the individual members of the governance networks (Van Wezemael, 2008b: 9; see also Jessop, 2002: 229; Landry, 2008: 17, 55, 77).

The procedures of network governance do not just involve the processes of negotiation between actors with pre-existing and fixed identities; more importantly they also involve the continuous transformation and differentiation of identities and their languages through processes of exchange (Van Wezemael, 2008a: 178). Instead of aiming at exact and

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measurable results, network governance values the transformative processes themselves that reshape the actors and their knowledges as well as the relations between them. Among others, author and city consultant Charles Landry, who was a direct source of inspiration for and a contributor to Istanbul 2010, argued that network governance might be said to be successful if it manages to contribute to the capacities of individual actors, institutions, and urban social bodies and publics in general, enabling them to be more dynamic, complex, and varied (Landry 2008, 55; see also Jessop 2002, 240). The notion of complexity repositions the definitions of "outcome" or "success" in the network paradigm, in the sense that reflexive capacities and interactive dynamics are more important than states and that the generated total is expected to be more, or something different, than the sum of its parts. Hence, is the constitution of spaces and capacities for reflexive learning are included in the definition of successful outcomes.

In the governance strategies and spaces of Istanbul 2010, the discourses of network governance conveyed trust in networking as a superior organizational principle. The conditions of possibility for the emergence of Istanbul 2010's network governance and the re-articulations of discourses on horizontal organization and knowledge exchange were context-specific. Networking promised the potential for transformation of power structures related to the government of the country. Many praised Istanbul 2010 for establishing relations between civil society, the private sector, and Turkish state authorities— ones that were not there before. At a meeting in 2008, Faruk Pekin, one of the members first of the Advisory Board and later of the Executive Board expressed:

> In the year 2010 big events, festivals, concerts, art projects and exhibitions et cetera might take place, but they are not what really matters; what really matters is the

governance plan and the guiding principles that we needed to create for collaborative work between the public sector, local governments, and civil society.[108]

For Korhan Gümüş, the interaction across these self-generating interfaces among the multiplicity of actors in the governance networks of Istanbul 2010 was supposed to be transformative. In a more explicitly politicized comment, he argued that the pluralism of the new "interfaced" publicness and "opinion networks" would deconstruct the homogeneous formal public sphere and the claims to representativity by formal politics, and it would undermine hegemonic ideologies that claim the existence of a single truth. Interfaced publicness would offer a break from the intersecting histories of homogenization of the formal public sphere and commercial exploitation of diversity in the commercial sphere. Statements such as Pekin's and Gümüş' indicate that the search for new arrangements of urban agents and urban political agency, in which networks mediate collaboration and interfaces mediate publicness.

. Contributing to the particular articulations networking in the case of Istanbul 2010's were the legacies of the repressive, overtly centralist Turkish state. Until the mid 1990s, the Turkish state, led by the Ankara-based Kemalist elite, executed a developmentalist and western-oriented project of modernization. Riding the tide of successful grassroots mobilization in poor squatter neighborhoods in Istanbul, the Refah Partisi (Welfare Party, RP) became the first Islamist party to win the elections in 1996. The RP promised state reform but was removed from office by the military. Partially inheriting the RP project, since 2002 the Islamic-conservative administration of the Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party, AKP) has enacted reforms that have ended up being a move toward neoliberal policy-making rather than the initially promised (anti-western) democratization

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[108]See Polar, 2009.

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(Keyder, 2010; Tuğal, 2009). Moreover, whether the post-developmental state of the AKP actually achieved a break from centralist and repressive state traditions has been increasingly questioned by, among others, those cultural elites who had a strong presence within the Istanbul 2010 governance networks. Signaling a continuing quest for alternatives to statist development and representative democracy, Istanbul 2010 promoted network governance as a model of social transformation and popular participation.

To come back to Andrew Barry's point discussed above, discourses of networking in governance operate on the basis of the cross-over between technical discourses and social and political imaginaries. The information-technical discourse of networking sets up certain social and political imaginaries, in which concepts of interactivity, sharing, horizontal collaboration, and self-organization etc. abound. In the context of Istanbul 2010, principles and practices of networking targeted new urban agents such as interfaced public bodies and collaborative networks, concomitant with new arrangements of political agency providing a check against centralist, technocratic, and corporatist political power.[109]

Yet although Çolakoğlu advertised the organizational model of the Agency and its decision-making processes as the anti-thesis of state centralism and hierarchies, the Agency was in fact dependent on existing bureaucracies and state resources. The highest Committee at the Agency included, besides representatives of the Advisory and Executive Boards, also representatives of state ministries, including the Ministers for Finance, Culture and Tourism, and EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Head of the Delegation for EU Negotiations, Egeman Bağış. The highest Committee at the Agency oversaw the bureaucratic procedures that were installed for allotment, inspection, and evaluation. Bob Jessop's definition of meta-governance was applicable to the Agency. Meta-governance involves the arrangement of a

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[109] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 9, 2011.

strategically balanced mix of networking, hierarchical government, and market functions (Jessop, 2002, 239, 242). I will argue later that the experimental style of governance oriented toward a "balanced mix" had, in some ways, failed to unleash transformative energies and had induced reproduced structural relations of power. Indicative of this failure, in 2009, two of the Board members I quoted earlier, Çolakoğlu and Pekin, together with other civil society representatives, resigned from their positions at the Agency.

Moreover, outside the Agency, networking was not left to undirected communication and "spontaneous" self-organization but was in fact coordinated and regulated. Istanbul 2010 was driven by, and stimulated, new partnerships between civil society organizations, public institutions, the cultural sector as well as participatory citizens, both those who were self-organized through associations, foundations, or collectives and those who were not. The Istanbul 2010 Agency coordinated new alliances between existing organizations that decided to cooperate and initiatives proposed by citizens. Following a second definition of mea-governance, used by Sørensen and Torfing (2009: 238, 243), the Agency was charged with the task of the careful and deliberate governance of self-regulating governance networks, or in Foucauldian terminology, the government of self-government. This meant that rather than drafting specific strategies and initiatives for the different partners, the Agency was preoccupied with the "shaping of the context" in which networked self-organization can take place, by sustaining interlinkages, collective feedback and learning mechanisms, and arranging material interdependencies. The Agency acted to facilitate and coordinate the self-organization by selected partners in the network, who would work on their respective projects and events in wide range of cultural domains, including historical heritage,

traditional arts and crafts, domestic and international contemporary art, popular culture, and local arts projects and festivals facilitating participation at the neighborhood level.

Meta-governance as the "shaping of context" for networked self-organization came together with the expectation that the exchanges by new partnerships would produce economic growth at the same time that they manufactured new cultural and social relations. In the following section, I will discuss this expectation and in relation to the project of the creative city.

From Culture to Creativity

As argued above, network governance aims to mobilize and integrate the various knowledges, capabilities, resources, and energies of interdependent yet autonomous actors. Network governance targets exchanges through which new ideas, energies, and collective bodies emerge. One reason why governance actors affiliated to Istanbul 2010 recognized networking as a superior organizational principle was the search for new forms of publicness and improved relations between governors and governed. The second reason had to do with the expectation that network governance enabled positive interactions and cross-effects between different governance orientations and in that way offered strategies for exploiting the complexity inherent in urban environments.

Istanbul 2010 expressed the commitment to a multiplicity of governance orientations, corresponding to various sets of actors and disciplinary knowledges, in the following way. The official Istanbul 2010 website listed a mix of goals for Istanbul 2010. The list reflected a multiplicity of governance objectives and objects (Jessop, 2004), without indicating any overarching goal or prioritization. These objectives were:

- To expose unique features of Istanbul

- To realize projects for preservation of cultural heritage

- To improve infrastructure of and participation in culture and arts

- To promote Istanbul through culture and arts

- To increase Istanbul's share in cultural tourism

- To encourage residents of Istanbul to participate in decision making processes [110]

Referring to the multi-faceted, comprehensive scope of the project, Chairman of the Agency's Executive Board Nuri Çolakoğlu (2006: 38) commented on the near-impossibility of the undertaking of Istanbul 2010. He used the Turkish reference to the tale of the group of blind men that aims at identifying the thing standing in front of them, an elephant. Due to lack of general oversight they each come up with different and merely partial estimations, one touching its foot, another its ear, and a third its trunk. Çolakoğlu seemed to say that, similarly, Istanbul 2010 could perhaps only be approximated and perceived in a partial manner, as it included projects varying "from the culture and arts to urban transformation, from new governance models to social responsibility initiatives." However, despite the fact that, organizationally, the multiplicity of the different objects and objectives did imply certain separations and divisions, the different and double orientations (i.e., towards economic gain *and* cultural transformation, towards global audiences *and* local ones) were not understood to be necessarily divergent and incompatible.

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[110] See http://www.en.istanbul2010.org/PROJELERVEBASVURULAR/projearama/index.htm, accessed on August 21, 2010.

Rather, Çolakoğlu's ironic reference to the elephant expresses the aspiration for something more than the partial world views of the blind men: the cooperation between different parties in the construction of a common yet multi-faceted project that balances and harmonizes each of the individual orientations of governance. Indeed, advising on the model of governance that should be embraced by any ECOC, the 2004 report by consultancy Rae Palmer states that a successful ECOC aims to strike the "balance" between artistic vision and political interest, traditional and contemporary culture, high-profile events and local initiatives, city centre and suburban/regional locations, high art and popular art/culture, established cultural institutions and independent groups and artists, attractiveness to tourists and to the local population (Palmer/Rae Associates, 2004). In the light of the network governance paradigm, the balance indicated by the Palmer report is not, or should not be, just a compromise between different partners and their interests. Discourses of network governance suggest that these objectives could be mutually reinforcing, as networking is supposed to generate complex effects and exploit the complexity inherent in the urban environment (Jessop 2002; Sørensen and Torfing 2009; Van Wezemael 2008b).

While Istanbul 2010 had multiple governance objectives and objects, the Agency was divided in different divisions and working groups. There were divisions attending to performing arts, exhibition and screen arts, in addition to divisions attending to traditional culture and urban culture, the latter of which mainly executed projects related to the objective of participation. Further, there was a division focused on tourism and promotion and there were two divisions plus additional working groups on urban transformation/ regeneration and heritage restoration projects. The urban regeneration and heritage projects consumed all by itself 60% of the total budget of Istanbul 2010.

Marxist-inspired critiques of Istanbul 2010 pointed to the incompatibility between what they identify as economic goals such as increasing tourism and strengthening Istanbul's reputation and status as a global city on the one hand and the democratic ones such as encouraging participation in urban governance and democratic politics on the other. Other critiques opposed Istanbul 2010 as a vehicle of globalization and expansive capitalism *or* an event for local populations, invested in local culture. Critical accounts provided dramatic figures and stories telling how this city of migrants living in self-constructed *gecekondus*[111] and minorities in old and historic neighborhoods were targeted for gentrification and urban transformation projects (Keyder 2010; Ünsal and Kuyucu 2010). Still other critics adapted Jean Baudrillard's insights, which also structure Manuel Castells' account of the network society, to argue that culture was selectively rendered a commodified spectacle, a vehicle for prestige for cosmopolitan elites, while the spaces of everyday life were first destroyed and then resurrected in order to conform to tourist and orientalist simulacra (Klaic; Yardımcı 2005).

On the other side, discourses on networking did not construe economic and democratic-cultural objectives as mutually exclusive. As the literature on network governance foregrounds, the effects and ramifications of this type of governance are not contained within strictly demarcated cultural, economic, or managerial-political spheres, but include complex interactions, breaking down the boundaries of these spheres. In the case of Istanbul 2010, the promises of complex effects and positive interactions across different spheres, together with the immeasurability of outcomes, were articulated towards discourses of the creative city. Through the integration of the discourses of the creative city with the

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111 *Gecekondu* is the Turkish expression for shantytown, in its literal meaning referring to how houses were semi-legally "set up overnight."

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network paradigm, goals of economic value generation and cultural-democratic

transformation seemed to be achieved simultaneously and in fact mutually reinforcing. As I

will argue, these discourses rearticulated the formations of "the cultural" and "the economic"

and they made these spheres objects of governance in particular ways.

Charles Landry (2008, 12), whom I described earlier as a direct source of inspiration

for Istanbul 2010, provided the first conceptualization of 'the creative city.' One of his

central claims is that cultural resources are "the raw material of the city and its value base; its

assets replacing coal, steel or gold." In his definition, culture in the narrow sense of the arts

and artistic expression enhances the more general quality of creativity, where creativity

stands not only for the human capacity to think differently and find new solutions but also

bears on organizational and procedural concern. As far as Landry was concerned, creativity

helps improve the quality of life in the city in different ways, one of them being through

economic revitalization. With the writings of Richard Florida on the 'creative class,' the idea

was popularized that culture could be used to enhance a city's competitiveness to attract

high-skilled knowledge workers in global labor markets (Comunian 2010, 1158). Florida

assumes a connection between culture in the narrow sense of the arts, the creative human

capacity for thinking different by having "ideas," and innovation that produces value in a

patent-based knowledge economy. Such an understanding of the merits of culture in the

narrow sense and of cultural production by creative industries is also echoed by the European

Commission report titled "The Impact of Culture on Creativity," which constructs creativity

as a human capacity nurtured by the arts. When culture is managed well and provided with a

condition of technological connectivity, this report suggests, culture changes into *creativity*

and this leads to innovation in the knowledge economy.

Whereas in Landry's narrative economic revival serves the cultural-democratic goal of the improvement of the quality of life in the city (given a certain interpretation of "quality of life," the democratic character of which might be debatable), in subsequent approaches to the creative city, cultural-democratic goals serve the generation of economic value by strengthening the knowledge economy. As Florida's critics (Comunian 2010; Aksoy and Enlil 2010) argue, Florida seems more interested in economic gain through innovation and the whereabouts of the mobile work force of high-skilled "talent" than in the whereabouts of local populations and their multi-faceted and long-term best interests. However theories of both the creative city and knowledge economy assume that cultural-democratic improvement and economic growth are mutually reinforcing tendencies.

Moreover, shared paradigms share the insight that culture is not a matter of consumption but of *production*: it produces not only cultural or creative goods for consumption (i.e., music, fashion, shows and festivals for which there are markets), it also produces productivity. Cultural and creative industries are the source of inventiveness, further "capacities," and favorable "climates." In his article "Why creative industries matter to economic evolution," Jason Potts (666) argues that creative industries are "functionaries of knowledge creation" and together with the presence of open markets, property rights, good governance, and science and technology, they produce "socio-technical space for generic origination" that serve the knowledge economy. The creative industries furnish the general condition for the "origination of innovation" and the capacity of "experimentation with new ideas."

Analyzing the exploitation of culture as a resource for economic and political goals, theorist George Yúdice (2003, 28) opposes the Marxist rejection of the (mis)use of culture by

arguing the expediency of culture is not *only* or not *just* a matter of the instrumentalization of culture. The expediency of culture is an episteme on the basis of which we act; it comprises a performative mode through which "the social is practiced" (29). Similar to what I have argued about networking as a cultural technology, the expediency of culture connotes the emergence of a new mode of cognition, coming together with certain technologies of government (as well as protest). Yúdice's argument undermines the *a priori* opposition of the "cultural" and the "economic." To adapt terms by Lawrence Grossberg (2010, 177, 180), what "the cultural" comprises and how it relates to "the economic" is subject to contextual processes of articulation. In order to consider such processes in the context of Istanbul 2010, Bob Jessop's argument (2005, 154-156) about the knowledge economy can be expanded to the creative city: both function centrally in powerful discourses of urban governance that presumes a globally networked state. As such, these discourses, articulated to governance practices, reconfigure the historically produced configurations of and boundaries between the economic and the extra-economic.

Istanbul 2010 constituted a moment in which civil society and cultural institutions, followed by local and national public authorities, started taking up the creative city paradigm and embedding it contextually. While governance got focused on facilitating economic development and the transition to the knowledge economy, paradoxically, traditionally extra-economic facets such as "culture" and "citizenship" became concerns for urban governance in new ways. The reconfigurations of the economic and the cultural through the creative city paradigm and the new objects of governance that these reconfigurations implied came together with the move towards network governance by partnerships between (primarily) public authorities, civil society organizations and cultural organizations, and self-organizing,

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participatory citizens. Network governance functioned as a strategy to act upon the newly emerging concerns and objects of governance by drawing from and combining the particular capabilities, knowledges, and energies of different kinds of institutions and urban agents.

What were the contextual effects of Istanbul 2010's adaptation of the creative city/ knowledge economy paradigms? First, I will discuss the ways in which culture became an object of government, an area that is made visible, mapped, and managed in certain ways.[112] I focus on what I call the "culture-creativity nexus." This term describes the ways in which the project of the creative city on the one hand positioned culture as the primary asset and source of value in the creative city/ knowledge economy yet on the other hand differentiated culture from creativity and hence subjected culture to management by experts of the creative city and the knowledge economy.

In a personal interview, the manager of the division of Urban Culture at Istanbul 2010's Agency emphasized that "you have to understand what is creative in your city and support that."[113] Creativity, according to her, holds "huge value," *both* in terms of "political correctness" (a term my interviewee uses without the usual cynical connotations) and in terms of economic growth and development, so that "you are earning your money and I am earning my money." Without providing a definition, she made clear that creativity should be located in "the streets" rather than in the confined spaces of the museum and theater and that it would encompass new expressions of culture rather than folklore and tradition, although the latter may be integrated in some way.

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[112] Besides Yúdice's work, my approach to culture as an object of governance is inspired by Nikolas Rose's (1999) work on community as such an object.

[113] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 13, 2011.

The original bidding document of Istanbul 2010 reflected this approach in its formulation of the question: "How can cities such as Istanbul become more proactive in using their cultural capital to generate transformative energy and capability for development?" Istanbul 2010 should be a "capacity building process." In other words, the fact of Istanbul's cultural wealth signifies the city's potential for creativity; nevertheless the latter needs to be stimulated, managed, and exploited somehow. In the ECOC publication resulting from the Symposium Creative Cities and Industries in the 21st Century, the Minister of State, Hayati Yazıcı (2010: 6-8),[114] emphasized that Istanbul's inherent qualities predispose it to become a world-ranking creative city, but only if these assets are managed adequately. Playing off of the Istanbul 2010 domestic marketing campaign, which stated "Our energy come from Istanbul," Yazıcı hailed Istanbul as an energy source of some kind: Istanbul was "an inexhaustible city, a city of endless depth and variety, [that] will endure eternally, being further enriched as the world discovers it." But besides praising the inherent qualities and dispositions of Istanbul, Yazıcı's main argument was that being satisfied with and celebrating the rich heritage was not enough. Just enjoying cultural heritage formed a consumptive and exhausting attitude, while what was necessary was a generative and productive approach to culture. Along similar lines, the well-known author and city consultant John Howkins (164) warned against taking traditional culture as Turkey's asset and adhering to a position summarized by "we have our culture and we just want to do our culture better, and that will give us a competitive advantage." Without being aware of the colonial dimensions underlying his conceptualizations (i.e., from colonial times onward western discourses have

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[114] This Symposium was organized by Istanbul 2010's Urban Culture division and held in Istanbul. World-known city consultants and authors writing about the creative city such as Charles Landry and John Howkins met with practitioners of the cultural sector and governors from Turkey. The Istanbul 2010 Agency transcribed and published their talks.

contrasted the "dynamic" west to the "stagnated" east by referring to culture and tradition),

he rejected particularist or essentialist self-definitions of non-western societies and their

conceptualizations of culture as heritage and tradition. For these speakers there was a

connection between the two qualities of culture and creativity, as culture could be a resource

for, and stimulate, creativity. But there was also a rupture, as not all culture could be

considered beneficial for creativity.

In these formulations, culture as an object of governance was directed away from

traditions and heritage, towards creativity, which ambivalently referred to a particular type of

"creative" production and the more general capacity to invent, create, and produce. The lure

of the "new" had touched the Turkish participants as well and for one of them stood in

relation to the promise of overcoming binaries of east and west. One of the Turkish speakers

(152) at the symposium speculated that Istanbul as a creative city would "sweep away clichés

[…] that do not offer any new vision for years" such as those defining Istanbul as "in-

between East and West" or through historical-cultural values. This speaker propagated the

singularity of Istanbul in a multi-polar world and the ways in which it should be a center that

"generates ideas, work and production" through relations with the whole world.

Moreover, networking as a cultural technology operated on the culture-creativity

nexus in order to reposition cultural difference and the formation of the cultural in the light of

regimes of value instituted through the creative city/ knowledge economy paradigms.

Networking resurfaced as an organizational feature indispensable to creativity because the

interaction and exchange between different partners would generate production as well as

productivity as capacity.

