

**Civil Society in Turkey: Old Belongings
and Loyalty
A Case Study (JMO)**

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To Cem Karaca...

An Overview: The Concept of Civil Society

There can be little doubt that the idea of civil society has become a much more popular concept since 1980s, especially in Eastern Europe, and following it has emerged in Western Europe and United states in 1990s.¹ However, both by the right and the left, the concept has been used with different connotations and distinctive political intentions. Generally as a result of the reconceptualization of and its articulation to particular political agenda, the concept of civil society became more blurred and unidentifiable. Thus, it may require a historical perspective informed by theory to clarify the concept and put it into its modern content. Yet there are still some general traits of the concept, and among them, civil society is mostly identified with social movements existing beyond the State. That liberal view of civil society, although may be problematic, has been widely accepted. But, that does not mean that no critiques have been made for its idealization and for its links with capitalist mode of production.

It is clear that the emergence of the concept of civil society is historically connected with the rise of capitalism and the evolution of the modern state in the Weberian sense of rational-legal structures of governance.² Thus, it can not be viewed in isolation from either market or state. For instance, as Hyden argues, a totalitarian society in which the market is rendered inoperative leaves no space for the growth of civil society and similarly, in societies where state does not exist, civil society does not exist.³ Chandhoke supports that argument: "...states constitute the limits of civil society, as well as enabling political initiatives in global civil society...In effect, vibrant civil societies require strong and stable states as a precondition to their very existence. After all, we hardly expect to find a civil society in countries like Afghanistan and Somalia, where the state itself leads a precarious existence as a result of the

¹ A. B. Seligman, (2002): "Civil Society as Idea and Ideal", in: ed. by S. Chambers and W. Kymlicka, *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, Oxford, p. 13

see also.N. Barry, (1999): "Sivil Toplum, Din ve İslam", in: ed. by Ö. Demir, *İslam, Sivil Toplum, Piyasa Ekonomisi*, Liberte Yayınları: Ankara, p. 1

² G. Hyden, (1997): "Building Civil Society at the Turn of the Millenium": in ed. by D. Korten, *Beyond Prince and Merchant*, Pact Publications: New York, p. 19

³ *ibid.* p. 19

civil wars that have wrecked the countries and their polities.”⁴ So, it is important to keep in mind that ‘civil society’ comes out of a European philosophical tradition in which state holds economically and legally dominant position..

In Turkey, the idea of civil society is still a hot debate in terms of its necessity. Since civil society is considered as a prerequisite for democracy and development, it became a much more championed concept. But, there is an increasing need to take a closer look at the philosophical origins of the concept in order to comprehend the discrepancies between Western European countries and Turkey. It is clear that the modernization in Turkey did not pass through identical phases as its European counter-part. Top-down, elit-led Turkish modernization and its distinctive cultural, political, economical and ideological context resulted in a quite distinctive picture of society. Thus, any studying of civil society in Turkey requires a through understanding of these peculiarities. In short, civil society organizations in Turkey have to be studied through empirical observation to reach at a better understanding of ‘civil society’. The general tendency in ‘civil society’ articles in the literature on Turkey is to analyze the impact of ‘Islamic culture’ on the building of a liberal ‘civil society’. I believe that, also on the Left, the attitudes toward -the idealization of- civil society are also problematic and deserves to be analyzed. In that sense, the case study of ‘JMO’ (Jeoloji Mühendisleri Odası), which is dominated by leftist geology engineers, would be a valuable example for a Turkish civil society organization in order to grasp –at least a part of- the leftist reactions in civil society and to discuss the theoretical background behind their actions.

For this purpose, this study is designed to include two parts. On the first part, some theoretical components of the discourse on civil society will be the focus. That includes its perception in the modern sense, and its interpretation in the Marxist tradition since it is said to be the guide for the officials in JMO. And secondly, the focus will be the reality in practice behind the theoretical discourse: the case of JMO. So, this paper mainly concerns ‘the idea of civil society(theory) and practice in reality’ experienced by JMO.

Theoretical Background

⁴ Chandhoke, Neera (2002): “The Limits of Global Civil Society”, in <http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/global/yearbook/>, p. 51

Civil Society in the Modern Sense

After the rise of the neo-liberal politics, the doctrines of free trade and unregulated markets, proposed the limitations of state, and enforced the state to draw back some of its duties or subsidies, such as in health and education sectors. Within this new picture, “NGOs were transformed into the guardians of civil society even as they subcontracted for the state.”⁵ Furthermore, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) were sometimes overemphasized for what they had done, and thus civil society was identified as the same of NGOs. However, such an indefiniteness or meaning slippages has to be sorted out and both the concepts of NGOs and civil society have to be put into their actual places in all concerned discussions.

Although there are many varied conceptualizations of civil society, among them a very widely accepted definition of civil society is that it is a “third realm differentiated from the economy and the state”⁶ as “(ideally) a realm of free choice, community, and participation.”⁷ In fact, that kind of a framework provides the individuals a space of action for their claims to individual and communal interests. Put differently, civil society is represented as a political space where individuals engage voluntarily action to reshape the existing rules, namely specific policies or norms.⁸ Civil society is generally perceived as a clearly defined sphere and thus can be easily championed by the citizens or other interest-holders in that domain. However, the lines between the state, economy and civil society are not as clear-cut as it is expressed. Furthermore, contrary to its definition, the exclusion of political parties, firms and commercial mass media from the sphere of civil society is something much more difficult to be achieved. A good example of this can be found in the declarations of the Amnesty International at Beijing in 1995. They identified several kinds of NGOs that “did not quite match the model of benign liberal independence: MANGOs (male-controlled NGOs), BINGOs (business-controlled NGOs), RINGOs (reactionary NGOs), as well as GINGOs (government-controlled NGOs).”⁹ So, there is a serious problem in the conceptualization of NGOs. They may function in the domains of the market and state. In that sense, perhaps,