In the context of Istanbul 2010, projects undertaken within the Culture and Arts branch of the Agency often revolved around networking and its innovative and transformative potential. Hence, projects that could count on financial support through the Agency of Istanbul 2010 promoted the "transnational mobility of cultural and artistic operators," the "transnational circulation of cultural and artistic works and products," and any exchanges of "knowledge and best practices in the field of art and culture" (8). The assumption was that transnational and multiple-actor partnerships would result in networked productivity, the capacity to generate innovative initiatives and ideas, that would enhance Istanbul's role as a "'cultural catalyst' amongst its geopolitical neighbors" (*Civil Society Dialogue* 5). The project titled "Intercultural Arts Dialogues" was realized in the main culture- and leisure district Beyoğlu, which during the times of the Ottoman Empire and up until several periods of ethnic violence in the 20th century had hosted Greek, Armenian, Jewish, and Levantine ethnic minorities yet which continued to be the residence of foreigners and travelers. Although the international platforms hosted artists mainly from Europe and the United States, the district mayor underscored the importance of the event in terms of sharing the district's unique and rich heritage, influenced by foreigners, and experiences with (supposedly all of) the rest of the world while in turn being introduced to what was unknown to local populations and institutions in order "to add up new values." In the first place, his expectations concentrated on networks producing, expanding, and renewing cultural and artistic production, but they ran parallel to expectations for other types of exchange and productivity within networked global modernity, as I will discuss shortly.[115]

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[115] See http://www.istanbul2010.org/HABER/GP_703421, accessed on September 20, 2011; http://www.en.istanbul2010.org/2010AKBAJANSI/hakk%C4%B1nda/index.htm, accessed on August 21, 2011.

The transition from cultural heritage to creative productivity is visible from the comparison of the promotional videos that address foreigners, prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture since 2005, and the promotional video that the Istanbul 2010 Agency distributed just a couple of years later. The earlier videos by the Ministry features *topoi* derived from orientalist travel writing and Romantic literature. The video clip stages the experience of the traveler-turned-tourist who discovering the "wonders" of a foreign culture and does so in mythical terms. The camera descends from high in the sky upon the city (like an airplane does) and subsequently delves into the secrets and treasures of the city, predominantly mysterious and religious shrines and palaces. Other promotional videos by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture continue the mythical themes, even staging figures flying through the air, while narratives unfold about the chivalrous advances of a male figure on his flying horse to a young woman. In one of the videos, the woman vaguely symbolizes the West and the uniting of the couple is guided by the text "Istanbul, the place where continents meet;" in another one a young woman is the single non-mythical character of the video and she is waiting for the metro to arrive while reading a newspaper. Her everyday moment gets interrupted by the visit of the mythical male, again on his mighty horse, who throws her a handful of rose leaves. The metro station is part of Istanbul's subway system, which was initiated as one of the showcase projects of Istanbul's transformation into a global city. What is common in these videos is the suggestion that east and west, tradition and the modern come together in Istanbul. Yet in the staging of unification, the binary oppositions between east-west, mythical-everyday, tradition-modern are reiterated. The coevalness (Fabian 1983) between east and west is denied as the east is delegated to mythical times and the times of

tradition, while the west is situated within historical-progressive time, a present-day and a future.

By contrast, the video by the 2010 Agency, which concludes with the slogan "Istanbul, the most inspiring city of the world," features fast cuts in high pace between images and sounds that suggest the traditional and modern, high art and popular culture, skyscraper and decaying historical alley, aesthetic beauty and urban reality—but these elements seem to all, and mixed together, stand for Istanbul, without that a categorization is possible in "east" and "west." The (supposedly) overwhelming mix causes awe and is, in certain ways, again "mysterious," but this time the mystery cannot be reduced to familiar orientalist mythical themes. Rather, there is no coherent representation, but only the unique experience that Istanbul offers, which according to the slogan of the video, is "inspiring." The foreigner addressed here is not necessarily a tourist but the contemporary knowledge worker, seeking novelty, dynamism, excitement, and "inspiration," or, in other words, all the raw material for production in creative and knowledge economies.

The earlier videos, staging Istanbul as a meeting point between east and west, reiterate what Sibel Yardımcı (2005, 73, 74) has identified as the bridge metaphor. The bridge metaphor, even though it suggests breaching and uniting, inevitable reinforces the separation of east and west. The hybrid model of the bridge metaphor falls back into discursive binaries, according to Yardımcı (76-84); it serves as the discursive counterpart of a geopolitical bipolarity dominated by the west. As a "bridge," Istanbul has promised the expansion of western trade and security efforts into the east. Although the bridge metaphor has not been abandoned, I want to argue that there are indications of an emerging discourse and the question is whether and how this discourse relates to re-articulations of Istanbul's

relational position in the world. As my discussions of Istanbul 2010-affiliated discourses on Istanbul as a creative city and of the Agency's promotional video indicate, emergent discourses call upon Istanbul to become a productive "hub" in a global network of relations and to let go of the preoccupation with east and west.

On the one hand, at the symposium on creative cities discussed before, Howkins's remarks were indications of the fact that discursive binaries and geopolitical bipolarities might be reinforced through discourses of creativity and productivity and affiliated practices of the knowledge economy. Similarly, the European Commission report on creativity that I cited earlier opens up with the claim that creativity is a *western* value, standing in a modernist tradition of desire and aspiration for novelty and progress: "In Western societies [the powerful catch phrase creativity] epitomises success, the modern, trends for novelty and excitement. [C]reativity is a positive word in a society constantly aspiring to innovation and 'progress'" (3). In the light of such appropriations, Istanbul as an inspirational city might continue a neo-orientalist representation. Istanbul's difference promises chaos, newness, and unexpected forms of hybridity (Özkan, 2010) particularly to the *western* knowledge worker. Such a promise of difference objectifies the east for the western knowledge worker, who is able to render valuable those phenomena associated with the east that are otherwise condemnable, like chaos.

On the other hand, however, the re-articulations of culture as creativity make part of re-imaginations of Istanbul's geopolitical position and function, according to which Istanbul is no longer a "bridge" in a bipolar world but a productive "hub" in a multi-polar world. These discourses of the networked and productive hub appear at a time when the geopolitical "balance of power" in the region once more seems to be destabilized and shifting. While

Turkey's EU access process is stalked, to a large degree due to lack of orientation within the EU and resurgence of nationalism within member states, Turkish political promote a more independent modern future, not arrived at via integration with the west. Adding to this are the facts that while the west undergoes a major financial crisis, Turkey's economy belongs to the fastest growing ones in the world. A public policy analyst for the US-Europe Analysis series of the Center on the United States and Europe at Brookings, Ömer Taşpınar (2), explains that neo-Ottomanism is a policy orientation and a political discourse. According to this discourse, Turkey should "play a very active diplomatic, political, and economic role in a wide region of which it is the 'center,'" reminiscent of imperial times. Taşpınar (5) adds that while in the past there did not seem to be any realistic geopolitical alternatives to the "Western option" for Turkey, current "AKP leaders want to reach out to non-Western regions to complement their ties to the West—not to replace them" (2). Neo-Ottomanism did not emerge out of nowhere. Since the 1990s, there was a renewed interest in the legacy of Istanbul as an imperial city that was however non-western, diverse, pluralist, and tolerant (Keyder 2010; Bartu 1999: 40; Bora 1999: 49). Relating neo-Ottomanism to earlier forms of Ottoman revivalism, Yanık (84) argues that through a "selective reading" (Yavuz, 1998, quoted in Yanık) of Ottoman history, presenting the Empire as a truly multiculturalist and pluralist entity, Turkish elites in the 2000s mobilized a rhetoric implying that the qualifications of the Ottoman Empire bestowed contemporary Turkey with the to credentials be a regional power and peacemaker. Current Minster of Foreign, Ahmet Davutoğlu, who wrote a book considered fundamental to neo-Ottomanism, averred in a 2008 interview that Turkey "should be seen neither as a bridge country, which only connects two points, nor a frontier country, nor indeed as an ordinary country, that sits at the edge of the Muslim world or the West," but

rather as a "central" country (Yanık, 2011: 87). In his book, Davutoğlu argued that, as Yigal Schleifer summarizes, "running away from its historical ties in the region, Turkey was also running away from political and economic opportunity" (Schleifer, 2009: 32). Between 2005 and 2008, Turkey's trade with the country's eight nearest neighbors, including Syria, Iran, and Iraq, has nearly doubled, going from $7.3 billion to $14.3 billion (ibid.).[116]

At the openings ceremony of Istanbul 2010, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan expressed Istanbul's role in a multi-polar, post-western world. After stating that Istanbul 2010 will mean a step forward in Turkey's EU access process, he was quick to add that Istanbul is "not just a European Cultural Capital but a World Cultural Capital." Reiterating the relations Istanbul maintained when it was the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Erdoğan claimed that the unique cultural accumulation of Istanbul would unite and know to inspire (not just the western knowledge worker but) people across five continents. Moreover, he promised that "on top of the historical accumulation," a "modern future" was being built, in which Istanbul would be a world financial market and attract the world's most prestigious congresses, sports and art events (Yeni Şafak. 2010).[117] Alluding to Istanbul's imperial past in order to claim its status as a world city makes part of the Neo-Ottomanist policy orientation. The discourses around Istanbul 2010 add the imagination of Istanbul as a center in the knowledge economy, a productive hub, not just between east and west, but in a multi-polar, global network.

This section has examined some of the ways in which the project of the creative global city articulated discourses of culture and the formation of the cultural. As a creative

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[116] The uprisings in the Middle East associated with the "Arab Spring" and the Western military interventions in Syria and Libya currently complicate the neo-Ottomanist doctrine.

[117] See also http://www.haberler.com/basbakan-erdogan-istanbul-dunya-kultur-2759603-haberi/, accessed on September 21, 2011.

city, Istanbul supposedly would no longer rely on, as some Istanbul 2010 partners described it, the (wasteful) *consumption* of its historical-cultural wealth. As argued in reference to the culture-creativity nexus, to seek out the "productive" potential of culture implies that culture is not imagined as a repository and rooted in tradition anymore but that culture is required to be generative and "creative" and re-imagined with modern and global-economic dimensions. "The cultural" becomes an arrangement that integrates 1) creativity (ambivalently artistic work, certain inspirational experiences, and capacities for thinking differently and innovation), 2) economic regimes of value that underlie the knowledge economy, and 3) practices of networking that allow for sharing and exchange. Although the literature on creative cities inevitably emphasizes the importance of ICTs, the latter were not the only mediating materialities that supported networking in the case of Istanbul 2010. However, informational-technical discourses informed political and economic imaginations key to the creative city.

Conclusion

This chapter explored networking as an assemblage that includes contextually particular articulations of political imaginaries and organizations of governance, ways of knowing and acting in the world as well as materializations of instruments. In the context of Istanbul 2010, networking promised an alternative to the overtly centralist, repressive state and its top-down modernization project. But also, inspired by the paradigm of the creative city, governance actors shared the expectation that new networked partnerships would start cycles of cultural exchange that resulted in cultural-democratic transformation as well as (potential for) economic growth (Comunian, 2011; Istanbul ECOC 2010 Agency, 2010).

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I related the ways in which network governance staged its objectives and objects to the paradigms of the creative city and the knowledge economy. Through such discourses, the potentially divergent or contradictory orientations of Istanbul 2010—economic value and cultural-democratic transformation—were rendered mutually reinforcing governance objectives. Istanbul 2010 networking assemblages rearticulated "culture" in relation to the economic: in the light of the regimes of value of so-called knowledge economies, culture became the source for "creativity," (globally) networked production, and a presumably inexhaustible, productive potential. Hence, Istanbul 2010's governance networks sought to manage and exploit culture and this had implications for the ways in which populations were able to participate in, and belong to, the creative city that Istanbul was supposed to become.

The next chapter explores the ways in which networked sociality, participatory culture, and general creativity became objects of governance to be managed and worked upon.

POPPING UP AND FADING OUT: PARTICIPATION IN ISTANBUL 2010

Introduction

Many statements by the Agency of Istanbul 2010 underscored the importance of people's expressive contributions, volunteering, energy, enthusiasm, and their investment in, and love for the city. Local populations were increasingly staged as the co-producers of Istanbul 2010 as an event and of Istanbul as a creative city. Branding the city "Istanbul 2010" or "Cultural Capital of Europe" and providing "logo support" to projects even if they had no financial support from the Agency were strategies of stimulating new partnerships across public institutions, civil society organizations, the cultural sector and "enthusiastic," "participatory" citizens.

Istanbul 2010's networking assemblages cast populations as participants in, and co-producers of, Istanbul 2010 and the city as such. This chapter focuses on technologies of place branding not so much as professionalized symbolic production in support of the marketing of the city, but as a cultural technology that both incites and controls popular participation. By relating networking to technologies of place branding, this chapter investigates modalities of participation and belonging as well as struggle and dissensus. Reflecting on social exclusion, I endeavor to come to terms with some of the implications of

the diagram of interactivity, effectuated by assemblages of networking, for the condition of citizenship and for the possibilities of dissensus.

Branding and Participation

I want to argue that in the context of network governance and the project of the creative global city, place branding played into several dynamics. First, in the governance space of Istanbul 2010, the brand can be recognized as a mediating platform for multiple actors cooperating in network governance. While brands can offer some common orientations, it is their vagueness, their underdetermined character, that network governance exploits, as it allows for ambivalences and multiplicity, and thus a variety of approaches and orientations by partners in the networks (see Davies 2009: 89; Sørensen and Torfing 2005: 213). Second, rather obviously, place branding operates within the global competition between cities. Rather than attracting tourists, place branding Istanbul has become more and more about attracting mega-events, prestigious congresses, foreign investors, businesses, and "talent," and also about branding Istanbul's and Turkey's export. Last, in Istanbul 2010 more than ever before, place branding functioned within the management of urban populations by inciting and organizing affect, creative energies, participation, and belonging to the city (see also Anholt 2008; Landry 2008, 86, 118; Thrift 2004). Technologies of branding here again relate to "networking" and "interactivity," which organize creative involvement and participation. Throughout this chapter, I will explore the ways in which these three dynamics at times reinforced one another, and were incompatible at other times and how they organized participation and belonging, while opening up possibilities for struggle.

With regard to the global competition between cities, place branding techniques have followed the logics of product differentiation (Callon, 2002; Lury, 2004). On the one hand, branded products set out to construct new markets from old ones and therefore they claim to be comparable to other products; on the other hand branding sets out to distinguish products, so that they address specific attachments and demands. Hence, branding is an important technology that subjects products to a play of singularities *and* substitutabilities, of standardization *and* experimentation. In the case of Istanbul's transformation into a global city, discourses creating a certain reputation for and image of Istanbul, such as the promotion videos above, aimed at staging Istanbul as a global city comparable to, and modeled after, modern western global cities on the one hand, but also as a place that would be different from western global cities on the other. Istanbul became the alternative global city, or as I would put it, the "other" hub, whereby "other" constitutes an ironic reference to the continuation of east-west binaries in the supposedly multi-polar and world.

A principal member of Turkey's largest businessmen association TUSIAD, Buhadir Kaleagasi, proposed several strategies of the play of singularities *and* substitutabilities in his article "The Soul of the City and Its Brand" (Kaleağasi, 2006). He stated that the city and its image *together* should manage the experience that visitors have. Visitors should be directed by the images of the city and the city's spatial design, operating interactively, to the point that it affects where they are going for sightseeing, for shopping and eating, and in the end the memories that they bring home. Not shying away from drastic measures, Kaleagasi advices renaming Istanbul's city parts and making sure that the names are easily recognizable in foreign (Western) languages. Further, as he suggests, the Bosporus could be a distinctive visual mark for Istanbul that expresses the connection between East and West. Yet this image

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should be accompanied by the ferryboats, argues Kaleagasi, which are reminiscent of Hong Kong's iconic Starferry. Taxis could be another visual mark, yet while alluding to the NY taxi image, they should have distinctive colors that resonate with Istanbul's color motives. Turning the taxis purple, for example, would intertextually refer to the use of purple as a marker of imperial status in Byzantine and Ottoman times. In the end, as Kaleagasi argues, the experience of "Istanbul" has to appear as a wholesome unity consisting of both the visual imagery in advertising and the city space itself.

The development of Istanbul into an alternative global city, an "other" hub, was cotemporaneous with a new period in Turkish political history that undermined the hegemony of Kemalist elites and their political ideologies pushing for west-oriented, state-based modernization. To the extent that the project of the global city overlapped with post-republican, Ottoman revivalism it was able, at least to a certain degree, to align the unlikely bedfellows of the conservative-Islamic AKP and Istanbul's bourgeoisie. Despite different ideological orientations and identities, both segments could support the move away from "Ankara" and the state-based modernization project of the Kemalist elite. As Çaglar Keyder (2010: 27) argues, since the growing aspirations for an alternative, non-Republican modernity in the mid 1990s, "there was a new (and post-national) representation of the city in which the peripheral modernity of the Empire seamlessly flowed into a desired status in contemporary global space." The rediscovery of the "Ottoman roots" of Istanbul found expression in the adaptation of Ottoman aesthetics in urban culture, art, and fashion (Bartu 1999: 38; Keyder 1999, 182-185; 2010: 27).[118] It was this (re)discovery of the Ottoman roots

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[118] I do not want to suggest that there were no ideological contradictions and differences. Urban cultural elites, who were not focused on Islamic ideology, invoked other pasts including a cosmopolitan Levantine past as well. They found sites in which they could recognize the "authentic," appreciating for instance "decline" as a feature

of the city and its peripheral modernity that was picked up upon by local and global business advocates and media, earning Istanbul the reputation of a uniquely different yet modern city, full of contrasts and surprises. Rather than the most exotic or oriental, Istanbul became the "coolest" city of the world, as *Newsweek* decided in 2005 (Keyder 2010; Soysal 2010; Özkan 2011: 201).

Istanbul 2010 formed a context in which the processes of branding Istanbul in the global arena once more intersected with internal developments and conditions. The brand "Istanbul 2010" addressed not only tourists or foreigners; the addressees also included local populations. In this regard, I want to point to Istanbul 2010's discourses and practices of participation that were the principal mediators of cultural-democratic investment. Besides including non-governmental, private, and public stakeholders in collaborative schemes, the governance networks of Istanbul 2010 promised to include local populations (Öner 2010, 268). The original bidding document stated that Istanbul 2010 would aspire: "To involve as many people and organizations as possible and to use this opportunity to redefine relations between the people of Istanbul and the city administration in order to create a new mechanism for decision making" (Toşun and Beyazit 2006; Initiative Group, 2005). As repeatedly emphasized, Istanbul 2010 would not be just a "festival," or an "event" that would be over in a year, but a process towards a sustainable change in social relations and a new model for urban governance, through which "governing bodies" and "governed" could work together. In this sense, Istanbul 2010 followed on the 2004 Palmer report that advised that any European Capital of Culture should include the "many" and "the marginalized" thus far not involved in urban governance. As the Istanbul 2010 Agency's website announced,

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of the multi-layered ancient city, or the local everyday, which they recognized as culturally distinct (Bartu 1999, 38; Özkan 2011, 208).

"Istanbul's success as European Capital of Culture will depend on Istanbul residents' embracing and supporting this project through extensive participation."[119]

Moreover, following the discourses of the "complex" creative city that promised that the potentially diverging objectives of network governance— the double orientation towards economic value and cultural-democratic transformation— could be achieved simultaneously and in fact would be mutually reinforcing (see Chapter 8), the understanding of "participation" was also both cultural-democratic and economic. In the creative city discourses emerging around Istanbul 2010, socio-cultural and democratic objectives inhabited the progressive notion that creativity would not be a capability exclusively possessed by artists or the high-skilled work force but a *general* human capability (Istanbul ECOC, 2010). Moreover, in a publication funded by the Agency, *Creative Istanbul: Sectors and City* [*Yaratıcı Istanbul: Sektorler ve Kent*], the creative industries were imagined as connectors (again, the metaphor of the interface, *arayüz,* was brought up) between Turkey's (pre-)industrial production and the global economy. According to this narrative, creative production should enhance the local industrial economy along with the pre-industrial crafts sector, so that the combination of efforts would generate economic advantage for society as a whole. Rather than inducing schisms in society, creativity should be used to bind society together (Aksoy and Enlil 2011: 18; Enlil and Evren 2011: 25).

I want to argue that such explicit discourses of 'participation,' which mediated hope for a more just city and which carried moral values articulated to imaginations of an urban democracy, intersected with technologies of place branding and their appeal for involvement in Istanbul 2010. If such discourses of participation were the principal mediators of moral

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119 See http://www.istanbul2010.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ist2010_images/gp_585220.pdf , accessed on August 21, 2010.

investment, a number of questions remain concerning how "participation" was articulated

into the project of the networked, creative city; what forms of involvement the logics of place

branding enabled; and what forms were disallowed or disempowered.

In order to answer these questions, it is useful to return to the concept of the interface

put forward by Gümüş, placing it in the light of Celia Lury's analysis of the brand as a new

media object (2004: 1-16). Brands share with new media objects their function as interfaces

that call upon us to relate to them and engage with them. Lury borrows from Andrew Barry

to suggest that "interactivity," as the organization of exchange and involvement, plays a key

role in branding (2004: 131, 132). Because brands only come into being as meaningful

identities and entities capable of ordering their contexts through the very engagement and

involvement they themselves command, they rely on the inputs and interactions they incite

and on the dynamic sets of relationalities they are able to establish between the (abstract)

object of the brand and variously situated subjects. Brands function on the basis of the

performative iteration of such relationalities, which become reflexive loops through which

information regarding the subjects attending to the particular brand is incorporated and

exploited for the redesign of the brand as well as of the product, service, or organization it

represents (8-10). As brands attain a form of power on the basis of inclusion (not exclusion),

they are dependent on a certain degree of openness in order to expand the possible

interactions and sets of relationalities involved. At the same time, however, technologies of

branding control and manage exchange and involvement, although there is always the risk of

losing control. Hence the value of a brand is contingent on the strategic balance between two

operative mechanisms, one of which reinforces the "system of mutual implication, the system

of regularities, and the coherent network of conditions of possibilities that has given rise to

the brand,' while the other maintains the brand as a 'possible set of relations and connections"
(16).

Istanbul 2010's technologies of place branding, operating as interfaces that appealed
to populations as co-producers of Istanbul 2010 and of the city as such, called for, incited,
and managed general creativity, involvement, and participation. Being components of the
assemblages of networking, these technologies facilitated controlled popular involvement.
First, I will discuss technologies of branding as they operated in media spaces in relation to
the incitement and management of popular involvement. In the next section, I will discuss
some programs working at the neighborhood level as well as some programs targeting
specific populations.

One of the slogans by the Istanbul 2010 Agency was "The Stage is Yours, Istanbul!"
[*Sahne Senin Istanbul*!] and appeared on billboards on the streets and in other media. The
slogan interpellated local populations as Istanbulites and called upon them to perform their
own identities as a way of participating in, and contributing to, the city's identity. As I
learned through personal interviews with the manager of the Urban Division and a PR
affiliate of the Istanbul 2010 Agency, the main communication platform for the Istanbul 2010
Agency was its website.[120] My interviewees said that although they had envisioned relying
more on television, this was impossible since television stations refused to offer the Agency
the same deals they offered state-related public institutions for screening announcements of
public events. Not recognizing the Agency as a public institution, these stations started to
charge unaffordable amounts.[121] Party due to not being acknowledged as a properly *public*
event by television channels, Istanbul 2010 ended up relying on the internet and in significant

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[120] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 13, 2011. Personal interview, Istanbul, August 12, 2011.

[121] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 13, 2011. Personal interview, Istanbul, August 12, 2011.

numbers addressing and constituting publics that were responsive to interactive and networked media designs. Yet partly this was due to a belief in the merits of "interactive," networked communication. As I reviewed in Chapter 8, the communication strategy, which made part of the original bidding document (2005: 134), presented slogans like "Fire Up!" and played on themes such as mobilization, participation, feedback, and two-way communication. It described the use of multiple media channels, including "creative" and "alternative" ones, so as to constitute various networks and spheres of circulation. According to the Ernst and Young Report (2011: 71), among all media platforms and channels television had been most successful in reaching and informing Istanbul's overall population, yet social media sharing websites had reached most participants, in other words, populations actually joining Istanbul 2010's activities and events.

Besides the official social media outlets, the work of announcing, "firing up," and sharing love for Istanbul was done through social media sites that were not formally related: facebook pages, video sharing sites, and personal blogs. The multiple imitation Istanbul 2010 facebook pages and general pages dedicated to Istanbul gathered from 10,000 to over 400,000 "fans," who "liked" Istanbul, and the activity on many of these pages exceeded in fact the activity on the official Istanbul 2010 facebook page. These numbers indicate the success of the technologies of place branding and the use of communications for the promotion of a particular type of networked sociality as the basis of popular involvement with Istanbul 2010. Technology-enabled networked 'interactivity' and participatory branding practices were the beginning of (the imagination of) new urban publics.[122] In addition, these numbers indicate the "risks" of losing control inherent in technologies of branding that rely

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[122] I use Michael Warner's (2002, 67) definition of publics as constituted in the address and existing in attentiveness and reflexivity.

on interactive input of citizens or consumers. Indeed, ideologically motivated appropriations of Istanbul 2010, twisting its logo and slogans, also emerged from social media platforms and the blogosphere as well as heavy critiques of Istanbul 2010 that made use of the Istanbul 2010 logo and slogans in order to do what Naomi Klein (2000) calls "culture jamming" or "adbusting."

As Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (2004:147) discuss in their article titled "Cultural-Economy and Cities," important is to underscore the role of passion, moral, values, soft knowledge, trust, and cultural metaphor in the urban economy. In addition to the "absolute centrality of passion in mobilizing and sustaining drive in contemporary capitalism, including the libidinal energies that motivate entrepreneurs, speculators and investors," Amin and Thrift (2007: 143) point to "consumer practices yielding considerable productive energy in the form of subverting or transforming brand value and meaning or intense enthusiasm and love." In the case of Istanbul 2010, "proper" citizens and agents of the "creative" city would be inspired by, and enthusiastic about, their city; they would be the agents of the new creative economy and urban society, starting with their paying attention to, and participating in, Istanbul 2010 and being aware of its significance as a project transforming the urban economy and society. The website explained the ways in which Istanbul 2010 would have a positive impact on the city by alluding to "the great dynamism" that "enthusiasm and creativity" would bring and that would "reach its peak in 2010 through universal participation."[123] The brand "Istanbul 2010" constituted a temporality of expectation, which was articulated to discourses of Istanbul becoming a creative, productive center in global

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[123]See http://istanbul2010.org/AVRUPAKULTURBASKENTI/istanbul2010nasilgelindi/index.htm , accessed on May 20, 2011.

space. It provided an orientation toward the future, while supporting the self-recognition of local populations as agents of the creative economy.

While the brand targeted expectation, governance actors were interested in measured it in order to map the transformative potential stemming from expectant passions and mentalities. The official Impact Report of Istanbul 2010 by Ernst and Young, next to providing "hard numbers," presented speculations, expectations, and assessments of involved actors and target populations. For example, in order to substantiate the claim that Istanbul's economy and especially the creative sector had profited from the investments in the culture and arts, the Report (2011: 54, 55) gave statistics regarding the growth in number of companies working in the creative industries. Yet beyond providing statistics regarding actual growth, the Report turned to "expectations" of growth. The Report provided polls targeting relevant stakeholders in the business world in order to ask, for instance, whether they thought there had been an increase in employment opportunities. The Report stated that 67% of Istanbulites who were informed about Istanbul 2010 affirmed that they expected that Istanbul 2010 had increased employment opportunities. Expectations and assessments, some of which could be considered "expert opinion," were featured as closest indexes for concrete states now and in the future. Yet the methodology also revealed an interest in expectation as such. For both "expert opinion" and "popular opinion" held that expectation levels formed valuable information that indicated people's orientations. The affective energies bundled up in expectation were recognized to be primary forces of transformation towards the creative city.

Networking Neighborhoods

One program within the Urban Culture division of the Istanbul 2010 Agency that especially sought to stimulate and manage participatory culture was the Volunteer Program. This Program connected a group of 6,000 volunteers (initially it aimed for 10,000, but the amount was lowered, not because of lack of interest, but because the size of the group became unmanageable). In order to promote a participatory culture and as a reward for their time and energy, volunteers received training by professionals in enterpreneurship and self-organization, especially within the cultural and the third (NGO) sector. Moreover, the volunteers were invited to directly practice the skills they had gained by brainstorming with other volunteers they had met during their service or through the online database in order to initiate more projects and events for Istanbul 2010.[124]

As the Program coordinator Murat Alemdar explained, the Volunteer Program could not have been executed in the way it was without the use of social media platforms, email groups and the Program blog, because these venues enabled dynamically evolving groups to collaborate and organize around specific projects and events.[125] Again, networking was also fostered through, and informed by, a discourse of political imagination. The Program blog laid out the merits of informal and decentralized communicative exchange, which was assigned a key role in stimulating self-organization and participation. Hence the Program design and its promotional discourses stressed the importance, not only of blogs and sharing websites, but also of skills for dialogue, self-expression, presentation and team work.[10] Expressing a political vision of networking, the header of the Program blog pictured a map of Istanbul with the dynamic structure of an evolving network superimposed onto this

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[124] Personal interview with Murat Alemdar, coordinator of the Volunteer Program, Istanbul, July 30, 2010; See also www.istanbul2010.org/gonullu; http://2010gonullu.blogspot.com, last accessed on March 23, 2011.

[125] Personal interview, Istanbul, July 30, 2010.

cartographic imagery in thin red lines. The lines forming the network connected human figures which would pop up and fade out again at regular intervals. These figures were avatars of sorts, representing the volunteers of the Program, located in different parts of the city. The captions that accompanied the avatars noted the various ages and professions of the volunteers in addition to the projects they were working on.

One of the activities receiving the most emphasis was the organization of two neighborhood festivals for which the volunteers worked together with neighborhood organizations, sport clubs, local businesses, and religious and cultural institutions. As the Program coordinator explained, the intention was that the model of the Volunteer Program would replicate and spread itself beyond the Agency-centered structure of Istanbul 2010. By reaching out to neighborhoods, the Volunteer Program targeted the development of an expanding, self-organizing network or network of networks. Admitting the limited scope of the festival projects, my interviewee asserted that it would take more than one year to replicate the model of the Volunteer Program widely. Nevertheless, the vision of an expanding network of self-organizing and collaborative communities was an important motivation for those involved in the Program. During a focus group meeting, one of the volunteers told me that their work set up not just cultural events but "a model for the world" that took "matters from the very local up until the very universal level."[126] He added that, in contemporary times, "we see that things are very intertwined anyway," implying that the present global state of connectedness would enable bottom-up organization on the basis of collaborative communities world-wide (ibid.). Some of his fellow volunteers mentioned that they advocated the universal potential of their model of self-organization whenever

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[126] Personal focus group interviews with anonymous volunteers, Istanbul, June 7, 2011.

promoting the Program to recruit new volunteers or organizations as partners in the festival network (ibid.).

The conceptual text provided on the Program blog laid out the merits of informal and decentralized communication, which was assigned a key role in enabling and stimulating self-organized participation.[127] Besides facilitating technical communication by setting up a structure for personal blogs kept by volunteers, online photo album portfolios, and a facebook group the Program offered training in communicative skills and practical experience pertaining to team work, self-expression, dialogue, and presentation.[128] Networking and interaction in this context of targeted self-organization and self-government rendered participation performative, reflexive, and transformative. To start with the latter, the volunteers in the Program recognized that their own transformation and the transformation of social relations and urban sociality were at stake in the Program. In the interviews that I held with them as well as in published newspaper interviews, volunteers emphasized that their experiences with the Program were deeply transformative, thanks to the new relations that they built with other volunteers, "the city," and its diverse populations. In personal interviews as well as in published newspaper interviews, volunteers emphasized the simultaneity of doing something good for their beloved city (a conception corresponding to the ethos of the brands), establishing relations with people of diverse social and cultural backgrounds whom they normally would not encounter, and undergoing transformative experiences that helped them to develop themselves.[129] Selecting from the projected gains listed in the poll that concluded the training days, the volunteers were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt that they had "gotten to know themselves better," "gained more confidence in

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[127]See http://2010gonullu.org//?kavramsal, last accessed March 23th, 2011.

[129] Focus group, Istanbul, June 7, 2011.

themselves," "developed themselves," "started to see themselves as a more active person," and/ or "come to feel themselves a part of Istanbul." The poll further measured the transformation of relations with others by asking the volunteers to what extent they were of the opinion that "living together means being open to other ideas," and/ or that it is a requirement to "not build convivial relationships through power," or to what extent they thought they personally were able to "listen actively," "to empathize," and have the critical insight that they "might consciously or unconsciously discriminate."

The Volunteer Program set out to "transform" citizens and social bodies through a double move, which involved reflexivity and performativity. While the volunteers themselves felt transformed and part of new collectivities and social bodies, the urban populations and neighborhoods that they collaborated with were transformed too. The conceptual text on the Program blog provided the following statement about participation and improved social relations in the city:

> The fact that Istanbulites with different ages, occupations, genders, religions, and ethnicities—in short that have different outlooks on life— will work together will serve the culture of conviviality in the city. Istanbulites will become free from prejudice and get to know each other.[130]

Transformative collaboration, which would enhance conviviality or more literally "living together" (*birlikte yaşam)*, was one of the motivations behind the neighborhood festivals that the Volunteer Program initiated in particular neighborhoods, where they cooperated with interested local parties. One of the two neighborhoods with which the Volunteer Program worked was Kadırga. While right next to Istanbul's historical crown, the Sultan Ahmet area, Kadırga is a low-income district, in which multiple communities

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[130]See http://2010gonullu.org//?kavramsal, accessed on March 23th, 2011.

including domestic and international migrants live mixed but also often separated along ethnic lines. Nevertheless, the festival brochure promoted Kadırga as "one of the best examples of Istanbul's culture of living together." In addition to religion, the rather anachronistic discourse of race was used in order to date back the diversity of the neighborhood and its tradition of conviviality to its earliest days as a Byzantine harbor. According to the brochure, the goal of initiating a neighborhood festival, one that was to be repeated annually, was, first, to introduce outsiders, not so much tourists but fellow Istanbulites, to this "old and hidden" neighborhood. Second, the aim was to create opportunities through which the residents of Kadırga would be enabled to "reflect their everyday lives through events such as exhibitions, workshops, and concerts."[131] In another formulation, the aim was "to shape the neighborhood as a living space through *experiencing* it" (emphasis mine). Experiences that would have the effect of shaping the neighborhood could be gained through involvement in "government, trade, artisans, social and religious organizations, different languages, neighborhood relations (*komşuluk*), art, crafts, eating habits, styles of dress, and music."

Both of these formulations indicate the extent to which reflexivity and performativity were supposed to advance certain social relations and the constitution of the neighborhood as such. By staging itself as a neighborhood in the festival and other community practices and by stimulating reflexive, networked collaboration, "Kadırga" had to be brought into being and local populations had to become a social body. To return to place branding, "Istanbul 2010" as a brand, in cooperation with "The Volunteer Program" and the respective neighborhood festival brands (for example, "The Kadırga Festival"),[12] instructed citizens on how to "properly" participate and belong to the city and their particular neighborhoods.

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[131] See Istanbul European Capital of Culture 2010 Volunteer Program, 2010.

Through their performance of the citizenship ethos and values communicated by these brands, the volunteers and neighborhood participants enacted these brands themselves. They made the multiplication of relationalities extending from these brands possible by providing additional input. At the same time, these "participatory," "inclusive" networks and their branded interfaces stimulated the reflexive transformation of volunteers and the neighborhood participants involved.

The brochure stated that the festival set out to "traditionalize" (*gelenekseleştirmek*) the neighborhood. If "to traditionalize" is a rather oxymoronic verb imbuing what supposedly is an inheritance from the past with a sense of both agency and futurity, likewise the act of initiating a festival that was a tribute to the traditional and that was meant to become an annual tradition implied a paradoxical future orientation. Moreover, it involved rather explicitly staging and performing "tradition." As the brochure indicated, the strategy of traditionalization came together with an emphasis on sustainability and hence an orientation onto the communal future.

Technologies of place branding and networked collaboration opened up the borders of the community through a logic of self-renewal. The conceptual text that the Volunteer Program had offered to their partners in Kadırga, and revised together with them, functioned as a contract laying out the behavioral protocols all participants agreed on. The contract stated that "Istanbul is a city of migration that with every newcomer gets to know a new culture and that with every new culture 'reinvents' itself at the neighborhood level." The text further stated that it was this (in my words) paradoxical tradition of self-renewal, taken to be the basis of "living together," that the Volunteer Program wanted to explore through its neighborhood projects and on the basis of the principles of voluntary work. The endeavors by

the Volunteer Program in Kadırga operated in line with the original ECOC bidding document (Initiative Group 2005) that represented Istanbul 2010 as an urban governance experiment that would generate new mechanisms for publicness and participation. Since cities deal with the ongoing movement of people and cultures, they were the most "appropriate site of new citizenship practices" with a "new dimension revolving around diversity" (Initiative Group, 2005: 17).

I want to suggest that the emerging mediation of participation and belonging through brand platforms seemed particularly attractive, especially for marginalized or lower-income communities and segments of the population. Attractive about these new platforms was that they seemed non-exclusive, indeed allowing for ongoing expansion of self-organizing networks and of the differentiation of communal identity through place branding. Meanwhile, they articulated culture and community to the regimes of value of the creative city. Traditionalization, festivalism, and promoting "neighborhood culture" [*mahalle kültürü*], introduced at a time when local and diverse forms were considered to face the "threat of new life styles, building complexes, [and] shopping malls" could be strategies of generating value in the creative global city through place branding, culture, and creativity. But they also formed ways of *claiming* this value for poorer, marginal, and excluded communities. Considering the conjuncture, this could be a politics that enables the protection of rights to the city for local populations. As Rosemary Coombe (2007: 897) proposes, new forms of symbolic capital accumulation such as place branding need to be underscored as sites of governance and struggle and they need to be assessed in terms of transparency, accountability, and democratic potential.[132] Approaching place branding as a new form of

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[132] Coombe (2007) narrates how Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) were articulated to cultural rights and claims to diversity by indigenous communities who by appropriating IPRs could claim the value of "their

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symbolic capital accumulation, I want to suggest that, to some degree, the articulation of

Istanbul as a branded city not only united the different stakeholders and partners of urban

governance, but also opened up the possibility of the branded city as a field of struggle. The

question is to what extent place branding could be and was appropriated for a politics of

value; and what kinds of actions by emerging publics and social bodies were enabled (or not).

It should be acknowledged that the guidelines and protocols of collaboration and

participation within network governance thwarted the possibility of political confrontation in

the sense of an ideological battle. During our interviews, the volunteers argued not to

maintain any affiliation to a political party or ideology. They construed themselves as the

neutral mediators of self-government and facilitators of collaboration between different

parties for negotiated common goals. I asked whether working in neighborhoods like Kadırga

did not automatically invoke the contested topic of urban transformation (*kentsel dönüşüm*).

After all, neighborhoods like these quickly fall prey to gentrification initiatives, which while

part of the project of the global city, have in several cases come at the expense of local

populations who were no longer able to afford the land they lived on due to its steep increase

in value. While one of the volunteers expressed strong feelings about the topic, she and other

volunteers answered that it would be impossible to even start a discussion about urban

transformation with their partners in the festival network. [133] They worked with the district

municipality Fatih, which, as Chapter 10 will show, is one of the most aggressively

gentrifying municipalities of Istanbul. Expressing a political stance against urban

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culture" within the knowledge economy. Ironically, by appropriating IPRs, these communities are able to prevent "local knowledge and resources from becoming mere data for the information-intensive industries of the new economy."

[133] Focus group, Istanbul, June 7, 2011.

transformation by antagonizing the municipality for its role in the process was not possible if the volunteers wished to cooperate with the municipality.

I want to suggest that place branding, while not unfolding a full politics or political strategy, nevertheless opened up possibilities of a politics of value that circumvented direct critique. The extent to which place branding in the context of the project of the global city *is* or at least *bears the potential of developing into a politics* was the topic of my conversation with an affiliate of the PR department of the Agency. Outlining a range of ethico-political possibilities inherent in place branding, my interviewee distinguished between attempts "to market a city in a communitarian way," so that local populations too can profit, and attempts "to sell a city in a neoliberal way."[134] She argued that if it is the case that cities become attractive and competitive on the basis of their differentiation, "you have to protect the culture and provide means to survive." She continued "in marketing we know that it is about protecting the social fabric and protecting the cultural structure of the city." My interviewee went on to argue that the process of branding a city should not rely on "a didactic top-down approach" but on a platform or structure that is not bound to any party or regime and "through which people would be able to talk about [how the neighborhood should be branded], communicate about it […] until everybody is happy about it, at least to a certain extent." She added "Then it would be legitimate. Here, place branding was directed towards values of diversity and community and developed by the negotiated consensus among local populations. Yet, according to this person's judgment, in the case of Istanbul, neither the Agency nor the municipality and central government had been successful in place branding Istanbul or in following her process. On the one hand, the Agency lacked a long-term, sustainable strategy, which is indispensible for place branding in the communitarian way. On

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[134] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 12, 2011.