⁵ *ibid.* p. 43

⁶ *ibid.* p. 36

⁷ M. Walzer, (2002): “Equality and civil Society”, in: ed. by S. Chambers and W. Kymlicka, *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, Oxford, p. 37

⁸ Scholte, Jan Aart (2002): “Civil Society and Democracy in Global Governance”, in: *Global Governance. A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, 8 (3), p. 283

⁹ Halliday, Fred (2001): “The Romance of Non-state Actors”, in: Josselin, Daphné and Wallace, William (ed.): *Non-state Actors in World Politics*, p. 23

leaving speculative discussions and idealization of civil society aside, more empirical studies on civil society should be conducted in order to evaluate the gap between the ideal and the actual. JMO, in that sense, for the Turkish case and for the leftist view of civil society, can provide us a modest insight. But before that, let me finish with the impossibility of equating NGOs and civil society, which is generally misinterpreted.

We can start with identifying the actors in civil society in order to understand its complex structure. There are “academic institutions, business forums, clan and kinship circles, consumer advocates, development cooperation initiatives, environmental movements, ethnic lobbies, faith-based associations, human rights promoters, labour unions, local community groups, peace movements, philanthropic foundations, professional bodies, relief organizations, think tanks, women’s networks, youth associations and more.”¹⁰ In that sense, as Scholte stresses, civil society has a wider meaning than the ‘formally organized, officially registered and professionally administered NGOs.’¹¹ In other words, civil society can not be equivalent to the ‘third realm’ of all nonofficial and noncommercial activities, so called NGOs.¹² So, JMO also should not be dismissed because of its not being a NGO. Even though JMO has organic links with state policies, its semi-private character allows itself to move independently from the government.

Civil Society in the Marxist Sense.

During the interviews that I have made with the officials of JMO -among them were the head the organization, voluntary workers in JMO and geology engineers in MTA (Maden Tetkik Arama)-a common point was their understanding or conceptualization of civil society. They all referred to Gramsci’s theory of civil society, implicitly or explicitly, at least once so as to define their position in the organization and how they perceive ‘civil society’ in general. For this reason, although there can be various liberal perspectives, each identified with early philosophers like Locke, Paine or Tocqueville, I would like to discuss the contribution of Marx and Gramsci on civil society that have profound influence on the Marxist literature and on officials of JMO, as well. So my intent is to put forward the conceptualization of ‘civil society’ as it is understood in the Marxist literature in order to grasp the theoretical

¹⁰ Scholte, Jan Aart (2002): “Civil Society and Democracy in Global Governance”, in: *Global Governance. A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, 8 (3), pp. 283-284

¹¹ *ibid.* p. 284

¹² *ibid.* p. 285

background upon which the actors in JMO stand. However, that will not include all the marxist writers, but instead limit itself with the philosophical line of Hegel – Marx - Gramsci respectively.

Hegel. The roots of the modern discussion of civil society go back to Hegel.¹³ The distinction between state and civil society was first made by Hegel in his book of ‘Philosophy of Right’ in 1821. He used ‘Bürgerliche Gesellschaft’ for civil society as a stage between the family and the state “which differs from the ethical world of the family and public life of the state.”¹⁴ Before Hegel, ‘political’ and ‘civil’ conditions were not separated and thus state and civil society meant one and the same thing.

As Pelczynski states, in *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel subdivides the sphere of ethical life into *family*, *civil society* and *the state*. And, they are ‘moments’ of the ‘the ethical order’ and they are the ‘ethical powers which regulate the life of individuals’.¹⁵ To Hegel;

- In *family*, ethical duties are determined by one’s place in the family which depends on natural factors of sex and birth as in the Greek Polis. Love, altruism and concern for the whole are the dominant features of ethical disposition in the family community.
- In *Civil Society*, that type of ethical unity disintegrates and the satisfaction of private needs becomes the primary concern. They can achieve this by working, producing and exchanging the product of their labor in the market. And Hegel claims that while individuals behave selfishly and instrumentally towards each other, they can not help satisfying other men’s needs. Moreover, men are socialized by that way and they are not merely rewarded with money, but also with respect and recognition. Then, the interactions and relations for their satisfaction give rise to social classes or ‘estates’, and public authorities (courts of law, welfare and regulatory agencies). Hegel states that public authorities can intervene in the operation of the market so as to ensure the safety of person and property.

¹³ L. E. Lomasky, (2002): “Classical Liberalism and Civil society”, in: ed. by S. Chambers and W. Kymlicka, *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, Oxford, p. 51

¹⁴ Z. A. Pelczynski, (1984): “The Significance of Hegel’s Separation of the State and Civil Society”, in: *The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel’s Political Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p. ?

¹⁵ *ibid.* p. ?

- The *State*, to Hegel, is defined as strictly political state and its constitution. While in civil society the aim is the particular interests, in the political sphere (of the state) the general interest of the community is the aim. So the ethical duty of those who participate in the work of sovereign authority of the state is to promote the common good of the community. Ethical life reaches its highest form in the political sphere.¹⁶

The chief task of the state, as Ilting states, is the coordination of diverging social interest. Therefore, what is vital for individuals is to recognize that private and personal ends converge with the communal end in the long-run, and to cooperate in the preservation of the state community.¹⁷ In Hegel's own words: "The irony of civil society is that the individuals who compose it think of themselves as free and independent agents, while they are, in fact, caught up in a 'system of all-round interdependence', in which the subsistence and welfare of the individual...are interwoven with, and grounded on, the subsistence, welfare and rights of all."¹⁸ So, the individual voluntary action for private purposes in the civil society ended up with the satisfaction of communal interests. That proved, for Hegel, the existence of a 'system of all-round interdependence'.