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the other hand, the AKP-led local and central governments did not understand the economic logic of differentiation, and more, ideologically, they did not allow cultural difference to complicate the particular collective memory and identity they ideologically espouse and promote. Referring to gentrification developments in the district Fatih, she argued that for the sake of reconstructing an ideal Ottoman city with "adjustments" to modern times, the city had been "cleaned-out" and ethnic minorities, such as the Roma, who could actually add value, had been driven out and their settlements destroyed.

Earlier I stated that neo-Ottomanism makes part of claims to an alternative modernity, imagined through the legacy of Istanbul as an imperial city that was however non-western, diverse, pluralist, and tolerant. However, neo-Ottomanist ideologies, no less than western euromodern ideologies and Kemalist nationalist ones, project and define the community of "we" in historicist manner, meaning that the past bears the kernel of further developments supposedly unwinding in a homogeneous and singular temporality in which time passes from past to present to future. Neo-Ottomanism likewise defines the essence of the community and it continues what Islamists in the 1990s started: the production of a historical script that decentered eurocentrism yet (re)centered history on a new essence from which all developments in the region have spun (see Samman, 2011: 184). If neo-Ottomanism appropriates the values of diversity, pluralism, and tolerance, contextual struggles determine how these values are articulated to particular bodies, and what kind of power relations these articulations reproduce or challenge.

Technologies of place branding, in the context of Istanbul or Istanbul 2010, however unfulfilled and incomplete, constituted platforms through which modes of differentiated belonging to the creative city were negotiated. In contrast to the historicism of the

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community of "we," discourses by the Volunteer Program tended to be oriented toward continuing transformation, "newness," and open possibilities with regard to the future, in which social bodies would be produced through exchange and cooperation. Returning to my discussion in the previous chapter, place branding does not appropriate "culture" as a repository of meanings and traditions but a productive resource; "culture" is the generator of meanings, tastes, affective energies, and shifting social relations that produce cultural and economic value at the same time. I want to argue that place branding, participation, and networked collaboration open up the imagination of a more differentiated and less exclusive belonging to the global city and an open-ended community that would, as the Kadırga festival brochure claimed, familiarize and enrich itself with every newcomer. Whereas officials and some Agency affiliates saw Istanbul 2010 as an integration tool through which migrants would become "proper" Istanbulites, according to the volunteers at the Volunteer Program, *the* Istanbulite did not exist, since Istanbul is a migrant city.[135] To ask people to "become Istanbulite" would be a senseless demand, since Istanbul's populations were inherently diverse and it was these populations who formed the real "mosaic" that promotional discourses of Istanbul as a global city never cease to hail.

However, such tendencies toward claiming value and differentiated belonging were not institutionalized but rather dependent on particular practices and struggles, signifying different orientations and subdued antagonisms within the governance networks of Istanbul 2010. In our interview, the program coordinator of the Volunteer Program commented on tendencies underpinning other Istanbul 2010 programs to foreground central districts of Istanbul and their recognized cultural icons and heritage. He stated: "There is an 'ugly' side to the fact that Istanbul 2010 often encourages trafficking from the peripheries of the city to

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[135] Focus group, Istanbul, June 7, 2011.

the center, even though people become more closed upon themselves under such circumstances […] If you want to create participatory culture you need to relocate to people's own living spaces and environments."[136]Within Istanbul 2010 and the many projects and events that were initiated over its networks, canons of Culture and heritage resurfaced, embodied by certain icons that were supposed to anchor communal identity, often a distinctively "urban" community of true "Istanbulites." In the program "The March of the Cultural Ants," organized under the Agency's division of Urban Culture, school children in the peripheral districts were provided special educational sessions to acquaint themselves with the city in which they live but which they do not properly "inhabit." One of the volunteers explained to me that the goal of the program was not so much to define Istanbul *for* the children as to *let them* define their city. The children were invited to understand the city as a rather abstract object of love and wonder, and to narrate and draw Istanbul as they imagined it. But they were also informed "about" Istanbul and why the EU had chosen it to be a Cultural Capital. They were shown pictures of iconic monuments and sites and they learned about its history. When I asked whether the volunteer also had worked with children in more central districts and whether he had noticed any differences, my interviewee replied that the children in the peripheral districts tended to be a lot more quiet and shy because they did not have the answers when they were asked about the monuments for example. They had never visited the famous sites and museums and some of them had never even seen the Bosporus Strait, which divides the European and Asian sides of the city, and which is one of the most visible elements of Istanbul's image globally and locally. I asked my interviewee why the icons were so important to know about. His answer was that in the limited time he was scheduled to spend with any group of children, it would be impossible to "really explain"

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[136] Personal interview, Istanbul, July 30, 2010.

Istanbul's culture. "Culture" in his explanation and in the visual discourses of the program's educational materials tended to be definite and demarcated rather than open-ended and produced over decentralized networks. The interviewee in question emphasized the importance of individual and different forms of imagining, narrating, and creating knowledge about Istanbul, which the children apparently often did with the assistance of the internet. Nonetheless, the March of the Cultural Ants together with others reaching out to targeted ex-migrant populations also reintroduced patterns of centralization and marginalization, in cultural, social, and geographical senses.

The networking assemblages of Istanbul 2010 introduced new modes of government and control. Within Istanbul 2010's participatory governance networks, the technology of the contract, as a technology of management, targeted, as I mentioned before, citizens of the creative, global city that were indeed "creative," cultured, communicative, cooperative, self-organizing, and community-minded. Through networked collaboration and self-organization local populations in Kadırga were supposed to transform themselves into participatory, resourceful subjectivities and collaborative collectivities. Moreover, these citizens produced cultural events and festivals that potentially provided further differentiation of the place brand Istanbul/ Kadırga. However, in the light of the larger context in which historicist definitions of the community of "we" were prevalent, place branding, participation, and networked collaboration open up possibilities of a politics of value. While ideological critique antagonizing Istanbul's political elites and official institutions was not possible, the politics of value worked toward enabling more differentiated belonging to the creative, global city in the making.

The Diagram of Interactivity

Barry approaches interactivity neither as a political ideology nor as a technical function, but as a diagram effectuated by assemblages involving particular technical devices, political discourses, and practices (2001: 150, 151). I will examine the networking assemblages of Istanbul 2010 both in terms of participation and as a manifestation of the diagram of interactivity.

The Agency's website spoke of Istanbulites having to accept their duty to represent their city and to participate in what could be seen as a collective performance of 'being Istanbul'. Istanbul 2010's Advisory Board Chairman and Member of Parliament for Istanbul, Egemen Bağış declared in Istanbul 2010's bidding document that the project would "pave the way and do all within our power for culture and art to meet with the people [and] thus transform the Istanbulite into [the] Enthusiastic Participator [sic]" (Initiative Group, 2005: 17). The fact that the will to participation was an expectation for creative or global-city citizens expressed itself in the judgment that Istanbul's populations lacked this will and were not participatory "enough." The numbers of people attending and participating in events were in many areas lower than targeted and than they, according to the Agency affiliates and press discourses alike, could have been in if was not Istanbul but a city abroad.[137] If Istanbul 2010 sought to constitute self-governing, participatory citizen-subjects, ex-migrant populations living on the peripheries, formed an important target group. For instance, "My Home Istanbul" brought together members of five differentially empowered segments of the population

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[137] Governance actors often regarded the low interest in art and culture, the presumably faint will to participate, and the presumed indifference towards the cultural rights propagated by the Istanbul 2010 as characteristic for "Turkish" society. Because of the character of its populations, Istanbul could not be a "modern," "Western" creative global city. Nevertheless, in Turkish media and opinions held by local populations, the skepticism regarding Istanbul 2010's chances for success did not always imply a negative judgment regarding Turkish society and could in fact be accompanied with an embrace of Turkey's non-European "difference" as well as a (implicit) critique of attempts by Western-based supranational organizations like EU to transform Turkish society.

(housewives, disabled, students, district managers, and clerical public servants) in total 1,750 people residing in one of the peripheral districts of Istanbul. In doing so, the program aimed to raise "urban awareness." The program assumed that urban awareness is "the key for residents to join in city management" and hence it is a prerequisite for the constitution and expansion of participatory culture and urban democracy. In Foucauldian terminology, "participation," especially when deployed as an instrument for raising "urban awareness," becomes *constitutive* of the global city citizen, *enabling* to the extent that it allowed residents to join governance and possibly negotiate government, yet *constraining* to the extent that this implied taking up a certain subject position and enacting certain types of urban sociality and social relations, while abandoning others.

Politically, the diagram of interactivity as manifested in the participatory networks implied that Istanbul 2010 reinforced and extended the *requirement to participate*. Following the logics of network governance, participation forms a civic responsibility through which one attains a chance to have a voice, but there is no such right in the first place. "Participation" becomes a *sine qua non* that, to the extent that the model of network governance becomes increasingly influential in the management of cities and their decision making processes, replaces the territorial regime of citizenship rights, including the "one man one vote" principle of representational democracy. Participation offers the sole option of active involvement, or else one does not effectively exist – not even as the excluded, alienated "mass" that is inadequately represented by failing representational-democratic institutions. By implication, the status or condition of "exclusion" is rendered absent. As the header of the blog of the Volunteer Program suggested, if read symptomatically, participatory subjects "pop up" and "fade out," after which they have no visible presence. This condition of

invisibility extends into the critical theory of networked sociality as there seems to be no prominent concept that is able to evoke, and hence critically underscore, this "absence of exclusion" pertaining to "the beyond" of the participatory networks of network governance.

What about those who chose not to participate in Istanbul 2010? The Volunteer Program volunteers, who worked with neighborhoods to organize festivals, emphasized the extent to which they would chase local organizations and whomever they identified as 'key individuals' in the neighborhood to become a partner in the festival network.[14] They would call them again and again to convince them to attend the meetings and highlight the importance of their contributions. Yet, at some point, they felt that they could not help it if people refused to come or ignored them. In the end, the responsibility and will to participate lay with the people.[15] The director of the Urban Culture division at the Agency, Yeşim Yalman, stated that when evaluating Istanbul 2010's success for herself, she did not focus on the numbers of those whom Istanbul 2010 did not manage to involve, but on those who were reached and who did become engaged. Even if Istanbul 2010 made a change for only *some* people and improved the relations to the city for only *some* groups, the experiment in urban governance would have achieved something.[16]

Those in networks of the "continuing pasts" (Chakrabarty, 2000) were absent. According to creative city theory, networked creativity relies on a new urban, networked sociality. While Landry (2008: 126, 128) calls for urban departments that solely focus on "connectedness," networking, and platforms for communication, he also devalues "traditional networks," which according to him "contribute nothing special to urban creativity." By naming and discursively identifying "proper" connectivity, creativity, and complexity, creative city theory assumes and produces stable categories of actors (i.e., the "usual suspects"

including Florida's creative class), recognizable practices of networked creativity (i.e., arts and culture in a narrow and selective sense) and their venues (i.e., from info-zones for the digital-literate to in-crowd supper clubs). With some exceptions, Istanbul 2010 had no interest in and did not attribute any worth to networks of the "continuing pasts," other than absorbing selected elements that had the potential to be interestingly hybrid and "cool." The networks of Istanbul 2010 did not extend to many of Istanbul's everyday venues and media such as teahouses, region-based migrant associations [*hemşeri dernekleri*] (see Erder, 1999), religious centers, neighborhood associations operating zines and self-built microphone installations, residential streets and their circuits of talk and gossip. Publics and social bodies gathered by these alternative networks and their forms of sociality were left out, which however did not mean that individual persons could not reconstitute themselves and become part of Istanbul 2010's networks and their modes of participation and belonging.

Moreover, by discursively identifying "proper" connectivity, creativity, and complexity, and by targeting a particular networked and transformative sociality, Istanbul 2010 actively discouraged identification along the lines of historically produced ethnic and religious categories of social identity. I was stunned to notice that the Ernst and Young evaluation report of Istanbul 2010 deployed the definition of minorities based on the Treaty of Lausanne concluded in 1923, and did so without further commentary. Although formally still in use, this definition is heavily contested, since it only acknowledges Christian confessional groups such as Greeks and Armenians in addition to Jews. It omits Kurds, Alevis, Laz and many others including sexual minorities. Istanbul 2010 tended to reproduce the exclusions of formal politics and hegemonic publics by not addressing these exclusions. The invisible "beyond" of the participatory networks can be identified as those movements,

organizations, and cultural centers invested in identity politics. Apart from a few exceptions, these organizations were not explicitly approached as partners, nor did they understand themselves as such. Consequently, those who thought of themselves as excluded from formal, representative politics and from society's hegemonic formations of publicness were often only reaffirmed in their belief. Considering the fact that racism and the oppression of dissidence are pervasive in Istanbul and Turkey – and in relation to the Kurdish population this situation is exacerbated by a covert history of civil war – to insist on a cooperative "network of the willing" might not, I would argue, constitute a strategy poised to improve the state of democracy and cultural rights.

The *sine qua non* of participation also bore on the political potential of the relations within the Istanbul 2010 Agency. In the previous chapter, I discussed arguments by Board members of the Agency Korhan Gümüş, Faruk Pekin, and Nuri Çolakoğlu stating that the importance of Istanbul 2010 resided in its transformative force. Network governance would open up new, collaborative platforms together with new publics by developing "interfaces" for public, multi-perspectival knowledge production. In 2009, prominent civil society representatives, including Pekin and Çolakoğlu, resigned from their positions at the Agency. As Pekin argued in an open letter, the transformative potential of Istanbul 2010 was being blocked by bureaucrats and business men, who made Istanbul 2010 "anti-civil society," "anti-art," "big budget," and even suspect of corruption.[18] Similarly, former affiliate of the Agency Oğuz Öner (2010: 277) claimed that fairly insignificant forms of participation got appropriated to cover up excessively centralized and technocratic decision making by the metropolitan municipality. The experiment in urban governance that Istanbul 2010 stood for had the effect of "silencing" civil society and local populations more than ever. However,

Gümüş and others, including the Volunteer Program coordinator, stayed in post, arguing that persistent involvement would be the only way to forge transformation. Yet the multiplicity within the governance networks did not amount to the recognition of adversarial positions. In the absence of accessible mechanisms for the mediation of antagonistic relations, the predominant allusions to the promise of collaboration for the common good implied that the presumably transformative networks in fact by and large reproduced hegemonic relations. Exclusion resided in the acts of silencing opposing voices and it became to some degree visible through their departure. Yet, within the governance networks, the *sine qua non* of participation reinforced tendencies of participatory network governance toward substituting an ethos of dialogical democracy for more antagonistic or agonistic approaches to politics.

Pekin's resignation letter as well as the accounts of events I got during personal interviews with civil society affiliates of the Agency portrayed the weaknesses and failures of Istanbul 2010 as contextual particularities that were not inherent in the model of network governance. The power struggles and recentralizing attempts by state authorities were specific to the Turkish context. These governance actors thereby assumed that concrete practices had failed in the light of an abstract model in which the experimental always stays transformative. In the formulation by Charles Landry (2008: 70), "[s]uccess and failure tend to come together" as "the seeds of success lie in failure and vice versa and we can learn from both through continuous feedback." By extension, as Roberto Comunian (2011: 1167) argues, "[f]or a system to be innovative, creative, and changeable it must be driven far from equilibrium where it can make use of disorder, irregularity, and difference as essential elements in the process of change." Yet, empirical research that critically explores ideologies of networking and their contextual workings suggests that network governance is often not

transformative, free of closures, or antithetical to hierarchies and in fact still subject to state

coercion (Davies, 2009; 2011). In the case of Istanbul 2010, while the networked interface of

the Istanbul 2010 brand assembled different orientations, these were not empowered to have

a transformative effect on the hegemonic relations of urban governance. To the extent that

Istanbul 2010's network governance relied on dialogical democracy, cooperation, exchange,

and multi- or interdisciplinarity, there were no mechanisms available for mediating or acting

out conflict (see also Mouffe, 2005). In the absence of mechanisms that enabled contestation

in addition to participation, Istanbul 2010's network governance stood for a modality of

government and control that reproduced hegemonic relations.

Conclusion

As discussed in this chapter, discourses of "participation," which mediated hope for a

more just city and which carried moral values articulated to imaginations of urban democracy,

intersected with technologies of place branding and their call for popular involvement in

Istanbul 2010. Yet Istanbul 2010's networking assemblages constructed interfaces that both

incited *and* managed citizen involvement through place branding. Turning participation into

the condition of citizenship, these assemblages effectuated a diagram of interactivity

revolving around the *sine qua non* of participation. By extension, they rendered absent the

status of exclusion and erased antagonism from the governance networks.

One point of critique towards this emerging arrangement of government was that

despite the discourses of the participation of "the many and the marginalized" and of

"general creativity," networked creativity and participation were clearly still selective

concepts that privileged particular subject positions and forms of sociality, in addition to

venues and types of interaction. In other words, government through networking fostered

certain forms of being, of sociality, and social relations, while 'disallowing' alternative forms.

By targeting a particular networked and transformative sociality, Istanbul 2010 actively

discouraged identification along the lines of historically produced ethnic and religious

categories of social identity. The invisible 'beyond' of the participatory networks can be

identified as those movements, organizations, and cultural centers invested in identity politics.

Second, I explored the effects of the *sine qua non* of participation with regard to the

political potential of relations within the Agency. I argued that while the networked interface

of the Istanbul 2010 brand assembled different orientations, the latter were not empowered to

have a transformative effect on the hegemonic relations of urban governance. While

requiring participation yet lacking mechanisms for mediating antagonisms, Istanbul 2010's

network governance stood for a modality of government that reproduced hegemonic

relations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

URBAN MEDIATIONS AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

Introduction

This chapter analyzes urban transformation and the struggles it prompted in relation to discourses and practices of networking involving ICTs. While in the 2000s Istanbul underwent transformation at unprecedented speed, activists resisted transformation projects, which they deemed exclusive, neglectful of public interests, and driven by the search for capitalist accumulation through real estate. I focus on one of the most well-known and extensive urban activist collectives, the Sulukule Platform. This collective tried to prevent the transformation project in the Sulukule neighborhood, which historically was a Roma settlement. The Sulukule Platform aimed to insert its concerns about Sulukule into the online informational zones of urban activism as well as into wider national and international informational circuits. The Platform's activism resulted in countless amateur video uploads, blogs, scholarly productions and student work, workshops, a youth orchestra, the 40 Days 40 Nights neighborhood festival, an alternative urban planning proposal to be executed in collaboration with Istanbul 2010, and reports for and by institutions such as the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the European Commission. Scholars from the University College London visited Sulukule and prepared a report as well. In artistic circles, prominent supporters, who

contributed through art production and performances, were the Romani director Tony Gatliff, the German documentary maker Astrid Heudbrandtner, musicians Sezen Aksu, Manu Chao, and the Romani band Gogol Bordello (Karaman & Islam, 2012; Robins, 2011).

This chapter explores the question of how the Sulukule Platform's networking assemblages organized, enabled, and constrained resistance by generating technologically supported relations between activists, powerful rights commissions and governance institutions, Sulukuleans, and nonactivist publics. The question attended to is: what possibilities for alternative social and socio-technical relations did the assemblages of networking enable and foreclose in the context of urban struggle? In order to answer this question, I develop a material approach to participation and resistance that draws from Lefebvre's notion of the "right to the city" as a contribution to the city as *oeuvre*. Participation in this material sense consists in making an intervention in the socio-technical and socio-spatial order of the city. I argue that urban struggle had to face and negotiate the repercussions of unequal distributions of knowledge and skills; conventional divisions in subjects and objects of various, technologically enabled "gazes";[138] and disconnections between particular circuits of information and communication.

Sulukule is an interesting case to explore possibilities for resistance and participation in Lefebvre's sense for the (tragic) reason that the Sulukule Platform's strategies were by all means successful in attracting attention, as they intended to, yet they did not manage to "save" Sulukule and the demolitions took place despite the impressive mobilization by the Platform. The events show tensions between strategies for participation as transformative intervention into the socio-spatial and socio-technical order and strategies for attention that actually

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[138] The concept of the gaze was developed in Laura Mulvey's analysis of filmic representational apparatuses that rearticulate the male gaze. I only loosely draw from this work by arguing for multiple gazes inscribing different representational apparatuses.

inclined to reproduce this order. As the last section of this chapter discusses, when successful

in attracting attention in national and international informational circuits, the involvement of

the Sulukuleans became nil, or at least limited and confined to fulfilling a narrow set of roles.

Nonetheless resistance in the wake of the Sulukule Platform's might open up new chances

for participation and intervention as other neighborhoods, including far less famed ones not

favored to the same degree by activists, have started to appropriate its strategies of networked

symbolic production and self-organization.

This chapter starts out by developing this material approach to participation and

resistance. Next, I introduce the case study. I discuss the Platform's resistance strategies

which focused on establishing informational circuits and connecting different publics,

discourses, and mediating materialities. I attend to the ways in which discourses and

practices of networking shaped the activist collective's self-organization as well as facilitated

the production of a presumably "open-ended" multiplicity of knowledges. Although the

Platform's symbolic production, the discourses and media forms it produced, was

heterogeneous, representations of cultural uniqueness recurred. Cultural uniqueness was

articulated to moral standards of rights (minority rights, human rights) as well as to the value

regimes of the "creative city."

Second, I look to how the networking assemblages structured socio-technical and

mediated relations between Sulukuleans, activists, and nonactivist publics. I explore

discourses of participation and, subsequently, the socio-technical organization of

participation as enacted by the Sulukule Platform networking assemblages. I explore at

length amateur and professional activist video documentaries as informational strategies that

negotiated unequal distributions of access and skill and ensuing roles and identities in the

activist network. Through producing and disseminating video documentaries activists sought to enable alternative knowledges and mental maps that contested planning discourses underpinning Istanbul's transformation into a global city as well as to generate new bonds of sympathy and solidarity among urban populations.

Third, I explore the effects of the resistance strategies and their socio-technical organization by analyzing practices of ICT usage in the larger urban media ecology. I look to the role of popular commercial internet platforms, mainly Google's search engine and the video-sharing websites Youtube and Vimeo. These platforms were used by governance and planners groups in favor of urban transformation projects as well as by the activists opposing urban transformation projects. I argue that the conditions of possibility for the emergence on the internet of particular discourses about "urban transformation"— either official pro-transformation narratives or oppositional activist ones—are co-determined by the functioning and usage practices of these popular internet platforms.

Finally, the last section wraps up my previous arguments and presents an analysis of the Sulukule Platform's networking assemblages and their possibilities and limitations with regard to participation and resistance in Lefebvre's material sense.

A Material Approach to Participation

In the following, I develop a material approach to participation and resistance that draws from Lefebvre's notion of the "right to the city" understood as the possibility to intervene in the socio-technical and socio-spatial order of the city. In his writings on the "right to the city," Lefebvre (1996) argues that the city as *oeuvre* is produced through the

accumulation and interaction of different acts, behaviors, communication practices, and

mediating materialities:

> If one considers the city as *oeuvre* of certain historical and social 'agents,' the action
> and the result, the group (or groups) and their 'product' can be clearly identified
> without separating them. There is no *oeuvre* without a regulated succession of acts
> and actions, of decisions and conducts, messages and codes. Nor can an *oeuvre* exist
> without things, without something to shape, without practico-material reality,
> without a site, without a 'nature,' a countryside, an environment. (103)

Lefebvre's concept of "the city as an *oeuvre*" pertains to the organization of all acts,

behaviors, meanings, and materialities that are expressed in space and that generate space.

His conception of the production of space and urban relations emphasizes the "practico-

material reality," namely practices involving a (unlimited) range of mediating materialities.

For Lefebvre, the "right to the city" is not about struggle over particular rights—struggles

that can be considered successful when their concerns become reflected in legislation (see

Mitchell, 2003: 26-29). Rather, the right to the city has to do with a continuous struggle,

spread through all dimensions of life, to intervene in the established socio-spatial and

practico-material order and to produce new spaces and relations between spaces, people, and

materialities (infrastructures, tools, means of production). To put it in another way,

Lefebvre's notion of the right to the city suggests a *material* approach to the theme of

participation consisting in the political possibility of making an intervention in, and

contribution to, the city as an *oeuvre*.

Drawing from Lefebvre, I consider technological practices as part of the city as

oeuvre. I use the concept of "urban media ecology" [139] in order to draw attention to

networking processes that integrate different media forms and mediating materialities while

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[139] Different perspectives in media-ecology point to the role of material and formal qualities of media and
technologies. See Matthew Fuller, Katherine Hayles, and Marshall McLuhan.

producing urban space. I focus on the emergence of an unstable and dynamic network through practices that connect and translate between diverse mediating materialities (see also Hayles, 2005: 31) and in doing so contribute to the production of space and of relations between spaces, people, and things. In this chapter, networking assemblages mediate *in particular ways*: they offer formative material platforms and channels that give shape to cultural performances, memories, imagined futures, desires, and cultural politics. Moreover, technologies as networked spaces of representation constitute virtual topologies of connection experienced as bonds of association as well as mental maps and imaginations of space (Berland, 2009; Morley, 2000).

Participation in Lefebvre's material sense is a socio-technical practice and consists in possibilities for transformative intervention in the socio-technical and socio-spatial order of the city. Thus, in applying this theoretical framework to the resistance by the Sulukule Platform, I center my analysis on material practices of technological use and I inquire into the possibilities for transformative intervention that the resistance either opened up or foreclosed through its networked self-organization and symbolic production involving a multiplicity of discourses and media forms. My analysis frames the ways in which networking assemblages either created or thwarted possibilities for alternative social and socio-technical relations as part of struggles pertaining to participation and the right to the city. As a result urban struggles appear as at the same time *informational struggles* that negotiate technological connectivity and disconnection as well as divisions in subject and object of diverse technologically supported "gazes."

Resistance Strategies: Connecting and Translating

Sulukule was a historic neighborhood on Istanbul's historic peninsula Istanbul and until recently home to a millennium old Roma community. From the 1940s until the end of the 1980s, Sulukule emerged as a thriving entertainment district famous for its musicians and belly dancers among Istanbulites and tourists. Starting from the mid 1990s, however, the municipality and the local police department attempted to "clean up" the neighborhood on the grounds that the district had become a site of drugs trafficking and prostitution. After the entertainment houses were raided and closed, the neighborhood fell into economic despair only more (Karaman &Islam, 2012: 235, 236). More recently these efforts at "cleaning up" have been combined with urban preservation and gentrification efforts that target boosting Istanbul's prestige and allure as a branded global city. The newly passed Law No. 5366 on Conservation and Revitalization of Deteriorated Historical Buildings permitted urban transformation without consent of affected populations as well as expropriation of property. In Sulukule, as elsewhere in Istanbul, expropriation of property and eviction of population was eased by widespread informal arrangement regarding ownership and tenant status (Uysal, 2012: 17). The district municipality Fatih together with the project developer, the state's Housing Development Administration (Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı, TOKİ), and other private investors were able to generate enormous profits by acquiring land at very low prices before constructing luxurious villas for sale (Letsch, 2011).

Arguing that the Turkey's legal system was "not trustworthy,"[140] the activists of Sulukule Platform considered urban struggle to be not purely a matter of defending particular rights. Instead, as I demonstrate below, the Platform's strategies revolved around diverse symbolic production and establishing informational circuits. The multiplicity of the

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[140] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 4, 2010; personal interview, Istanbul, June 6, 2011.

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Platform's symbolic production was a strategy that informed its mediation across different scales and between different institutions and circuits of information and communication. The Platform's discourses sought to resonate well with, and provide *linkage* to, the discourses of powerful supra- and international rights commissions and governance institutions. Through diverse symbolic production, the activists established information- and communication circuits and negotiated the various value regimes these institutions attended to. For instance, discourses of cultural heritage linked the Platform to UNESCO, which threatened to take Istanbul off its World Heritage List, which would negatively impact the city's prestige and reputation. The Platform prepared a report for UNESCO that encompassed discourses regarding architecture and planning, historical heritage and preservation (including Law No. 5366), cultural history, cultural rights, and diversity. In addition, a report prepared by Sulukule Platform activist Cihan Baysal and published by UN Habitat's Advisory Group of Forced Evictions, compared Sulukule to eight other neighborhoods in Istanbul in terms of the urban, legal, and policy contexts of the demolition and eviction processes. The report also discussed the institutional context, including the role played by the municipality and the project developer TOKİ. Furthermore, the European Roma Rights Center cited another Sulukule Platform activist, Hacer Foggo, in a report about Roma rights in Turkey prepared for the EU Enlargement Program (European Roma Rights Centre, 2012). When addressing rights commissions and governance institutions, the Platform activists recast or "translated" their concerns over the neighborhood into the specific discourses and value regimes these commissions and institutions were invested in.

While the Platform activists sought to articulate the case of Sulukule to the particular interests and value regimes of various rights commissions and governance institutions, they

addressed these institutions not because they believed these institutions would in some immediate way restore justice in Turkey. Rather, addressing these institutions formed part of an informational strategy through which the case of Sulukule would reach international as well as Turkish audiences. As my informants explained affiliated with the Platform, in the absence of effective legal instruments, activism was to a large extent a matter of producing and disseminating media messages that would threaten institutional reputations and corporate brands.[141] Whenever international commissions and institutions released statements and reports regarding the injustices at stake, there was an incentive for press in Turkey and abroad to report on these releases and address the issue. So, while the Sulukule Platform initially alarmed the international institutions, this could generate a loop back into national informational circuits. For instance, remarks about Sulukule in the EU evaluation report of Turkey instigated coverage in the domestic press (Dağlar, 2011). Likewise UNESCO's critique toward the authorities brought Sulukule to the press' attention (Radikal, 2009). Sometimes the strategy of manufacturing such loops was successful according to the activists. The personal blog *Reclaim Istanbul*, by one of the activists, claimed that "the extent of bad publicity" regarding Sulukule compelled the president of TOKİ to communicate with the Platform and commit to the alternative development plans crafted by STOP, the planners collective affiliated to the Platform (Reclaim Istanbul, 2011). At other times, the strategy was not successful, as was the case of the UN Habitat report mentioned above. Platform activists considered the UN an important addressee because it acknowledged urban rights beyond property protection. In a personal interview, Sulukule Platform activist Cihan Baysal, who prepared the report, argued that it had been ignored by the UN itself. The responsible authorities within the UN had not even looked at the summary, she complained. Her hope

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[141] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 6, 2011; Personal interview, Istanbul, May 12, 2011.

was now that opinion makers, other rights organizations, and scholars, including me, would

pick up on the report in order to at least disseminate the story of Sulukule into wider

informational circuits.

Moreover, one of the activists, whom I will call Solmaz, argued that when

communicating with the municipality, Platform activists had to strategically incorporate "the

other's language."[142] She said, "In order to fight them, you have to understand their language."

For instance, since the municipal board dealing with the transformation project made

architectural and physical issues their priority, the Platform also started to emphasize these

issues. In this case, the Platform's multiplicity was also *tactical* in Michel de Certeau's (1984:

30) sense: appropriation of discourses and styles enabled the activists to "use, manipulate,

and divert" them and in that way challenge the imposed spatial order. Speaking about the

advantages of the Platform's multiple lines of effectivity, Solmaz argued that the

municipality had not been able to judge whether what was at stake was a cultural festival, a

movement of sorts, or political action by dissidents. She claimed that transgressing those

categories and operating in unexpected manners had been the strength of the resistance.[143]

The Sulukule Platform activists cultivated a discourse about a networked, borderless

and center-less mode of self-organization. Networked self-organization was supposed to

enlist as many supporters as possible in order to make use of different sets of skills and

knowledge and produce informational circuits between various institutions and domestic and

international publics. One of the blogs by the Sulukule Platform announced that:

> The Platform has a structure that questions the transformation process imposed on
> the neighborhood, searches alternative approaches, and attempts to come up with

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[142] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 4, 2010.

[143] Ibid.

solutions for the daily emergencies. It is a formation without a center and borders. Everybody tackles the subject in accord with their own priorities and fields of expertise and within the bounds of their capabilities. At that point they join the platform. Some of us work in the neighborhood; some of us work in offices. Some of us travel all around the city in order to have our voice heard by the relevant authorities. We provide coordination and communication via email and we sometimes take initiative to make individual or participatory decisions.[144]

According to this statement, the self-organizing structure stimulated processes of questioning transformation plans and developing alternative approaches to urban renewal and regeneration, thereby soliciting input of all kinds. There was no hierarchy and no center and decisions could be made autonomously or in participatory fashion. In a personal interview, one of the activists further explained how the platform worked. He described the platform as consisting of "people from different backgrounds in a very loose structure without an association or foundation, allowing people to come in and go out, being able to put in as much as they wanted."[145] My informant further emphasized, "Different strategies were allowed." He said that these strategies often ad hoc in order to provide immediate responses. Although there were some principles such as "defending the cultural heritage and being with the people that are disadvantaged, social justice etc., [these] were never principles taught as such."[146] Likewise, Solmaz, who had been involved since the very beginning and was clearly a key figure, argued that she did not have any prejudices or categorizations in mind regarding the different contributions that the Sulukule Platform had solicited. She said "The platform has no top and bottom structure, but everyone is very different and we share the duties." Solmaz emphasized that "In general, everything has its use, whatever has been done,

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[144] See http://sulukulegunlugu.blogspot.com/2008/05/4-mays-pazar-mustafa-iftinin-radikal.html , accessed on July 15, 2012.

[145] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 12, 2011.

[146] Ibid.

everything has benefitted something; somewhere, it has left a trace." Whatever people

produced, "Every time it tells something and it can become influential at some point."[147]

There were discourses of justice and cultural uniqueness, socio-economic and urban

planning accounts, arguments for cultural entrepreneurialism, and anti-capitalist critique.

Furthermore, there were both amateur and professional artistic forms of expression and

media. These discourses and expressive forms alluded to different value regimes including

socio-economic justice, economic potential, the quality of life in the city, democracy,

aesthetic value, canonic culture, alternative subculture, revolutionary potential etc. Although

the Platform's discourses and value regimes were diverse, a consistently recurring theme was

the framing of Sulukule's case as one of cultural rights and minority protection. Cultural

uniqueness was articulated to moral standards of rights (minority rights, human rights) as

well as to the value regimes of the "creative city."

For instance, discourses of cultural uniqueness provided linkage to the US Helsinki

Commission, which monitors rights issues mainly in Europe. A letter by this Commission,

dated April 4, 2008, framed cultural uniqueness as a moral concern:

> We write to express our concern about the Sulukule urban transformation project
> developed by the Fatih and Greater Istanbul municipalities. It is our understanding
> that six districts in Istanbul including Sulukule have been chosen to undergo urban
> transformation as part of the 2010 European Capital of Culture. While we understand
> the need to preserve many historical landmarks in Istanbul, we are deeply troubled
> that Sulukule, home to a Roma community since 1054 and one of the oldest Romani
> settlements in Europe, is on the brink of total demolition and will be replaced with
> new villa style homes. The unfortunate outcome of this urban renewal project will
> not only destroy this historic neighborhood, but will force 3,500 Sulukule residents
> 40 kilometers outside of the city to the district of Taşoluk or onto the streets. (Nuket,
> 2008)

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[147] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 4, 2010.

This statement mobilized meanings and values of "Roma identity," "Community," and "Heritage." It called upon Turkey's public authorities to take responsibility as Istanbul carried the prestigious title of European Capital of Culture 2010. Similarly, the EU's report on Minority and Cultural Rights in Turkey, which evaluated these issues as part of Turkey's EU accession process, stated that there was no proof of progress made with regard to the cultural rights of Roma in Turkey.

The discourses of cultural uniqueness found expression in a range of media forms incorporating text, image, and sound. The most professional video clip by the Platform, produced under the name of the affiliated Roma association, showed a small orchestra and two female dancers, while an older man sings the song My Beloved Sulukule (*Canım Sulukule*), mixing gypsy musical traditions and the popular Turkish *Alaturka* musical style. The video clip opens with a series of titles explaining that Sulukule had been in the "heart" of the city Istanbul for over 1000 years. The camera's gaze passes through the monumental city walls, stemming from Theodosian times, and journeys into the streets of Sulukule. It ends up in a small entertainment house, where the orchestra starts playing. The musicians all wear numbered armbands. As the film evolves, we learn that the numbers on the armbands correspond to the numbers that mark houses for demolition. Fragments of the performance and of the demolition process intermingle: as bulldozers start taking down the tiny, fragile houses of the Sulukuleans, the music's pace increases and the women start dancing. The film ends with titles giving information about the demolitions and their social implications. The last titles read "Don't leave Istanbul without its cheer!" and "Lay claim to Sulukule!"

According to the person who uploaded the film to the internet video-sharing website Vimeo and who identified as its director, the film had been presented to the EU Council on

city planning in order "to explain what was going on in Istanbul to EU members."[148]

Apparently, the voice of the singer, the bodies of the dancers, the looks of the musicians, the sounds of the instruments, the atmosphere in the entertainment house, combined with the footage of the demolition process and the titles—everything together— had an explanatory function and expressed what was at stake, to EU politicians as well as broader domestic and international publics. However, in expressing what was at stake presumably, the film alluded to the value regimes of the "creative city" project, discussed in previous chapters, that was in full preparation at the time of the film's production: culture, arts, entertainment etc that would inspire creative energies and trigger productivity, be it among self-organizing communities or professionals in the creative sector. Sulukuleans were in fact presented as both in potential members of such a community and as professionals stimulating creative economies. Focusing much of its activities and symbolic production on music, dance, and unique heritage, the Sulukule Platform appropriated technologies of place branding and presented the neighborhood as a key element of Istanbul's "creative city" project. The fact that the neighborhood was part of Istanbul's historic peninsula made the case for urban activists readily appropriable as one of cultivating and regenerating precious cultural heritage. One activist argued that, in the memories of many Istanbulites and tourists, Sulukule had "quite a romantic and positive meaning."[149] Solmaz, whom I quoted before, reported that Sulukule in itself was a "mediatic place" and that Platform had been able to use music as a "connection" for wider audiences[150] The case of Sulukule then indicates that place-branding

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[148] See http://vimeo.com/3244474 , accessed on July 20, 2012.

[149] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 12, 2011.

[150] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 4, 2010.

technologies also offer ways of *claiming* value for communities threatened with displacement by the urban transformation projects.

The Sulukule Platform explored possibilities that my informant at the Istanbul 2010 Agency had argued neither the Agency nor the municipality had managed to do very well: instead of "selling a city," marketing of the city in "the communal way" so that local residents would benefit from the "creative city" project (see Chapter 6). For Sulukule Platform members, claiming value in this way was a strategy for contesting exclusive, hegemonic identities. In a personal interview, Cihan explained that media discourses commonly criminalize Sulukuleans as well as Romas in general.[151] According to her observations for instance, a mention of the decay of buildings in the neighborhood would carry the connotation of moral decay of its residents. The urban transformation process was presented by authorities and proponents as one of "cleaning" the city and making it more secure for the "real" Istanbulites. The campaign by the Sulukule Platform was an attempt to turn negative stereotypes into positive representations. Roma communities were often constructed as "others" and excluded from the "Turkish" and/ or "urban-Istanbulite" community of "we."[152] Technologies of place branding were attractive for urban activism because of their potential to employ networked brand platforms as less exclusive and more differential technologies of belonging to the city. Networked self-organization and creative production were not restricted to Istanbul 2010 programs; they also informed the resistance networks that used place branding as a more differential technology of belonging to the so-called "creative city."

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[151] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 6, 2011.

[152] Discrimination of Roma and their isolation from Turkish society is widespread. For instance, statistics by a World Value Survey poll that 72% of Turks in Turkey would not want to have a Romani person as their neighbor (Karaman & Islam, 2012).

Participation and Intervention

Discourses and practices of networking in the case of the Sulukule Platform were articulated with invocations of participation. "Participation" opened up a field of political contestation and competition between the activists and state governance institutions. For instance, Sulukule Platform activist Hacer Foggo criticized the municipality's use of a discourse of participation and its slogan "People First."[153] As she underlined, according to a 2007 survey by the Platform, only 7.5 percent of the local residents said their opinion about the project was asked in one way or another and 56 percent of local residents said that they were never contacted by the municipality. In contrast, the Platform claimed to engage in "participatory planning" that included neighborhood populations as well as diverse professional experts. In the 2008 report for UNESCO, the Sulukule Platform is described as intending to "create [a] dialogue foundation in order to provide participation and sustainability" (2) and seeking the involvement of "all relevant local, central and international actors" (ibid). It claimed that due to the lack of participatory mechanisms in the municipality's approach, or as the document stated "insufficient contribution from both parties," the preservation process, which was UNESCO's primary concern, was insufficient. According to the 92-page report, the Sulukule Platform offered an important model for an alternative approach that should be considered for adaptation to other areas in Istanbul that were included in UNESCO's World Heritage List (Kıyak İngin, 2008). The municipality's stated efforts toward "participation" can hardly be taken seriously. In the past, the

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[153] According to the Sulukule Platform's survey regarding the involvement of local residents in the municipality's project, by September 2007, only 7.5 percent of the local residents said their opinion about the project was asked in one way or another. On the whole, 56 percent of local residents said that they were never contacted by the municipality.

municipality's website featured a poll asking the local constituencies whether they were content with the "renewal" of the neighborhood Sulukule. While the poll might have been a means of creating an illusion of public consent and legitimacy for the project, it was exactly the affected populations, many of whom did not use the internet at all, that the municpality avoided asking by using this poll. The activists' efforts toward "participation" deserve further analysis. The Sulukule Platform's discourses of participation should be considered together with socio-technical mechanisms that organize, enable, and constrain involvement by different parties. In the following, my aim is to analyze the Platform's networking assemblages in terms of how they organized participation *materially* in a socio-technical sense. I argue that urban struggle had to face and negotiate the repercussions of particular informational divides (Nakamura, 2008): unequal distributions of particular sets of knowledge and skills; divisions in subjects and objects of various technologically enabled "gazes"; and connections and disconnections between circuits of information.