Marx. The term 'Bürgerliche Gesellschaft' was taken by Marx and became a fundamental concept through criticism and modification. The origin of the meaning of civil society is said to be found in Marx's Preface to *A Critique of Political Economy*.¹⁹ Although Marx kept the state/civil society distinction, he rejected the view that state was an all inclusive political community with a distinct ethical character, and thus denied its primacy in social and historical life.²⁰ He reversed the Hegelian relation of the state/civil society and made the civil society (bourgeoisie society) the ground of political life and the source of political change.

¹⁶ *ibid.* p. ?

¹⁷ K. H. Ilting, (1984): "Hegel's concept of the State and Marx's Early Critique", in: *The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p. ?

see also. M. Shaw, (199?) *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict*, ed. by L. Kurtz Academia Press: San Diego, pp. 269-278

see also. L. D. Hunt, "Hegel's Institutional Liberalism: Political Economy and Civil Society in the Philosophy of Right", in <http://www3.isp.msu.edu/cers/Hunt.htm>

¹⁸ M. H. Lenzen, (2002): "The Use and Abuse of 'Civil Society' in Development", *Transnational Associations*, 3, pp. 170-187, in <http://www.uia.org/ta/issues/2002/lenzen.php>

¹⁹ N. Bobbio, (1979): "Gramsci and the Conception of Civil Society", in: ed. by C. Mouffe, *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, RKP, p. 27

²⁰ Z. A. Pelczynski, (1984): "The Significance of Hegel's Separation of the State and Civil Society", in: *The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p. ?

In other words, the Hegelian complex, structured civil society was decomposed by Marx and transformed into the economic sphere of labor, production and change. Marx made civil society ‘the real site of economic relations’ or the relations on which a legal and political superstructure is raised. Even though one can read in *The Holy Family* (Marx and Engels 1845): “the modern state has civil society as a natural base”, the distinction between state and civil society as superstructure/structure, in fact, is not clear cut. That can be observed in Marx’s arguments on the state. State as an instrument of ruling class seems to be a quick reading of Marx. As the ‘relative autonomy of state’ discussions in 1970s has indicated that there is not only one reading of Marx’s writings.

Two separate theories of the state were identified in Marx’s writings, according to Keith Faulks.²¹ (1) First line of reading can be found its clearest form in the *Communist Manifesto*. There, the state is defined as an instrument under the control of the ruling class to coerce the propertyless class. Thus, for Lenin, who held this thought, the struggle for the control of the state was the goal for communists. (2) Second theory of the state, on the other hand, can be identified in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* in which Marx examines the reign of Louis Napoleon in the middle of 19th century. And there, the state appears to be independent, rather than as an instrument of a ruling class. That relative neglect of state motivated some theorists (like Poulantzas, Miliband and Jessop) to develop that line of thought in 1970s and onwards.

Gramsci. If we go on with the conceptualization of ‘state/civil society relations’, one of the preeminent figures, Gramsci, who had significant contributions to the Marxist literature, has to be mentioned. He is also important since his writings had great influence on the political discourse of leftist fractions in JMO.

To Gramsci, civil society is not limited with the economic relations, but it is where economic, social, ideological and religious conflicts originate and occur, and that state institutions have the task of solving them either by mediating or preventing or repressing them.²²

For Gramsci, civil society is an active moment as in Marx, but it is a part of the superstructure in contrast to Marx. In other words, to Gramsci, civil society (private) and state (political society) are two parts of the superstructure. Therefore, it is argued that Gramsci based his

²¹ K. Faulks, (1997): *Political Sociology: A Critical Introduction*, Edinburg University Press , pp. 34-36

²² N. Bobbio, (1979): “Gramsci and the Conception of Civil Society”, in: ed. by C. Mouffe, *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, RKP, p. 25

concept of civil society on Hegel, instead of Marx. Moreover, Gramsci and Marx came up with two different conceptualizations of civil society out of their Hegel readings. For Gramsci, civil society is a active and positive moment, and also ideology in superstructure appears as the primary moment while institutions, the secondary moment. Following that, one of the reasons why he inspired many Marxists that much can be Gramsci's statement that *state is also an important site of political struggle*. As Alan Hunt²³ notes, that was a Gramscian challenge to Leninist tradition since Gramsci emphasized the specific character of politics which is not reducible to the state. Another important point he highlights –with his theory of hegemony- in particular is the importance of ideological manipulation by ruling class over the working class. In that sense, hegemony is “a type of communicative power that refers to an ideological justification for the inequalities of capitalism.”²⁴ So, as it appears, the communicative power is important as well as material class struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. As a last sentence, in his theory, the state is not an object to be captured but, in contrast to Lenin's view, is itself an arena for struggle.

It can be said that Gramsci also viewed the content and form of civil society as the outcome and object of a class struggle. But, to Gramsci, that outcome depends on which social group has been or is becoming hegemonic. For instance, where bourgeoisie is hegemonic, civil society is a bourgeois society and constitutional guarantees and political expressions are window-dressing for bourgeois rule.²⁵

In this part, I tried to explain different conceptualizations of civil society following Hegel-Marx-Gramsci in order to indicate the theoretical approaches that inspired the intellectual climate in JMO.