To begin with, most of the activists belonged to Istanbul's cultural elites and they had professional careers as media producers, journalists, scholars, non-governmental organization (NGO) workers, and "creative workers" in the cultural sector. These cultural elites attributed the value of uniqueness to places that were neglected by mainstream tastes and development schemes (see also Özkan, 2011). One of the activists told me in a personal interview how in this case the activists used their professional skills for resisting:

> All those people [activists] involved, they were so resourceful and they were so skilled especially in communication. The whole platform, rather than doing things on the site was active in communication, spreading the word, campaigning, organizing and setting up certain spaces for activities.[154]

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[154] Personal interview, Istanbul, May 12, 2011.

Being "skilled" and having access to relevant resources, these individuals were able to insert the concerns of the specific neighborhood into the online informational zones of urban activism as well as into wider national and international circuits of media- and knowledge production. This same informant told me that although they had tried to work more closely with local residents, it had proven to be unrealistic to aim for full-time inclusion of local populations in the alternative planning activities. Similarly, other activists I interviewed admitted that "a distance" had always remained between the activists on the one hand and the local populations on the other produced by different skills, lifestyles, and, as I will argue later, politics.[155]

This "distance" was reflected in the Platform's practices of networked symbolic production. The Platform's networking assemblages constructed divisions in subjects and objects of photographic, filmic, scholarly, and journalistic "gazes." Sulukuleans were represented in and by the discourses and media forms that the activists produced and that they mobilized as strategies of addressing powerful institutions as well as wider publics.[156] Similarly, distances, divisions, and disconnections resurfaced in listserv practices. These practices underlined clear divisions of labor and patterns of connection and disconnection. The Sulukule Platform activists communicated intensely over a listserv that is still going strong today and has expanded to cover issues pertaining to urban activism beyond the Sulukule campaign. From the Platform's beginning, the listserv was an important medium through which the activists exchanged ideas, coordinated resistance efforts, and informed

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[155] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 6, 2011.

[156] While the Platform worked closely with the local neighborhood association, Sulukule Romani Culture Development and Cooperation Association (Sulukule Roman Kültürünü Geliştirme ve Dayanışma Derneği), only the chair of the neighborhood organization, Şükrü Pündük, was frequently quoted in the documents prepared by the Sulukule Platform and in press interviews. Yet beyond him, other locals did not have a direct contribution to press statements or these documents, which nonetheless were a central strategy in presenting the Sulukule cause.

new supporters. Often there were calls for immediate help for someone with the skills to accomplish a particular task, such as speaking to visiting journalists from abroad, or helping with an article or a website. Moreover, the Sulukule Platform's listserv formed part of the informational circuits of urban activism in Istanbul, where several major listservs varied in size from a couple of hundred subscribers to more than 1,000.[157] Through the use of its listserv the Platform also connected to other urban movements with different ideological orientations or focused on other concerns.[158] The listserv was a medium through which the Sulukule Platform could act as "a loose structure" and people with different ideological convictions and concerns could somehow affiliate without registering as members or committing in any binding sense. As holds for Istanbul's urban activism, listservs constitute a modality of organization that rather than commanding conviction and commitment relies on the possibility of withdrawal, neglect, and keeping track at a distance, which enables in some ways more dynamic political investments and re-alliances (Dean, 2003; Lovink, 2005). Yet the local populations of Sulukule were not connected to these informational circuits at all.

Nevertheless, certain discursive and media practices also encompassed informational strategies that negotiated unequal distributions of skills and ensuing roles and identities. I want to argue that especially activist video production and dissemination did so by cultivating a degree of what Mikhail Bakhtin calls *heteroglossia* in its symbolic production.

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[157] Some of the bigger listservs are SOS Istanbul, Kenthareketleriforumu, toplumunsehircilikhareketi, Planlama.Org, and several list servs by the leftist organization Halkevi.

[158] As activists on either side told me, the ideological divides revolved around the "old" question of reformation versus revolution. For them, this extended to the question of whether to participate in partnerships with the municipality and other established institutions, or whether to push for local, direct democracy, which would constitute autonomy. The listservs generated networked informational circuits of urban activism that was characterized as much by waging antagonistic conflict as by sharing particular issues or concerns held in common (see also Dean, 2003). Messages that were cross-posted to various listservs often related to emergencies such as evictions, demolitions, and escalating clashes with the authorities in locales where affiliates of a particular collective were active and could provide first- or second-hand information. Cross-postings were also used to increase the numbers of bodies in a street protest or signatures in a campaign.

Short, amateur as well as more professional documentaries increasingly appeared on video-sharing websites and blogs as activists and students entered the neighborhood with their hand-held digital cameras. These activist videos, as I argue later, were prevalent on commercial internet platforms and received up to tens of thousands of views. Following Bakhtin, activist video production included utterances that were not subordinated to a singularly dominant discourse but that formed instances of "another's speech," "accented and individual utterance" that decentralized the text (Bakhtin, 1981: 272, 313). Videos contained such "accented utterances," namely sayings and whatever other performative self-representations by Sulukuleans, as the film makers did not try all that hard to subject the diverse visual, audio, and textual input that they incorporated to any privileged, monological discourse.[159] Obviously, also in the case of video production there was a division of roles between those filming (namely the activists) and those being filmed (Sulukuleans). Sometimes, the camera seemed to be just running, accompanying the filmmaker's exploration of the neighborhood, documenting its physical features and the encounters with local residents, activists, and others. At other times, the clips were composed of photo stills, accompanied by music and titles. By choosing shots, providing voice-overs, adding titles, tagging, editing, adding music, and writing comments to their uploaded videos, activists coming into the neighborhood controlled the symbolic production. But they did so only up to a certain extent and the distinction of filming and being filmed did not directly translate into agency and the complete lack thereof.

Instead, the positions of subject and object that were rendered by the photographic and documentary-filmic "gazes" were negotiable. Since the activist videos consisted of rather "raw" footage, they gave a sense of immediacy. Yet the sense of immediacy did not refer to

[159] See also Nichols, 1991; Hall ,1996.

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the capture of "natural" realities but to moments of mediation and media-making in which the camera was continuously noticed and a center of attention. These moments further generated instantaneous performances of identities. The videos staged encounters between Sulukuleans and incoming activists in which the play of identities came to the fore. To some degree, the local residents affected and controlled the symbolic production by telling each other how to pose; by giving "guided tours" to incoming activists during which they narrated how they thought the neighborhood had been harmed by the ongoing demolitions; by leaving graffiti messages on the remaining walls of destroyed buildings that showed up again and again in the activist videos; by demanding the camera to be pointed at them as they told their stories to the film makers as well as the anticipated audiences; by directly pleading for help to the camera; by chasing incomers with cameras away or questioning them; and by seizing the camera's attention in order to create the opportunity to shame people they had disputes with such as lovers who postponed marrying them. Lastly, the Sulukuleans in the activist videos were empowered by another kind of "gaze," different than the one supported by the technological apparatuses of activism: Sulukuleans looked backed into the cameras and examined the activists, sometimes with suspicion and, as they got used to activists and media crews coming into the neighborhood, with a blasé attitude. Their gazes seemed to speak back to the film makers and, indirectly, the implied audiences of activist knowledge production.

According to the Platform activist Solmaz, the fact that the activists' symbolic production included a range of discourses and media forms was crucial in order to invoke "Sulukule" in multiple ways. She thought that this multiplicity was something "nice because [the case of Sulukule] has become visible, touchable." Activists created multiple "traces" of Sulukule, as Solmaz said, and ensured that there was "not only the knowledge of the

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municipality."[160] To the extent that activists were interested in somehow alternative knowledge and visions, they used strategies such as magnifying commonly overlooked, everyday objects, behaviors, sounds, gestures, as well as "empty" moments. Recording the overlooked and the minor allows for new experiences of urban spaces and redistributions of care and attention.

After the demolition process had caused irreversible damage, activist discourses and aesthetics emerged around slogans such as "They took Sulukule and broke my drum!", which featured on the poster for an exhibition about Sulukule organized by the Platform in a gallery space in the historical entertainment district Beyoğlu. Activist video clips eventually became less the celebrations of Romani culture and more the witness accounts testifying to the brutality of destruction and the despair and hardships of everyday life for remaining, expelled, and relocated populations. At the same time, these videos started problematizing their "objects," alluding to themes of loss and absence, memory, and ghostliness. The professional photographer Fatih Pınar, who by now is well-known in activist circles and beyond for documenting urban struggle, contributed a video clip consisting of photo stills accompanied by the voice-over of the laments and pleas of affected individuals, including an old man who tells how he was forced to start living in a tent together with his family and his 20-day old grandchild. The film ends on the ghostly image of a girl in a red dress fading out and disappearing among the rubble. The video was uploaded to Vimeo, where Pınar commented in English and Turkish:

> They killed Sulukule. Again they won. Sulukule, with its culture of hundreds of
> years is taken from its real owners and given to the rich investors to create a new and
> artificial disneyland [sic.]. Now the last inhabitants are walking in the dust of the

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[160] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 4, 2010.

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destruction and looking for their lost memories among things like iron tools and copper cables.[161]

Both this statement and the video clip associated the decomposition and shattering of physical materiality in the demolition process with the shattering of embodied life worlds and memories. Physical destruction symbolizes immaterial loss.

In a similar vein, other comments about uploaded videos emphasized subjective experiences and the inner world of reflection. Rather than committing to an objective gaze, they rendered the media objects they were a part of, the totality of video and text, constructed artifacts. The upload of the award-winning short documentary *My Beloved Sulukule* by Nelja Osseiran set out to create a "lasting memory." The film maker writes in the comment section of the upload about her own experiences as a photographer in the neighborhood:

> I learned so much from them and about them. I realized that in time I had become their 'Nejla Abla' [*Sister Nejla*]. They would be so happy to see me when I went. They invited me in their houses and posed for me. I would be giving them either their pictures or pictures of people they knew and loved. Each time I went, my heart felt heavier. It was steadily taking the shape of a disaster area. Most of the houses were in rubble or completely gone. Each time I went, I felt more hopeless and helpless... Still I went - I felt I could not let them down. I knew they would be waiting for their pictures and the light I saw in their eyes overshadowed the shame of humanity, the brutality of poverty.[162]

Osseiran argues that she did not construct this memory only for outsiders, but also for locals as she often gave them pictures of themselves, their neighbors, and their neighborhood to keep or to send to their sons and husbands if they were away from home for military service or in prison.

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[161]See http://vimeo.com/5071818 , accessed on July 23, 2012.

[162] See http://vimeo.com/19842109 , accessed on July 23, 2012.

Activist recordings of everyday-life scenes—some more professional than others—and their distribution over video-sharing websites and weblogs were one way in which activists aimed to connect different social groups in transformative ways. Activists assigned importance to these videos as they used them to both mediate experiences of victimized urban populations and generate new experiences and visions for others, leading to relations of sympathy and solidarity. In other words, interpellation and transformation of viewing audiences through the mediated encounter with Sulukuleans was much of the intended effect for activists. In a passionately written essay accompanying the upload of *My Beloved Sulukule* on Vimeo, Cihan, whom I quoted before, commented: "[…] conscience speaks; it speaks that being merely a spectator to the agony of others means indirect participation in the crimes committed." And further, "We feel through sight and comprehend as we see. When Gülsüm [the voice-over narrator of the video, a Sulukule resident] stops, the viewer is no more the person he/she was at the beginning, is bitten deeper and seized by an urge to revolt; no doubt that another witness has been added to the list of those who will testify."[163] Counting on activist media stimulating new insights and affects, Cihan speculated that new bonds of solidarity would emerge across the city and its populations:

> While we record, one by one, in our memories, what they, the oppressors do not see and do not understand; we may be faced someday, somewhere, perhaps at unexpected moments and even at moments within broader spans, with the pain given to the others and our conscience may be disturbed. A child's face in Tarlabaşı, a woman's laugh in Fener-Balat, a wall in Ayvansaray or an old man from this [Sulukule] neighborhood.[164]

As Cihan's account suggests, activist videos did not only reconstruct or preserve Sulukule's past, but also invoked wider spatialities by drawing the connection between

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[163] Ibid.
[164] Ibid.

Sulukule and the pan-Istanbul "urban transformation." Similarly, Osseiran's film did not only reconstruct or preserve Sulukule's past, but ended by providing information from the UN Habitat report I referred to before: at least one million people in Istanbul were under threat of losing their homes.

Activists wanted their networking practices, including their media production, to generate new visions, topologies, mental maps, and forms of sociality that would be transformative of urban social relations and that would allow for the solidarity of an ever-widening resistance network.

In the above quote, Cihan appealed to the antagonistic language of "oppressors" and "oppressed," and suggested that "the," the oppressors, did not even understand the realities of the other party. However, beyond those two categories, the "we" she invoked was not clearly situated at either side of oppressor or oppressed but a third category that constituted a middle-field with undecided politics. More concretely, the "we" addressed the video's viewing audiences, who were not the "repressed others" of society, but the urban middle-classes of internet users and consumers of the Platform's symbolic production. The Sulukule Platform targeted exactly mobilization of this middle-field with its undecided politics. Moreover, the kind of subversion that the activist strategies pursued can be conceptualized as what Stuart Hall (1996) calls a transformation that does not substitute or abandon binaries and hierarchies but "invades" them and in doing so exploits and challenges them. Such transformation links to Bakhtinian dialogics, rather than Marxian dialectics: it counterposes "the exercise of cultural power through the imposition of the norm in an attempt to freeze and fix meaning in language" by exploiting "the constant eruption of new meanings, the fluidity of heteroglossia, and the way meaning's inherent instability and heterogeneity

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dislocated and displaced language's apparently 'finished' character" (Hall, 1996: 296).

Sulukule Platform strategies elaborated such a transformation by integrating the heteroglot

representation of Sulukuleans and Romani culture into the urban media ecology. Their

symbolic production did not transcend or abandon distinctions of self and other but instead

mobilized an excess economy revolving around the operations of the *carnivalesque*[165] that

Romani culture, positioned as the exotic "other" of Turkish and middle-class urbanite

identity, embodied. The textual and visual discourses of cultural uniqueness as well as the

nostalgia regarding the loss of this uniqueness in the process of demolition and urban

transformation constituted sites of "the transgressions of pleasure, play, and desire" (Hall,

1996: 301). Mixing exoticist and artistic expression with calls for justice, the mobilization of

this excess economy was supposed to transform urban relations by generating new visions

and experiences for viewing audiences encountering "Sulukule" in mediated forms. This

economy was further articulated to, and captured by, technologies of place branding, value

regimes in the "creative city," and the moral standards of cultural rights discourse.

I want to conclude that the Platform, as activists themselves admitted, did not realize

its promise of participatory planning and self-organization that would include local

populations fully. The socio-technical organization of networking generated particular roles

and divisions and Sulukuleans did not emerge as independent knowledge producers.

However, while the division in knowledge producers and subjects of various gazes (activists)

versus objects of these gazes (Sulukuleans) was not effaceable, it was nonetheless negotiable.

As the case of activist video production and dissemination indicates, the socio-technical

organization of networked resistance mobilized the transformative potential of Bakhtinian

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[165] I do not refer to the carnavalesque as an accurate reflection of historical conditions but as a contemporary
cultural construct that both organizes and challenges the classed and ethnicized binaries and hierarchies of
Turkish urban society.

dialogics. Cultivating *hetereoglossia* in symbolic production formed a way of negotiating the informational divides expressing themselves in divisions in subjects and objects of various technologically enabled "gazes" and connections and disconnections between circuits of information. Moreover, heteroglot symbolic production mobilized an excess economy

The next section discusses the effects of the Platform's socio-technical organization of participation and resistance in relation to the urban media ecology at large and ICT-supported practices by nonactivist populations.

Searching "Sulukule"

The Sulukule activists made intense use of blogs and video-sharing websites. The role of commercial internet services deserves therefore further scrutiny. Services like Google's search engine and the video-sharing websites Vimeo and Youtube form an important part of the urban media ecology and, following Lefebvre, contribute to the city as *oeuvre*.[166] In the following, I focus on the search-based internet by discussing search engines and video-sharing websites as information management systems that present and hierarchize information in particular ways. My aim is to analyze how internet practices, especially search, organized, enabled, and constrained participation and resistance with regard to wider, nonactivist publics. Such an analysis suggests the (possible) effects of the Sulukule Platform's socio-technical organization of participation and resistance.

Activist networking assemblages integrated ICTs as a means of establishing informational circuits; producing mental maps of urban transformation, victimhood, and resistance; and generating virtual topologies forming bonds of association between different

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[166] Other video-sharing websites that are popular in Turkey are Dailymotion, Metacafe, and the Turkish video-sharing website Izlesene.

publics in Istanbul, Turkey, and abroad. However, the conditions of possibility for the emergence on the internet of particular discourses about "urban transformation" [*kentsel dönüşüm*], either official pro-urban transformation narratives or opposing, activist narratives, are co-determined by the practices of use of popular internet services such as search engines and video-sharing websites. Richard Rogers (2009) attributes an important role to search engines since, more than "surfing," they define how we interact with the internet. He (19) argues that search engines are "epistemological machines in the sense that they crawl, index, cache and ultimately order content." Rogers' question (2004: 28) is how the Web functions as a "potential collision space between official and unofficial accounts of reality."

Following Rogers's points regarding search as well as his question, I want to note that the possibility of producing alternative mental maps of urban space and topologies of association and solidarity is partly contingent on the workings of information management systems like search engines. Particular technological practices such as adding tags, titles, and comments to video uploads allow search engines to establish associations between different discourses. Thanks to technological practices by urban activists, search engines can connect discourses representing urban transformation processes in various neighborhoods. In that sense, search engines and user practices may contribute to the creation of a larger critical narrative of urban transformation and to the imagination of a topology of struggle against exclusive urban transformation. When I did searches, looking for Sulukule on Youtube and clicking on recommended videos also brought up more videos of, and references to, other Istanbul neighborhoods facing urban transformation projects including Tarlabaşı, Fener-Balat, Ayvansaray, Derbent, and Kağıthane.

Nevertheless, the question of whether internet-based information systems produced an account of reality alternative to official resources and did what the activists hoped they would do is hard to answer in general terms. Our consumption of information is structured though operations of information management systems and the ways in which they order, prioritize, and recommend digital items to us. Yet, search engines and recommendation systems aim to calculate in customized ways what we will like best and what will be most meaningful to us. They do this on the basis of patterns of activity, location, language settings, and profile information. In consequence, it would be fair to say that there is not one internet, which is the same for all, as our language makes us believe; there are *multiple* internets that present information differently to each of us (Rogers, 2009; Langlois, 2011).[167] So, for instance, once Youtube "figures you out" and is able to calculate the probabilities of what information, what video clips, would meet your interests and tastes, it keeps recommending you information somehow related to the resources you initially engaged with.

Speaking then in the most general terms, with regard to urban transformation, the internet was used for communication with wider audiences by governance and planners groups in favor of urban transformation projects and by the activists opposing urban transformation projects alike.[168] However, remarkably, regardless of the variables I chose,

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[167] Ganaele Langlois (2011) develops a framework for the analysis of operations of search engines and recommendation systems. She looks at the possibility of meaning and *meaningfulness* in the context of online, for-profit internet platforms that rely on user interactivity, such video sharing websites. Langlois turns to Felix Guattari to argue that processes of meaning production and circulation are regulated by "semiotechnologies" that organize "the logics through which data becomes meaningful or meaning informational" (10). Semiotechnologies comprise the "range of technocultural processes that, by working with and through signs, organize the relationships, mediations and translations between data input, information, linguistic symbols, cultural practices of communication and users" (ibid).

[168] I conducted test searches with Google's search engine, while cancelling customized search and paying attention to determinants like location setting, regional preferences, and language preferences. With the help of a friend actually located in Turkey, I conducted on the same day Google searches from within Turkey and from the USA as well as USA-based searches, while setting my regional preference to Turkey and adding Turkish to

searches on the neighborhood name "Sulukule" provided an abundance of activist resources, the top-ranked of which was the Sulukule Platform blog, which was returned above information provided by established news agencies and municipality resources. The top-ranking and omnipresence of activist resources is an indication that the search-based internet in this case generated, to use Rogers' phrase, accounts of reality alternative to official ones.

However, the fact that search engines matched "Sulukule" with activist resources does not mean that activists had been able to introduce an authoritative discourse regarding urban transformation altogether. For instance, searching not on the name of this neighborhood but on the Turkish term for urban transformation [*kentsel dönüşüm*] rendered among the top ranks the websites of planning agencies and project developers cooperating with Istanbul's municipalities and TOKİ. Nevertheless, this search term also generated academic and activist resources among the results on the first page. The top-ranked return was the distinctively leftist news portal *habersol.org.tr*. Moreover, in my searches, Youtube in particular offered a heterogeneous mix of visual and textual discourses.[169] Besides the activist videos discussed above, the search engine rendered popular recordings of Romani music and dance performances, and scenes from Turkish and international fiction films and television series stereotyping "Gypsies." Search as a site of research raises questions regarding the production and consumption of digital formations of place, identity, and "otherness" and their re-articulations to concrete urban spaces and bodies. The fact that "Sulukule" was an object of so many different gazes (planning gazes, resistance gazes,

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my preferred languages. In each case, I disabled personalized search as well as customization based on signed-out search activity.

[169] The search engines of these video-sharing websites, like Google, personalize and customize results and thus make general conclusions problematic. Youtube gives less than Google control over the degrees of personalization and customization. I searched the Youtube collection through Google in order to undo customization based on signed-out search activity.

exoticist gazes, artistic gazes) made these processes only more intense but not more "participatory" as the people of Sulukule themselves were not involved.

The activists of the Platform hoped that Sulukule could become an icon and symbol for the process of urban transformation that threatened many neighborhoods in Istanbul and that alternative mental maps and bonds of solidarity would emerge across urban populations and places.[170] However, Kırca-Schroeder & Aytar (2012) argue that the case of Sulukule tended to absorb all public attention at the expense of other cases and while the activists knew how to address and involve various powerful institutions and actors successfully, Sulukule was isolated from other neighborhoods in Istanbul threatened by the same fate of demolition. There is a technological or socio-technical side to both arguments. My analysis of the search-based internet suggests that while a larger critical narrative regarding urban transformation might emerge, there also was an attention economy at work that tended to favor Sulukule at the expense of the visibility of other neighborhoods marked for urban transformation projects. In terms of receiving attention, rather than information being available online, ranking and placement on search engine result pages matters and sites that receive attention tend to garner only more as they gain priority in those rankings (Rogers, 2009; 2010). "Sulukule," favored by the activists, managed to become absolutely dominant on the internet.

Moreover, while Sulukule's place-branded reputation yielded somehow attractive meanings, in the case of the Tarlabaşı neighborhood's digital presence, discriminatory and racist meanings were more common. This neighborhood currently faces demolition and expulsion of populations yet urban activists have not mobilized to the same degree as in Sulukule. Meanwhile, Youtube won't hesitate to present you video recommendations that

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[170] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 4, 2010.

include the most discriminatory and racist interpretations of street scenes which through tags and titles become associated with "Tarlabaşı." In the results I got, more than a few videos related to this search term contained hate speech regarding transgender sex workers, homeless children addicted to glue huffing, and ethnic minorities presumably turned terrorists and thieves.

The comparison between the digital presences of Sulukule and Tarlabaşı are telling not only with regard to differences in activist approaches but also with regard to different official approaches. Pro-urban transformation discourses and official resources were relatively marginalized on the search-based web in the Sulukule case. What prevailed was the enormous amount of activist resources and media coverage. Moreover, due to the fact that the activists had managed to attract plenty of attention for their cause, the municipality had received so much critique that, it seems, they chose to keep quiet as much as possible. The municipality's website did not make an effort to be "transparent" and present the project at length but only gave sporadic updates about completed phases. In contrast, when 5 years after Sulukule the Tarlabaşı regeneration project started, the Beyoğlu municipality had learned from Fatih municipality's mistakes and sold the project immediately to the company GAP (which formed part of a holding of which Prime Minister Erdoğan's son-in-law was CEO). As I found, the developer's project website was ranked high in on Google. Most striking was the "before-and-after" imagery on the website that projected the expected urban transformation of the neighborhood as a kind of magical "make-over." The project film first displays scenes from everyday life in Tarlabaşı, emphasizing the fallen state of the buildings, the laundry between the buildings, garbage on the ground, and the children hanging around purposelessly. Then a break with a title "Future Tarlabaşı" follows. The photographic-realist

imagery is replaced by a "game gaze" that moves through, and probes into, a 3-D, simulated world. Especially remarkable are the processes of computer-enabled morphing that execute the transition from contemporary, photographic scenes, following realistic representational conventions, into digital constructions of what these places will look like supposedly in the near future. Not only the buildings change: the laundry from the windows disappears, and so do garbage and graffiti. Even the sky clears up. The photographic-realist representation of an old lady in a black chador carrying grocery bags is replaced by the digitally simulated figure of a young lady wearing a pink blouse and white pants, carrying, instead of bulky groceries, fancy boutique bags. I want to argue that the visual discourse and aesthetics of digital morphing and simulation constituted a regime of truth that helped executers and advocates of the urban transformation project image and present this project as a clean, instantaneous, and smooth make-over; a process that, free of destruction and pain, would magically turn inner-city slums into modern, wealthy, and orderly places. This aesthetic of reconfiguration erases questions of physical materialities being destroyed and going to waste, lifeworlds being terminated, and bodies being evicted and endangered. Urban transformation as "morphing" fit the municipality's claims that the project was invested in social and economic development of current populations and preservation of historical architecture.

The private-public partnership approach reflected what Stephan Graham and Simon Marvin (2001) call splintering urbanism: infrastructural networks that do not just stimulate connection but also "unbundle" public and private services by letting topological connections prevail over spatial contiguity and hence bypassing "non-valued" or "less powerful" people and places (Graham & Marvin, 2001: 33, 220; Coutard, 215: 49). In the case of Tarlabaşı's regeneration project, technological practices by the municipality were implicated in this

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condition of "splintering." The municipality website did not have an information page on the

transformation project within its official *.gov.tr* domain. Nowhere did it explain the project to

a general public or address the affected segments of the Tarlabaşı population. Instead the

municipality's website linked to the above-mentioned *.com* website by the project developer,

which, as a means of highlighting the public-private character of the undertaking,

appropriated the municipality's logo and showcased some pictures of, and comments by, the

Beyoğlu mayor. However, the project developer used the website to advertise the project to

interested parties such as real estate buyers and investors. This website provided legal and

technical details regarding buying and selling property, some construction plans and models,

and information about the project developer. The information regarding what would happen

to the current residents was vague and scarce, even though the website did not fail to

advertise the project as one promoting social and economic development and a healthier and

safer environment for the neighborhood's population. As I learned through fieldwork, the

local residents had many complaints about not being informed about their fate by either the

municipality or the project developer. These complaints were reiterated in an Amnesty

International report dated July, 2011, in which Amnesty mentions that intimidation and

threats to sign eviction notices were common.[171] In Tarlabaşı's case, "splintering" showed

itself in the emergence of ICT-supported informational circuits that addressed clients but not

affected populations, redrawing the boundaries of the public and polity that mattered.

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[171] The residents of Tarlabaşı were often not very digital literate and at times illiterate, or speakers of Kurdish and not Turkish. For the Amnesty International report, see http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/turkey-urged-halt-heavy-handed-evictions-istanbul-2011-07-18

Networks and Mediation

The Sulukule Platform's strategies were by all means successful in attracting attention, as they intended to, yet they did not manage to "save" Sulukule. In the following, I argue that the events show tensions between strategies for participation as transformative intervention into the socio-spatial and socio-technical order and strategies for attention that actually inclined to reproduce this order.

Integrated with the Sulukule Platform's networking assemblages, discourses of cultural uniqueness formed a strategy of attention. These discourses provided linkage to international institutional addressees preoccupied with cultural rights and minority issue. But more, these discourses corresponded with the value regimes of the "creative city." Following Celia Lury (2004) as I did in Chapter 6, technologies of branding manage popular involvement, although there is always the risk of losing control. As discussed in Chapter 6, Istanbul 2010's technologies of place branding, which operated as interfaces, called for, incited, and managed general creativity, involvement, and participation. Yet the "risk" inherent in the technologies of branding consists in productivity, transformation, and differentiation *beyond control*. Sulukule Platform discourses of cultural uniqueness and place-branding technologies sought to claim and produce value for the stigmatized and marginalized Sulukule neighborhood. Claiming value for Sulukule in this way formed a strategy of contesting exclusive, hegemonic identities. Yet did the resistance strategies of the Sulukule Platform in fact generate participation in Lefebvre's material sense of possibilities for transformative intervention in the socio-technical and socio-spatial order of the city?

The Platform's symbolic production did not transcend or abandon distinctions of self and other but instead mobilized an excess economy revolving around the operations of the

carnivalesque that Romani culture, positioned as the exotic "other" of "Turkish" and middle-class urbanite identity, embodied. The mobilization of this excess economy was supposed to transform urban relations by generating new visions and experiences for viewing audiences encountering "Sulukule" in mediated forms. The concrete effects of the Platform's strategies were contingent on the socio-technical organization of the activist network and the operations of the urban media ecology at large.

My argument regarding the effects the Platform's activism engendered can be laid out by mapping the activist network spatially. This shows the patterns of connection and disconnection in the Sulukule Platform's networking assemblages as well as the distribution of heterogeneity/dialogic spaces and homogeneity/monologic spaces. The Platform constituted a node in the network that it produced. As such, the Platform operated across multiple scales and connected multiple discourses, regimes of value, and mediating materialities. In some ways, both for Sulukuleans and activists there were important possibilities for negotiating roles and identities. Yet, the further out toward the "edges" of the network, the more this multiplicity became reduced and supplemented with monological discourses, single regimes of value, and a limited set of mediating materialities. Toward one edge of the Platform's network, there were powerful institutions that were committed to a narrow set of discourses and particular regimes of value (i.e., cultural uniqueness, minority rights, preservation of architectural heritage, property rights). Toward the other edge, there were the Sulukuleans, who were themselves not directly connected to these institutions yet were involved in other, rather local, circuits of communication and association. Furthermore, there were nonactivist populations, searching the internet and consuming media, for whom "Sulukule" was foremost a digital formation and a media spectacle. Arguably, activists who

themselves became producers of media, such as the amateur video makers, must have been aware of the differences between the complex realities they experienced in embodied ways and the representational and communicative possibilities they mobilized in their campaigning in online and offline media. Yet for those who never set a foot in the neighborhood, "Sulukule" was in the first place a mediated formation inscribed by particular "gazes" and by the ordering techniques of the search-based internet. In addition, Sulukuleans did not emerge as independent knowledge producers with regard to their neighborhood's digital presence on the internet but remained rather the objects of various activist and governance gazes.

I argued that the actual knowledge production by the activists was rather diverse, and their networking generated a transformative potential that often affected those most involved. Other scholars however have argued that the Platform's focus on cultural uniqueness worsened tendencies towards the "othering" of the populations of Sulukule (see Kırca-Schroeder & Aytar, 2012). While the Sulukule Platform's symbolic production was rather diverse and heteroglot, its public campaigns, conducted by and large on the internet, often focused on music and dance and the value of "unique" cultural heritage. Although temporary fixings of meaning are contingent on contextual articulations, the Platform's visual productions especially may not have avoided essentialisms, but in fact stimulated their recurrence. Remarkably, during the public campaign film discussed above, featuring the orchestra and the belly dancers together with images of the demolition processes, the camera's gaze is that of the outsider, who enters Sulukule. This exoticizing gaze is deployed in order to address viewers who are themselves nonRoma: foreigners and nonminority Istanbulites and Turks. Interpellated as an outsider, the viewer is confronted with an uncanny

mixture of entertainment (music and belly dance) and injustice (the violent tearing down of the tiny Sulukule houses by cranes).

I want to argue that the Sulukule Platform's success in terms of attracting attention through discourses of cultural uniqueness also formed the point at which the activist strategies yielded negative consequences. The Sulukule Platform was very well connected to media organizations and the activists hoped they could use established broadcast media to their advantage. However the media producers Sulukule attracted were often interested in spectacular symbolic production. As journalists and media crews flocked to Sulukule to cover events, visual discourses of "Gypsy culture" started to overwrite the multiplicity of concerns activists had about Sulukule's case, expressed in for instance socio-economic, legal, and anti-capitalist discourses. As one activist recalled in an interview, during a workshop in which Sulukuleans participated a journalist had no interest in asking them any questions. Instead, this journalist insisted that they would sing and dance in order for him to take their pictures. The request by the journalist in pursuit of the image of the "dancing gypsy" indicates how the discourse of cultural uniqueness turned local residents into objectified spectacle and deprived them of political voice. Exotic stereotypes assisted in normalizing the withdrawal of the law and citizenship rights by reproducing the myth that gypsies are used to "living the moment"—a suggestion that undermined the sense of crisis. Moreover, this ethnicizing image of the worriless bonvivant resonated all too well with the municipality's claims that Sulukule's populations were treated properly (Girit McDaniel, 2010).

The Platform's discourses of cultural uniqueness and its mediated construction of "Romani" identities, especially in light of their inherent potential for evolving into "othering" stereotypes, were at times rather incompatible with local sensitivities and politics. The choice

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by the activists to emphasize cultural uniqueness (music, dance, neighborhood culture [*mahalle kültürü*], and ethnicity) was problematic for the reason that it was not in line with the strategic negotiations of identity residents themselves often opted for. The residents preferred not to identify as Romani when they thought that would expose them to risks of further marginalization by Turkish conservatisms and nationalisms, in other words when such identification seemed disadvantageous and dangerous to them. It was common for Sulukuleans to publicly assure their affiliation by hanging huge Turkish flags in front of their houses or by calling themselves first of all Muslim, second Turk, and only in the third place Romani, as even the chair of the Sulukule Romani Culture Development and Cooperation Association, Şükrü Pündük, did (Girit McDaniel, 2010). As the activists knew, according to municipality polls only 31% of the population would describe themselves as Romani (Uysal, 2012: 14). Activists chose to ignore such data and relied on their own counting according to which 3,000-3,500 of the 5,000 residents identified as Romani. In doing so, the activists were rather irresponsive to political strategies of Sulukuleans who presented their identities differently depending on the situation they faced. The position of the activists, who advocated resistance, was further complicated by the fact that the majority of people despite losing their houses still voted for the conservative-Islamic ruling party, the AKP. The activists saw this voting behavior again as a result of fear and repression by the authorities.[172]

The activists assumed that focusing on Romani culture and identity in their campaign was a counterforce against the assimilatory and repressive strategies by the municipality, which were backed-up by the discourses of mainstream, conservative media outlets. Describing the repressive, assimilatory strategies and discriminatory discourses through which Roma and nonRoma were socialized in Turkey, one activist told me: "If you train

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[172] Personal interview, Istanbul, June 6, 2011.

people like that of course they don't want to say their identity. But if you look around [in Sulukule], you can see the culture, the neighborhood culture [*mahalle kültürü*], the Romani culture, and you can understand that there is something special in this place."[173] In their fight against repression and assimilation, activists chose to construct the complex realities of the neighborhood that they themselves experienced as "special" and "different" as matters of "Romani" identity and culture. In that sense, the discourses of cultural uniqueness were more than an attention strategy for the Sulukule Platform activists; they were also an expression of the experience of complex realities that seemed beyond the normal order; and they were a politics against what the activists held to be a conservative and capitalist "make-over" of the city. However, as a consequence of being incapable to respond to local sensitivities, the Platform could not prevent that another association emerged. This association was closely related to a very conservative Islamic sect and cooperated with the municipality (Karaman & Islam, 2012: 237). This new neighborhood competed with the association over the legitimacy to act on behalf of, and as spokesperson for, the Sulukule residents. While the activists successfully knew how to address and involve various powerful institutions and actors, all the symbolic production and ensuing attention did not save Sulukule, which nevertheless got destroyed and the local populations dispersed facing new levels of impoverishment.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I highlighted that while sometimes negotiable, urban struggle faced unequal distributions of knowledge and skills, divisions in subjects and objects of various technologically-enabled "gazes," and connections and disconnections between circuits of information. In terms of a Lefebvrian, material approach to participation, these

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[173] Personal interview, Istanbul, August 4, 2010.

conditions affected the extent to which different individuals and groups could contribute to the city as an *oeuvre* and make a political intervention in the socio-technical and socio-spatial order of the city. In their search for publicity, the resistance also relied on mediating apparatuses that reproduced consumable spectacles of otherness, in addition to a fixed division of roles (subjects versus objects of representation) based in an unequal distribution of skills. The limited participation of Sulukuleans in the extended informational circuits engendered by the Platform's communication-oriented activism was problematic. It allowed for the emergence of discrepancies between politics by activists and Sulukuleans themselves who did always want to be associated with the discourses and media spectacles yielded by the label "Romani." Approaching the possibilities of resistance materially in Lefebvre's sense, it is not sufficient to attract attention by resorting to the circulation of spectacular symbolic production through ICT-based or broadcasting venues. Rather, reorganizing socio-technical relations, and thereby social relations, requires cultivating and translating between media that integrate various sets of skills and mediate care, memory, dialogue, and reflection in different of ways. This would enable resisting what Bernard Stiegler (2010) calls psychopower (attentional control) as well as monopolies of knowledge and power (Berland, 2009: 97; Rossiter, 2006: 205, 206, 209). Let me recall here Korhan Gümüş' speculation regarding new forms of publicness, which I cited in Chapter 5 and 6 in relation to Istanbul 2010's networking assemblages: the dynamic interfaces of networking cannot be reduced to ICTs; they may include any of the venues and forms that mediate everyday life, such as teahouses, stoops, neighborhood zines, self-built speaker installations, and walls habitually appropriated to feature posters and graffiti. Mobilizing, connecting, and translating between diverse mediations of knowledge, dialogue, memory, and desire may produce a more

thorough political intervention in the socio-technical and socio-spatial order of the city (see

also Berland, 2009: 96, 97).

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

This dissertation explored the promises and politics of "networking" in the context of urban development in Istanbul, Turkey, where the intertwining projects of the global and creative city and the information society determined the governance agenda. It focused on organizations of governance and struggle in relation to technological practices involving information communication technologies (ICTs) as well as discourses of networking inspired by ICTs. The governance projects that I discussed centrally in this dissertation shared their reliance on "networked" formations of governance. In order to organize and orchestrate the cooperation between different governance actors, they enacted principles and mechanisms of networking, including "collective intelligence," "transparency," and "participation." Involved actors were foremost information industries committed to corporate social responsibility (CSR), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and self-governing, "participatory" communities. The question this dissertation started out with was: how do discourses and practices of networking generate new models and mechanisms for urban governance and participation in the global city, yet simultaneously animate searches for and enactments of alternative trajectories of urban transformation? In more abstract terms, this dissertation inquired into the possibilities and limitations of participation and citizenship in the global city.

Appropriated from the theoretical work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, the concept of "assemblage" refers to contextually articulated yet unstable relations among heterogeneous components that include structures, practices, materials, affects, and enunciations (Slack, 2012: 152). In this dissertation, I studied assemblages that by integrating such components organized governance and participation in the cases of the state-led information society project, Corporate Social Responsibility ICT for Development (CSR ICT4D), the creative city project Istanbul 2010, and urban resistance. The assemblages that I identified consisted primarily of discourses, logics, and techniques related to "networking," and they produced organizations of 1) scales and spaces of interaction and exchange, 2) mechanisms and agents of governance and struggle, and 3) mediating materialities and human-technological relationships expressed in regimes of embodiment, forms of knowledge, and technologies of the self. In the following, I will consider each of these three dimensions and offer some theorized, albeit tentative, conclusions on the possibilities and limitations of participation and citizenship in the global city.

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With regard to spaces and scales of interaction and exchange, I argue that networking assemblages not only promoted the standardization of spaces of interaction and exchange but also worked toward particularity. According to Aihwa Ong and Stephen Collier (2004), the utility of the concept of "assemblage" is that it underscores the capacity of certain global forms to travel in and out of different contexts by producing contextual particularity as well as emergent global zones of standardized interaction, valuation, and control. I suggest that certain discourses, logics, and techniques of networking travel in and out of different

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contexts and in doing so both standardize and particularize spaces and zones. Let me unpack this in more detail.