Civil Society in Turkey: JMO (A Case Study)

In this part, JMO (Jeoloji Mühendisleri Odası) as one of the examples of civil society organizations in Turkey will be the object of inquiry in order to grasp the underlying practical reality beneath the well structured modern discourse of civil society. That means to go beyond the written and oral texts and procedural descriptions of the organization. Therefore, I listened to life histories of five interviewees after they enrolled in JMO. Such a method provided me

²³ A. Hunt, (1980): “Introduction”, in: ed. by A.Hunt, *Marxism and Democracy*, p. 15

²⁴ K. Faulks, (1997): *Political Sociology: A Critical Introduction*, Edinburg University Press, p.36

²⁵ J.L. Cohen and A. Arato, (1992): *Civil Society and Political Theory*, MIT Press: Cambridge, p. 146-147

less information on the bureaucratic relations and its legal status, but on the other hand supplied a valuable pool full of normative insights which helped me to construct a picture of JMO. So, from now on, instead of talking theoretical issues, how individuals engaged in JMO, how they formed group identities and in what ways they struggled with each other will be the topic of discussion. Here, to my point of view, the most significant observation is that old belongings are still playing crucial role in the (re)construction of loyalty to groups in JMO. But initially, before speaking on the relation between old belongings and loyalty, let me start with a brief history of JMO and the political diversification within it in general.

A Timeline of JMO.

JMO was founded in 1973. It was not the only civil society organization of geology engineers at that time. TJK (Türkiye Jeoloji Kurumu) and JD (Jeoloji Derneği) were alternatives to JMO. However, the existence of JD did not last long, and it can be said that the history of JMO was constructed throughout its opposition to TJK. After 1970s, these two institutions, JMO and TJK, became the centers of distinctive political groups and carriers of separate political agenda. The former was dominated by left fractions, equipped with socialist values and strategies, as the latter was more of a professional institution dealing with scientific production under the control of social democrats. Thus, the position of JMO vis-a-vis TJK was mainly determined by its reactions to TJK's conformist policies, rather than professional drives.

JMO was accusing TJK of making 'pure' science, and was accused of being 'too' political. That tension, throughout the 70s and till the end of 80s, constituted the basis of their interaction and established the legitimate ground for further critiques. Indeed, that discrepancy between the two appeared to be the extension of the struggles of the political camps existing in the society over to the civil society organizations. As already mentioned, JMO was overtaken by the left fractions, on the other hand TJK had more inclinations to take the state's side which was less risky.

In JMO, the most preminent fractions that directs the organization might be grouped as following: TKP/TİP/TSİP tradition, Kurtuluş (Salvation) and Dev-Yol (Revolutionary Way). Those fractions were the internal dynamics of JMO. Though those groups did not share similar political perspectives, that did not prevent them from forming alliances at critical times. For instance, TKP/TİP/TSİP wing was not against the TJK, and also having members

in TJK as well. So, although in 1989 most of the followers of that wing did not approve the idea of elimination of TJK, Kurtuluş and Dev-Yol –only by forming an alliance- could achieve the collapse of TJK. Or, a few years later in the elections of JMO (after 1989, it became the only organization representing geology engineers), TKP/TİP/TSİP tradition and Dev-Yol formed a common list of candidates and won the elections.

However, before discussing in detail the inter-fractional struggles and dialogues, three historical events that had significant influences on all the fractions should be reminded. The first, as already mentioned, is the political climate of 1970s which spread and reinforced the radical left ideas among the students – who would be engineers in the future- in universities. And the ones that came to be geology engineers in the early 70s and founded JMO, are now either retired or having last days of their jobs.

The second is the military coup in 1980. That interrupted the radical political discourse in JMO, many sympathisers and activists from different political groups were forced to leave the country and some were put in jail. As a consequence, repressive politics of the state did function as a shock wave within the fractions and push them into silence. It was that time, for instance, when many geology engineers coming from TKP/TİP/TSİP tradition were dismissed from TJK.

And the third, during 1980s and especially after 1990, is the advancement of neo-liberal politics and ‘globalization’ effects triggering a large number of geology engineers to enter into the private sector and that, in effect, softening the tone of political discourse in JMO. Some leftist engineers feared of being ideologically insufficient in comprehending the contemporary world. That was a period of political vacillation, indeed. Neo-liberal politics and privatization, after nineties, seem to have changed the ratio of engineers in state-sector to private sector in the JMO. Although before that time there were members of JMO from the private sector, neo-liberal politics enhanced the number of small or middle-scaled entrepreneurs among the geology engineers.

To put it succinctly, the history of JMO is not independent from the external political climate. Every social and political mobilization had its reflection on the organization. So each era had profound effects on the identification of groups in JMO. And If we try to outline the tendency of change for 30 years, we can say that it mainly goes from strict political identities to the adoption of a more pragmatist stance. However, that does not mean either a severe break from

the old group identities or a significant increase of the individual freedom at times of political manoeuvres. Old belongings seem to be still at work. But before passing to today's JMO, the history should be completed with a few details.

The Peace With Academia

After 1989 with the closedown of TJK, the dialogues between JMO and academia was on the edge of exhaustion. TJK was the most important instrument for the publishment of academic production, and mainly fed by academicians as well as geology engineers. But this rupture resulted in discontent among the academicians, and they cut to send scientific articles to the JMO. That was a loss of prestige for JMO, and the beginning of unproductivity in terms of science. The tension between academia and JMO ended in mid 1990s, by the great efforts of JMO officials during the period of alliance between TKP/TİP/TSİP tradition and Dev-Yol (1991-1999). The last two years of this alliance was a period of endeavours for unification-forming a bloc- with Kurtuluş by inviting them to work with the prevailing board of directors. However, the old competition and arguments were still alive in the memories and that unification project failed to create a common ground of communication. Moreover, all the fractions entered the next elections separately, and at the end Kurtuluş became the leading group (1999-2003). Nevertheless, throughout this time, the relations with academia has been gradually improved. As a sign of that, more articles of academicians in the periodicals have been published.²⁶

A New Face and Old Belongings

At the first look, it is hard to distinguish those fractions now since they are disguised under new group names. In the last elections, in 2001, there were three group lists competing: Bağımsız Mühendisler (Independent Engineers), Demokratik Katılım Platformu (Democratic Participation Platform) and Devrimci Demokrat Liste (Revolutionary Democratic List). Although the lists can allow us to think of a leftist tendency, in fact those groups are totally the extension of the earlier three fractions, mentioned above, with little changes. It is true that some engineers shifted their political position, some new-comers (young engineers) articulated to those groups, some continued their political stance individually, some preferred to stay outside. But, all those shifts, articulations or individual acts could not distort the reality

²⁶ There are four periodicals published by JMO. Türkiye Jeoloji Bülteni (on pure science), Jeoloji Mühendisi Dergisi (on applied science), Mavi Gezegen (on popular science) and Haber Bülteni (includes articles of members on daily, political and social issues).

of prevailing old identities constructed around three leftist fractions. On the one hand, Bağımsız Mühendisler are composed of the old members of these three fractions and relatively young engineers who are in search for a new political discourse. However, in times of disagreement, the majority of supporters of ‘Bağımsız Mühendisler’ gathered around the old belongings which means a return back to ex-group identities. On the other hand, Demokratik Katılım Platformu is the new face of Kurtuluş, and Devrimci Demokrat Liste is an extension of Dev-Yol. Of course, it has to be stated that, this continuation does not indicate that nothing has changed in the political agenda of the fractions. On the contrary, as I tried to mention above, there is a shift from strict leftist views to moderate ones. Nevertheless, that shift occurred, interestingly, within the fractions without totally distorting the group identity and questioning the loyalty to that groups. For instance, there are three unchangeable policies conducted by all fractions throughout the history of JMO. Those are concerning *gold mine corporations*, *privatization* and *nuclear energy*. And before every elections in JMO, each fraction declares that they are against those three; foreign corporations in gold mining, privatization of state sector and the implantation of nuclear energy centrals. Even now, although some say yes to gold mining they can not express loudly. The ghosts of old belongings are always with them.

So, after thirty years, it is still possible to talk on the predominance of old belongings and three fractions. Then, we have to answer the most crucial questions: why have the loyalty to old belongings been preserved and how has it (re)constructed throughout three decades?

Old Belongings and Construction of Loyalty

To say, rational motive behind loyalty to the fractions is just on the account of political proximity, would be too naive. There are various factors bearing upon the construction of loyalty other than the rational ‘voluntary’ action or the choices of actors on political issues.

First is the economic interests of the group members. JMO is not an independent civil society organization. One of the main sources of income is the state funds, besides the montly collected membership fees. In that sense, it is as well an economic organization where a considerable amount of money is accumulated. Thus, that characteristic of JMO has made it a more desirable organization for the fractions. To illustrate an economic advantage for the groups in 1970s, the fraction who held the power of JMO also could benefit from its printing office for free to multiply their hand-outs. In 1990s, such economic advantages and the

amount of money under the control of JMO had increased tremendously, especially after the earthquake of 1999 when JMO was authorized as the only institution for ground-checking and got paid for that service, which means giving O.K for construction on a certain ground which is a bureaucratic necessity stipulated by municipality. For instance, last year, the total income for ten months was a trillion Turkish Liras. Although big corruptions are hardly seen, small-scaled cheatings are said to have occurred in JMO. However, that economic advantage might be used by the fractions as a charming object to attract the members or would-be members at times of election. Of course, economic advantage does not have to be seen only in terms of monetary gain, on the other hand it is generally in kind. For instance, members of the leading group of JMO are invited to restaurants, bars and etc. for their loyalty to the group and for their loyalty in the future.

Second way of keeping loyalty is achieved through the usage of material sources of JMO. The relationship between academicians and JMO can exemplify the existing situation. For instance, for the academicians whose articles are not published abroad or who can not write in English, the periodicals of JMO have a vital importance for their careers. All the articles has to pass the Science Committee to be published, although there is a high competition, some academicians are more lucky than the others. That means, the mechanism of ‘reciprocity’ works, Committee (a representative of the leading group) approves some certain academicians’ articles and expect loyalty in turn. In fact, nepotism appears to be a part of this game to keep the group identity alive though it means the exclusion of meritocracy which is highly expected in a modern civil society.

Thirdly, loyalty is a channel for status seekers and small or middle scaled entrepreneurs. On the one hand, for the status seekers, to move individually does not mean anything where group lists are voted. So as a rational choice, links are established with one of the groups to be a candidate in the group’s list. Such attitudes of candidates can be observed in the elections of small cities, where high bureaucrats are small in number. For instance, Branch Chairs (Şube Başkanlığı) in small provinces might be a respected position and therefore desirable for status seekers. In these provinces, on the other hand, geology engineers who became small and/or middle scaled entrepreneurs seek to be the part of the administration for two reasons. First they are also status seekers since they are aware of the fact that ‘labels’ before their names would ease to compete in the market. And secondly, JMO is the most appropriate arena to establish a network through keeping loyalty to their group and making new connections with others which would be advantageous for their business.

Fourthly, although it is not frequently observed in the case of JMO, the organization is conceived as a step for one's later political career. An example is Haydar İlker, a retired geology engineer who has also worked for JMO for years, is now vice president of ÖDP (Freedom and Solidarity Party). Another famous figure on that regard is Esat Kırathlıoğlu. Esat Kırathlıoğlu was one of the founders of TJK and later on became a politician. In that sense, being in the board of directors of the organization can play a crucial role to show one's potential and political skills to the political parties and by that way the person finds the chance to be well-recognized.