The second chapter of this dissertation analyzed the contradictory set of spatialities and agencies involved in the state-led "information society" project. On the one hand, bureaucratic planning discourses stimulated standardization. They advanced Turkey's integration with global informational spaces and socio-technical trajectories planned by supranational governance institutions and foreign experts. On the other hand, these planning discourses constructed the state as the responsible agent of development and the transformation toward the information society as a development with national contours. Accordingly, the Turkish state tried to disconnect Turkish users from certain flows of information through restrictive access and content regulations and reconnect them again by producing the information society on a national scale and as a national space. The state's engineering of a national technological zone further revolved around rather visionary plans for "national" technological services such as email accounts and a search engine, in addition to already realized measures including skill trainings, controlled social media platforms, wired yet filtered classrooms, and special distant education software and platforms. Critics of the state-led information society project denied that they as internet users were supposed to be subjected to the sovereign Turkish state while online. They identified as cosmopolitan *netizens* of some sort and appealed not just to a standardized but also a universalized notion of rights. By referring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, these critics introduced imaginations of political legitimacy and rights that challenged the state's construction of the ICT-supported informational realm as a national territory in favor of a more global and cosmopolitan order.

The interplay between standardization through global integration or universalization on the one hand and particularity on the other suggests a struggle over the "proper" spaces and scales of interaction and belonging. The third chapter continued this theme of standardization and particularity by reviewing the NGO-led information society project. This NGO-led project decentralized state responsibility for governance and development, but at the same time it also generated contradictory tendencies toward supra- or transnationalization *and* localization of governance and politics. In relation to this project, the formation of extended zones of interaction and exchange can be understood as the standardization of technical formats through the dissemination of proprietary software. Moreover, the formation of globally standardized zones occurred through the spread of sets of skills and capabilities. Finally, governmental models pressured for the adaptation of globalized "good governance" regimes and the liberal principle of "freedom of information." While ICT NGOs had somewhat different agendas, the support for global connectivity, standardized governance models, and integrated markets enabled apparatuses of control and accumulation in favor of information capitalism as a mode of production and governmental practices of global governance.

Yet the networking assemblages of the NGO-led information society project did not merely work toward standardization. The striving for global connectivity was concomitant with decentralization efforts and discourses of local participation and self-government. Appealing to "networked," "participatory," and "horizontal" models of governance, NGO discourses and practices constructed the informational realm supported by ICTs as a global space of connectivity and networked exchange between *global* and *local* actors. That is to say, while eclipsing the state as the sole agent of development toward the so-called

information society, the NGOs constructed "local communities" as operating entities of self-government endowed with political authority. Even though these communities did not enjoy political authority with regard to the aforementioned globalized affairs of technology, capitalism, and global governance, on local scales they operated rather independently and they remained by and large outside of the purview of the powerful institutions involved in the NGO-led information society project. As governance spaces, these local communities were appropriated by a variety of interests and forces and they generated a multiplicity of ideological positions and politics. My three case studies of City Councils affiliated with the United Nation's community empowerment program Local Agenda 21 (LA-21) respectively highlighted 1) resistances, at times inspired by nationalism, to globalization as well as to LA-21's formulations of the "local community"; 2) exploitation of the community in the interest of city planning by the metropolitan municipality; and 3) adaption of the discourse of community by City Council participants for what I called a politics of depoliticization.

The creative city project discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 can again be seen to generate both standardization and particularity. First, the theme of standardization and particularity spoke to the production of Istanbul as an *alternative* global city. Neo-Ottomanist policy discourses, alluding to Istanbul's imperial past, promoted Istanbul's difference and competitive edge in reference to its supposedly unique cultural blend and geopolitical position. Discourses of Istanbul as a "hub" in global, multi-polar knowledge economies substituted for those of Istanbul as a "bridge" between East and West. Nevertheless, the particularity of Istanbul as an alternative global city tended to be reducible to its functioning in still largely west-dominated knowledge economies. A residual European orientation expressed itself in planning discourses according to which Istanbul needed to follow the

model of the "western" creative city and break with certain "traditional" cultural practices that would be worthless. Moreover, in promotional discourses, Istanbul was staged as an "inspirational" city first and foremost for the *western* cultural tourist and knowledge worker, who would be able to render valuable those phenomena associated with the east that are otherwise condemnable, like chaos. Evocations of particularity appeared to be part and parcel of branding technologies that subject products, including cities joining the global competition, to a play of singularities *and* substitutabilities, of standardization *and* experimentation. In this play singularity, or particularity, and experimentation are subordinated to the regimes of value pertaining to the global market of branded cities.

However, in order to account for particularity, I emphasized that appropriations of discourses and practices of networking refracted the zoning efforts and forces implicated in the creative city project. The case of Sulukule indicates that place-branding technologies also offer ways of *claiming* value for communities threatened with displacement by urban transformation projects. Focusing much of its activities and symbolic production on music, dance, and unique heritage, the activist collective, the Sulukule Platform, appropriated place-branding technologies and presented the neighborhood as a key element of Istanbul's "creative city" project. Sulukuleans were presented as both members of a community bearing the value of a unique culture and as potential professionals stimulating creative economies. The Sulukule Platform *repurposed* discourses of networking, articulated to the creative and participatory community, and embarked on a search for alternative trajectories of urban transformation.

Producing standardized zones appeared to also be a matter of adapting to certain temporal regimes and working toward certain futures. When articulated as modernization and

development efforts, the production of zones was concomitant with experiences and narratives of time that emphasized linearity and singular, progressive development. Often, such narratives were predicated on the assumption of an unfolding process of "globalization" or "westernalization." In the case of the information society project as well as the creative city project, involved NGOs stimulated communities to acquire and produce new sets of skills and knowledge in preparation for what these NGOs took to be the necessities of the immanent future. In doing so, these NGOs integrated these communities with globalizing forms of labor, consumption, and citizenship. However, I described several instances related to the state-led information society project as well as Istanbul's transformation into a global city, in which modernization and development were ascribed to the city's re-orientation onto its presumed "roots" in an Ottoman and Islamic past. The forces of Istanbul's modernization would stem from this essential past and progress would form a singular, linear trajectory again.

While the production of zones of development may be experienced and narrated in reference to a rather simple and linear temporality, processes of refracting zoning efforts and forces, as observed in the case of Istanbul 2010 as well as the struggle around Sulukule, may be concomitant with more complex narratives of time. In the case of Istanbul 2010's Volunteer Program and its neighborhood activities, a paradoxical discourse of "traditionalization" supported the continuous renewal of self-organizing, networked communities. This discourse imbued what supposedly was an inheritance from the past with a sense of open-ended development and self-renewal through the integration of newcomers. Along similar lines, the activism around Sulukule seemed in some ways to have hinged on the invention of strategies that avoided deferring Sulukule's culture to a "frozen" past, that

went beyond the museumification of heritage, and that allowed Sulukuleans to emerge as participants in, and producers of, a coeval present through interaction and exchange with activists and outsiders.

I want to conclude that the concept of networking assemblage helps analyze the production of scales and spaces by foregrounding tendencies toward both standardization and particularity. Appropriations of networking discourses, logics, and techniques by those in favor of Istanbul's transformation into a global city and information society targeted the expansion of globally homogeneous spaces of interaction and exchange. However contextual appropriation of networking refracted zoning efforts and forces, effectuating "participatory," local communities and neighborhoods that were not strictly controlled by the powerful institutions invested in project-based development and urban transformation. Repurposing discourses of networking, communities and collectivities embarked on a search for alternative trajectories of urban transformation and ways of belonging to the global city. The fact that the concept of assemblage evokes and cultivates tensions between standardization and particularity makes this concept consistent with what I have called a *relational* view of power and resistance. As argued in the Introduction, the modalities of power that order global cities do not come strictly "from above" or from "elsewhere," but that they are produced within complex contextual relations; they work through specific logics and are mediated by particular forms. In these processes, they encounter resistance and undergo appropriation. The concept of assemblage supports such a relational conceptualization of power and resistance by directing our attention to the complex and undetermined processes of standardization *and* particularity that underlie the production of scales and spaces of interaction and exchange.

With regard to mechanisms and agents of governance, this dissertation showed that discourses of networking implicated diverse models and techniques of action and organization for governance and struggle. The concept of assemblage, by underscoring the dynamic interrelations between discourses, practices, and artifacts, has been instrumental in underscoring what Barry (2001) calls the fluidity between the technical and the political: beyond fulfilling a strictly technical function, networking provided models through which actors in different fields understand and intervene in reality (see also Barry, 2001; Dean et al., 2006: xvii; Law, 2000; Thrift, 1999). Looking at networked governance, I explored how networking assemblages produced a governmental order that included particular sites of agency, knowledge production, and control. Since the produced order was not static, I theorize networking as a site of power struggle and outline the political possibilities opened up by networking.

What has been striking in the context of governance and protest in Istanbul is that for various actors, discourses of networking, including "transparency," "collective intelligence," and "participation" promised some kind of political freedom through its opposition to state centralism and repression. While generating this rather underdetermined political promise of freedom and change, networking assemblages emerged as a site of negotiation of different forces and aspirations. Among them were investments in decentralization and post-developmentalism but also aspirations for grass-root self-organization and a more just and participatory global city. Networking assemblages contributed to the emergence of more heterogeneous spaces of governance and politics that were not strictly national. However, while creating new possibilities for certain participatory forms of governance and "bottom-up"

organization, the move toward decentralization came together with new regimes of governmental control and accumulation. Moreover, as project-based and networked urban governance targeted constituencies to be transformed into the "proper" citizen subjectivities of the global city and its information society, it facilitated the transformation of Turkey's developmentalist welfare state into what Neil Brenner (2003) calls the post-development state (see also Ong, 2006).

Nevertheless, networking practices by self-organizing communities mediated multiple hopes and aspirations and generated multiple forms of knowing and acting in the world, including ways of inhabiting and belonging to the global city. Networked, participatory governance formations produced communities with capabilities to not just adjust to but also *repurpose* the discourses, logics, and techniques of networking. The fact that these traveled so easily in and out of different contexts helped undermine fixed divisions between more established civil society institutions and self-organized resistance, between institutional governance that exploited the self-government of the community and extra-institutional self-organization. It instigated processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization of bodies invested with (political) authority and agency. It potentially refracted the imaginations and trajectories of urban transformation into multiple alternatives and resistances.

In sum, while serving the post-developmental global city, networking also served resistance and urban struggle. As discourses and practices of networking were deeply implicated in both the project of the global city and the urban struggles propelled by it, "networking" emerges as a site of negotiation of the limitations and possibilities of citizenship in the global city. By paying attention to the appropriations of discourses, logics, and techniques of networking it is possible to underscore not just the workings of control but

also the (potential for) transformation that may lead to alternative socio-technical and socio-spatial orders in the global city.

In my case studies, the decentralized organization of governance networks was often a crucial yet unacknowledged feature of networked governance formations that generated various effects. As already alluded to in the above, the decentralized organization of CSR ICT4D networks allowed for the emergence of the relatively control-free community spaces of the LA-21 community empowerment project. However, the decentered character of CSR ICT4D networks also consolidated relations of power. For instance, I found that "transparency" was often constructed through the strategic disclosure and withholding of information and particular uses of ICTs in decentralized governance networks. The politics of transparency was in fact a politics of disconnection that avoided maintaining relations of transparency and accountability to people actually targeted by CSR ICT4D as well as wider publics. Transparency functioned as a technology of accountability that empowered certain governance actors, while disempowering others. It facilitated governmental control over people's relations to ICTs and de-politicized questions of development and the future of the so-called information society. Consequently, sovereignty and citizenship were not just graduated (Ong, 2006), but also relative to certain spheres of life and scales of social and technical organization.

In the case of Istanbul 2010, I interpreted the decentralized organization of governance networks as a way of avoiding antagonistic confrontation. Istanbul 2010's networked platforms were supposed to elaborate some kind of "collective intelligence" by integrating the input of different bodies of knowledge, working groups and divisions at the Agency, as well as popular involvement. These platforms were hailed as transformative, free

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of closures, and antithetical to hierarchies. However, while Istanbul 2010 assembled different orientations, there were no mechanisms to stage and mediate antagonisms existing between different divisions and stakeholders. Hence, these different orientations were not empowered to have a transformative effect on the hegemonic relations of urban governance.

In the context of urban struggle, decentered, or according to the activists *centerless*, networking allowed the Sulukule Platform to pursue a strategy of engaging heterogeneous discourses and approaches and work in multiple directions simultaneously. Rather than the capability to enforce an agenda of its own, the Sulukule Platform's empowerment consisted in its capability to appropriate discourses and values sustained by others. The platform networked between different institutions and publics and, in doing so, carved out a position of agency for itself. The Platform's multiplicity made it possible to articulate "Sulukule" to different regimes of value and act within different contexts, at various scales.

<center>~ III ~</center>

I now turn to what I identified as the third dimension of networking assemblages' effectivities: mediating materialities and human-technological relationships expressed in regimes of embodiment, forms of knowledge, and technologies of the self. In this dissertation I used the concept of assemblage in order to advance a nonessentialist, nonmedia-centric approach to networking. I emphasized that technical artifacts and techniques form part of dynamic and unstable assemblages that are contextually articulated: they are always in use and mobilized "somewhere" and they are rearticulated by the multiple contexts in which they operate (Wise, 2005: 77). Even if ICTs appear as isolatable "things," "tools," and commodities, they exist only "in relation to the intermingling they make possible or that make them possible" (Slack, 2012: 154).

To a certain extent, my case study of CSR ICT4D described the conditions of

possibility of the production of ICTs as fixed "things and "tools." It explained the

forbearance of what Barry (2001) calls "inventive" technologies and techniques that carry the

potential to intervene in the socio-technical order by making new imaginations and actions

possible. My case study, developed throughout Chapter 3 and 4, analyzed the socio-technical

assemblages of CSR ICT4D that produced and reproduced the "skill geographies" and

infrastructures of information capitalism. I argued that in some ways, CSR ICT4D reinforced

the power-geometry of information capitalism: *decentralization* (the dissemination of skills

and computational power) tended to be a matter of *centralization* (the controlling of

resources); and *empowerment* (attaining capabilities) a matter of *disempowerment* (becoming

dependent on black-boxed technologies). The "good governance" principles that were

applied to community empowerment programs, such as horizontal transparency to all

stakeholders and participation, were not applied in the case ICT4D activities. Through their

governmental approach to development, CSR ICT4D projects depoliticized questions of

technological development and the information society. At the same time, within community

empowerment programs, ICTs were positioned merely as tools that would transmit pre-

existing messages, especially political "voices." While there was little investment in

exploring "inventive" technological possibilities, those involved in community

empowerment programs were rather skeptical about the participatory-democratic possibilities

of existing ICT applications.

While CSR ICT4D networking assemblages clearly sustained a socio-technical order,

it would be reductive to argue that CSR ICT4D was only bound to advance information

capitalism. Although a common attempt to formulate a technological politics was absent,

there were imaginations of information rights, self-development, and networked knowledge

exchange following noncapitalist regimes of value. Forming key elements of CSR ICT4D,

the moral economy of volunteerism and NGO appeals to justice and rights potentially

disrupted the logics of information capitalism.

Using the concept of assemblage, I have paid attention to the ways in which

discourses of networking implicated a wider array of material forms that mediate everyday

practices, rather than just the latest ICTs. This makes it necessary to explore processes of

mediation beyond the media and communication technologies that are commonly the

privileged objects of media studies (see also Grossberg, 2010: 302). Networking assemblages

involved discourses of "exchange," "interactivity," "self-organization," and "interface" and

articulated them with various actions, passions, and bodies.

In my analysis of the organization and mediation of popular involvement in Istanbul

2010, I noted that the enormous marketing machine of city branding utilized visual

discourses that in some ways formed a break with previous promotion campaigns. The

Istanbul 2010 visual discourses staged Istanbul as a mix of contrasts that did not allow for

any simple categorization in "east" and "west." By situating Istanbul's identity in open-ended

recombination rather than in "traditional" and "authentic" culture, these campaigns appealed

to the values of productive and dynamic creativity. These city-branding campaigns came

together with the expectation, held by Istanbul 2010 affiliates and governors, that populations

would develop themselves and become the properly enthusiastic, creative, productive, and

"participatory" citizens of the creative city. Istanbul 2010's technologies of place branding

operated as interfaces that called on populations to become co-producers of Istanbul 2010

and of the city as such. These brand interfaces incited and managed general creativity,

involvement, and participation. Especially through community programs such as neighborhood festivals, citizens were asked to contribute to and produce the creative city as well as to stage themselves as the "proper" citizens of such a city. In these neighborhood festivals, "participatory" communities came into being performatively, by turning "life" into a marker of itself.

Place branding as an interface facilitated *and* controlled popular involvement; popular creative involvement was also channeled. Certain icons and markers of culture and tradition—monuments, heritage sites, and their representations—were still dominant and central to authoritative accounts of identity and space. Although Istanbul 2010 affiliates emphasized the importance of individual and different forms of imagining, narrating, and creating knowledge about Istanbul, "culture," when signified by such icons and markers, proved to be definite and demarcated rather than open-ended and produced over networks.

Popular involvement was channeled and constrained in a second manner. Istanbul 2010's communications strategy presented slogans like "Fire Up!" and played on themes such as mobilization, participation, feedback, and two-way communication. It described the use of multiple media channels, including "creative" and "alternative" ones, so as to constitute various networks and spheres of circulation. However despite its investments in "general creativity,' Istanbul 2010 could not wholly escape from the limitations that the creative city paradigm imposes on general creativity and participation: by naming and discursively identifying "proper" connectivity, creativity, and complexity, creative city theory assumes and produces stable categories of actors (i.e., the "usual suspects" including Florida's creative class), recognizable practices of networked creativity (i.e., arts and culture in a narrow and selective sense) and their venues (i.e., from info-zones for the digital-literate

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to in-crowd supper clubs). Following such clues, Istanbul 2010 promoted networked creativity and participation as still selective concepts that privileged particular subject positions and forms of sociality, in addition to venues and types of interaction. In other words, government through networking fostered certain forms of being, of sociality, and social relations, while "disallowing" alternative forms. Looking at skill trainings and community empowerment projects indicated the ways in which emerging practices of "participatory" citizenship were inscribed by new sets of requirements and expectations. The forms of sociality "disallowed" by Istanbul 2010 can be identified in relation to those movements, organizations, and cultural centers invested in identity politics. Istanbul 2010 by and large discouraged identification along the lines of historically produced ethnic and religious categories of social identity.

While Istanbul 2010 discourses called for the participation of "the many and the marginalized" and for "general creativity," the diagram of power effectuated in Istanbul 2010's networking assemblages reconfigured participation as a *sine qua non*. This organization of participation undermined the imagination of urban citizenship as grounded in unconditional, inalienable rights. In doing so, it threatened to inhibit the appearance of those who did not "participate" as still rights-bearing subjects.

I used the concept of "urban media ecology" in order to draw attention to how networking assemblages either integrate or disconnect different material forms that mediate everyday life and in doing so contribute to the production of particular relations between spaces, differentially skilled people, and artifacts. In Chapter 7, I found that urban struggle, while driven by the promise of more "fully" participatory self-organization, faced unequal distributions of knowledge and skills, divisions in subjects and objects of various

technologically-enabled "gazes," and particular, selective connections and disconnections between circuits of information. The critical issue for the activist collective the Sulukule Platform appeared to be whether the emerging resistance networks successfully integrated different skills and mediations. Failing to elaborate such integration endangered the promise of more "fully" participatory self-organization as well as activists' solidarity with the multifarious expressions of politics and identity by local populations. The limited participation of Sulukuleans in the extended informational circuits engendered by the Platform's communication-oriented activism was problematic. It allowed for the emergence of discrepancies between politics by activists and Sulukuleans themselves who did always want to be associated with the discourses and media spectacles yielded by the label "Romani."

This dissertation showed how the interweaving of, on the one hand, technical discourses and practices and, on the other, political imaginaries and governance models, resulted in new socio-technical forms that organized governance and struggle in the globalizing city. Often these socio-technical forms promised more participatory interfaces and platforms. Throughout this dissertation, I refrained from defining "participation" as the possibility of gaining self-expression through a supposedly neutral and transparent system. Rather, in search of a normative definition relevant to the context of governance practices and struggle in the globalizing city, I conceptualized participation in a material way, namely as the possibility of intervening into the socio-technical and socio-spatial order. Such an intervention has to negotiate, and translate between, diverse mediations of dialogue, antagonism, knowledge, memory, and desire. Lefebvre imagined this political possibility of making an intervention in the city as an act of writing and contributing to the city as *oeuvre*. I want to end by turning to Lefebvre's elaboration of this metaphor:

[U]rban life tends to turn against themselves the messages, orders and constraints coming from above. It attempts to appropriate time and space by foiling dominations, by diverting them from their goal, by deceit. It also intervenes more or less at the level of the city and the way of inhabiting. In this way the *urban* is more or less the *oeuvre* of its citizens instead of imposing itself upon them as a system, as an already closed book. (1996: 117)

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