Before concluding this study, one more analysis should be mentioned here. Starting from 1970s till now, in JMO has existed 'abilik' relationships within the fractions. Basically, such a relationship does not refer a strict leadership, but rather 'abi' works as a consultant. Those people are generally old activists in the radical leftist movements and have contacts with a wider milieu. Indeed, the ones who are expressed as 'abi' are respected persons and asked for advice. Indirectly, they guide a certain group. They do not need to be ideologically superior to keep the people's loyalty active. They generally appear to be the key persons in order to have the group's problem overcome. In that sense, those charismatic persons are themselves instruments of reconstructing loyalty and group identity. In that sense, it would not be wrong to describe them as 'informal leaders'. However, 'abilik' institution has been eroded by the critiques questioning its reliability and validity, especially since mid 1990s. The new generation, new comers in JMO, did less likely stay inside this sphere of 'abilik' and benefit from it. As told by a geology engineer retired from MTA, there has always been members in JMO's history, although a few in number, who severely criticized the distinctive position of 'abi's and undervalued their advices. Nevertheless, it can be said that, at least symbolically it still continues to survive in JMO.

Conclusion.

Throughout this study, I tried to emphasize two separate issues. On the one hand, we have different conceptualizations of civil society; how civil society is theorized and perceived in liberal and Marxist sense. And among them, the Gramscian interpretation of civil society was the most appropriated approach by many interviewees. Thus, to understand their ideological stance and overt discourse, I traced the theories about civil society starting from Hegel to Gramsci.

On the other hand, the actually prevailing social relationships within JMO was studied. That was an endeavour to understand what is running in reality. Are there the principles of *individualism* and *rational voluntaristic authority* or *meritocracy* at work as to constitute a 'true' civil society organization or are these officials struggling for the counter-hegemonic domination against the capitalist state in Gramscian sense? In fact, the answer is both yes and no at the same time. It is possible to see liberal principles operating in the organization and also the officials equipped with socialist values working for socialist end. However, on the other hand, it is also possible to see 'cliental' relations at times of election or interest-oriented loyalty to group identities which do not fit the 'ideal' liberal or Marxist understanding. As a result, it can be stated that whatever the modern political and ideological discourse claims to civil society can be, there may emerge new forms of civil society organizations related to the peculiar conditions of that country, like the formation of a particular type of state or ensemble of instances (of economic, political, cultural and ideological-in Poulantzas's terms) or even the new form may be related to power struggles at micro level as it is in JMO. Therefore, it would be misleading to label all such societal constellations falling into the imaginary space between the family (private sphere) and the state (political sphere) as if there is an ideal model for a civil society organization to be achieved and they are all formed or 'invented' by the advancement of the bourgeois society and the capitalist state. In other words, the formation of civil society organization in different countries, regardless of its developmental level, is determined by various factor, like environmental conditions or power relations around them. Hence, the JMO case in Turkey should be analyzed in its peculiarity, instead of referring to examples in the Western European capitalist societies or to a model idealized by many politicians or thinkers.

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State and Civil Society Relation: Hegel, Marx and Gramsci

**A Term-Paper by
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**Submitted
To
Galip Yalman**

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Soc.554
Theories of State**

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Introduction

In this study, the main concern is to trace the historical roots of 'state and civil society' separation and its theorization in Marx's and Gramsci's works. So leaving the liberal tradition aside, the marxist reading of state/civil society relation will be analyzed throughout this paper. However, inevitably, that kind of a research necessitates to start from Hegel's philosophy since the roots of the modern discussion of civil society go back to Hegel¹ and many contributions of Marx depend on his critiques of Hegel's philosophy. Thus, Hegel's perspective on state and civil society needs to be unfolded in order to understand Marx's critiques of Hegel and Gramsci's contribution to the civil society discussion. So this study is designed around three significant figures in state/civil society discussion: Hegel, Marx and Gramsci.

Hegel's Conceptualization of State and Civil Society

It is a common point that the distinction between state and civil society was first made by G.W.F.Hegel in his book of Philosophy of Right in 1821. He used 'Bürgerliche Gessellschaft'-a term partly derived from Bürger which refers alike to citizen and bourgeois, and to older privileged burghers of towns, and excludes the lower middle classes²- for civil society as a stage between the family and the state "which differs from the ethical world of the family and public life of the state."³ Before Hegel, however, 'political' and 'civil' conditions were not separated and thus state and civil society meant one and the same thing.

In Philosophy of Right, Hegel subdivides the sphere of ethical life into *family*, *civil society* and *the state*. And, they are 'moments' of the 'the ethical order' and they are the 'ethical powers which regulate the life of individuals'.⁴ Those 'moments' needs to be opened up for a better comprehension. I will try to sort out each moment with regard to Pelczynski's article of 'The Significance of Hegel's Separation of the State and Civil Society' and broaden the discussion by referring to other authors' contributions.

In *family*, ethical duties are determined by one's place in the family which depends on natural factors of sex and birth as in the Greek Polis. And as Pelczynski indicates that the dominant features of ethical inclination in the family community are love, altruism and concern for the whole.⁵

¹ L. E. Lomasky, (2002): "Classical Liberalism and Civil society", in: ed. by S. Chambers and W. Kymlicka, *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, Oxford, p. 51

² F. Trentmann, (2000): "Introduction: Paradoxes of Civil Society", in: ed. by F. Trentmann, *Paradoxes of Civil Society*, Berghahn Books: Oxford, New York, p. 9

³ Z. A. Pelczynski, (1984): "The Significance of Hegel's Separation of the State and Civil Society", in: *The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p. 1

⁴ *ibid.* p. 9

⁵ *ibid.* p. 9

In *Civil Society*, that type of ethical unity disintegrates and the satisfaction of private needs becomes the primary concern. Individuals can achieve this by working, producing and exchanging the product of their labor in the market. And Hegel claims that while individuals behave selfishly and instrumentally towards each other, they can not help satisfying other men's needs. Moreover, while men are socialized by that way, they are not merely rewarded with money, but also with respect and recognition. Then, Pelczynski goes on with consequences, the interactions and relations for their satisfaction give rise to social classes or 'estates', and public authorities (courts of law, welfare and regulatory agencies). And in Hegel's philosophy, those public authorities can intervene in the operation of the market so as to ensure the safety of person and property. I think, once the civil society is categorized into its dimensions, Hegel's ideas on civil society becomes more overt and identifiable.

D.A.Duquette⁶ explicates those dimensions which are *the system of needs, administration of justice and police and corporation*. The first dimension, The System of Needs, involves the pursuit of need satisfaction. So civil society is where the needs are satisfied and the only mean for that satisfaction is 'work'. However, to Hegel, work has a further meaning than the satisfaction of needs which is also 'a mode of practical education in abilities and understanding'.⁷ In other words, the marketplace turns into a part of education (Bildung) where individuals "recognize each other as fundamentally the same, as people who must all work and satisfy universal needs in a market economy".⁸ As Gordon argues, the 'mechanism of recognition' is better understood by relating it to 'metaphysic of lord and bondsman' which denotes that "others are resources of value that must be respected -beings that have dignity".⁹ Thus, Gordon states that reciprocal dependency in Hegelian dialectics leads to transformation of abstract legalism of 'respect for persons' into concrete modes of social interaction which results in a culture of nondomination and mutual respect in civil

⁶ D. A. Duquette, *G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) Social and Political Thought*, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, in <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/h/hegelsoc.htm>

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ R. H. Gordon, (2000): "Kant, Smith and Hegel: The Market and the Categorical Imperative", in: ed. by F. Trentmann, *Paradoxes of Civil Society: New Perspectives on Modern German and British History*, Berghahn Books: New York, Oxford, p. 89

⁹ *ibid.* p. 89

see also. H. S. Harris, (1995): "Lordship and Bondage", in: *Hegel: Phenomenology and System*, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.: Indianapolis, Cambridge, pp. 39-40

see also. A. Ioannidou, (1997): "The Politics of the Division of Labour: Smith and Hegel on Civil Society", in: ed. by R. Fine and S. Rai, *Civil Society: Democratic Perspectives*, Frank Cass: London, Portland, pp. 58-59

society.¹⁰ Here, as Gordon argues, should be noted that the view of market and its role in ethical education – consciousness raising function- is an ‘ideal type’ in his philosophy.¹¹

On the other hand, the natural inequalities between individuals, to Hegel, inevitably transform into social inequalities which give rise to division in labor according to their capacities and the complexities of the system of production. Duquette states the Hegelian class division as; (1) the ‘substantial’ agricultural class, in which the family relations are dominant, and whose capital is nature. They tend to be patriarchial and dependent rather than ‘oriented toward free activity’. (2) the business class is a work-oriented class and main activities of that class are craftsmanship, manufacture and trade. (3) the last class is civil servants which is defined as ‘universal class’ by Hegel since their interests are the interests of society. They are free from “having to labor to support themselves”, says Duquette, and “maintain their livelihood either from private resources such as inheritance or are paid a salary by the state as members of the bureaucracy.”¹² Civil servants are highly educated and qualified individuals who occupy different positions on the basis of merit.

The second dimension of civil society is ‘Administration of Justice’. As Duquette expresses, in Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right* stated that laws must be made universally known through a public legal code. “Through a rational legal system, private property and personality are given legal recognition and validity in civil society, and wrongdoing now becomes an infringement, not merely of the subjective right of individuals but also of the larger universal will that exists in ethical life.”¹³ And the court of justice defends the universal rights by addressing particular cases of violation or conflict without ‘subjective feeling’ or ‘private bias’. Moreover, to Hegel, court proceedings and legal processes are argued to take place according to rights and rules of evidence; “judicial proceedings as well as the laws themselves must be made public; trial should be by jury; and punishment should fit the crime.”¹⁴

And the last dimension is ‘Police and Corporation’. On the one hand, ‘Police’ represents the public authorities in civil society. Its task is not only to cope with crime but supply supervision over public utilities as well. The latter task includes regulation of utilities and at times of necessity the intervention into activities related to the production, distribution and sale of goods and services, or related to any possible event affecting the rights and welfare of individuals and society. Duquette continues specifying ‘supervision over public

¹⁰ *ibid.* p. 90

¹¹ *ibid.* pp. 90-92

¹² D. A. Duquette, *G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) Social and Political Thought*, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, in <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/h/hegelsoc.htm>

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ *ibid.*

utilities' with two other contents, first is that the education is supervised and second 'the relief of poverty' is organized by public authorities. In that sense, Hegel is aware of the creation of an underclass, 'penurious rabble', which is running out of money for necessities. However, in *Philosophy of Right*, he can not provide an apparent solution to poverty problem (§ 245), and rather he emphasizes the necessity of establishing colonies for the population growth (§ 248).¹⁵

On the other hand, Corporation, in Hegelian terminology, differs from the contemporary business corporations. It is a "voluntary association of persons based on occupational or various personal interests (such as professional and trade guilds, educational clubs, religious societies, townships, etc.)."¹⁶ Duquette states that since corporation has an integrating function, to Hegel, especially in regard to the social and economic division of labor, in his construction of the idea of civil society self-interests or selfish purposes are shown to be universal interests/purposes at the same time. Since, at the end of the interactions between individuals, they realize the interdependence of subjects in terms of achieving self-interests and they establish the self-consciousness of the necessity of corporation. Thus, for Hegel, in his own words: If "the family is the first ethical root of the state; the corporation is the second and it is based in civil society" (§ 255).¹⁷

State, to Hegel, is defined as a 'strictly political state with its constitution' (§ 163). Naturally, his discussion of the constitutional structure of the state focuses on the idea of monarchy which is not absolutist or authoritarian, but limited by a constitution.¹⁸ And the modern state in terms of Hegel, is a politically organized, independent ethical community or a nation diffused by the order of 'Recht' (right; also means law) and it is a manifestation of 'Sittlichkeit' (modern ethical life) in its actions and relations.¹⁹ In practice, while in civil society the aim is the particular interests, in political sphere (state) the general interest of the community is aimed. So the ethical duty of the participants in the affairs of the state is to promote the common good of the community. Ethical life reaches its highest form in the political sphere, state.²⁰

¹⁵ S. Houlgate, (1998): *The Hegel Reader*, ed. by S. Houlgate, Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, Massachusetts, pp. 375-76, p. 376

¹⁶ D. A. Duquette, *G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) Social and Political Thought*, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, in <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/h/hegelsoc.htm>

¹⁷ S. Houlgate, (1998): *The Hegel Reader*, ed. by S. Houlgate, Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, Massachusetts, p. 379

¹⁸ S. Avineri, (1972): *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, London, New York, Sydney, p. 185

¹⁹ Z. A. Pelczynski, (1984): "The Significance of Hegel's Separation of the State and Civil Society", in: *The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

²⁰ *ibid.*

The chief task of the state, as Iltung states, is the coordination of diverging social interest. Therefore, what is vital for individuals is to recognize that private and personal ends converge with the communal end in the long-run, and to cooperate in the preservation of the state community.²¹ In Hegel's own words: "The irony of civil society is that the individuals who compose it think of themselves as free and independent agents, while they are, in fact, caught up in a 'system of all-round interdependence', in which the subsistence and welfare of the individual...are interwoven with, and grounded on, the subsistence, welfare and rights of all."²² This irony is dissolved only in the sphere of state where reason becomes conscious of itself and thus "man knows what he wants and acts accordingly".²³ In *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel writes:

"The state is the actuality of the ethical Idea-the ethical spirit as substantial will, manifest and clear to itself, which thinks and knows itself and implements what it knows in so far as it knows it. It has its immediate existence in custom and mediate existence in self-consciousness of the individual, in the individual's knowledge and activity, just as self-consciousness, by virtue of its disposition, has its substantial freedom in the state as its essence, its end, and the product of its activity"²⁴ (§ 257)

In Hegel, public and private ends appear to be identical. The goal of the state is happiness of its citizens, but once the subjective interests are not satisfied, then "the state itself stands on an insecure footing"²⁵ (§ 265). In other words, when the consciousness that binds subject and the state breaks up, or does dissolve gradually, the state is no longer secure.²⁶ So the social change can happen due to the disharmony between political state, civil society and ethical values of society. And state is the only organ that can put in order the inharmonious relation with civil society for its representing the ethical order.

Marx's Critique of Hegel's Philosophy and His Ideas on Civil Society and State

As I tried to discuss above, Hegel sees civil society as a sphere of diverging self interests that could be resolved only in the institution of the state, which embodies the highest

²¹ K. H. Iltung, (1984): "Hegel's concept of the State and Marx's Early Critique", in: *The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p. 94

see also. L. D. Hunt, "Hegel's Institutional Liberalism: Political Economy and Civil Society in the Philosophy of Right", in <http://www3.isp.msu.edu/cers/Hunt.htm>

²² M. H. Lenzen, (2002): "The Use and Abuse of 'Civil Society' in Development", *Transnational Associations*, 3, pp. 170-187, in <http://www.uia.org/ta/issues/2002/lenzen.php>

²³ S. Avineri, (1972): *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, London, New York, Sydney, p. 178

²⁴ S. Houlgate, (1998): *The Hegel Reader*, ed. by S. Houlgate, Blackwell Publishers: Oxford, Massachusetts, p. 380

²⁵ *ibid.* p. 383, § 265

²⁶ S. Avineri, (1972): *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, London, New York, Sydney, pp. 178-179

ethical ideals of society. Although Marx followed Hegel's separation of state and civil society, he entirely reached another end. In contrast to Hegel and by criticizing him, Marx reconceptualizes state and civil society and decomposes the relation between them. Instead of society which is formed under and in accordance with the laws of the State, Marx claims that the actions of the state are determined by society. Briefly, civil society was no longer a sphere of *corporation* at the end of market process, but a sphere of conflicts between competing private interests. And state, in terms of Marx, is freed from its reconciling mission between private interests and is posited as the target that would be overthrown as a consequence of class struggle on behalf of proletariat. Hence, apart from Hegel's analysis, State is not idealized in Marx's. Furthermore, contrary to Hegel supposed, it is the existing relationships within civil society, within the economic sphere, that determine the form and the character of the state. Adding that, in Marx's later work, Shaw notes that, the concept of civil society is largely replaced by that of the capitalist mode of production and frequently used.²⁷ Nevertheless, those concepts and Marx's theory requires to be evaluated more closely, and as far as I can, I will try to deal with this serious and dense topic by mainly referring to his writings.

Marx, as a Young Hegelian, in his early writings criticizes Hegel's view by rejecting the God as the true subject of humanity and places Man instead of God. In that sense, Pierson states that Feurbach's 'transformational criticism' of Hegel had a significant influence on Marx, for his inverting the subject and object of Hegel.²⁸ In the essay *On the Jewish Question* (1843), as well as in *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Pierson argues that Marx comes up with his own inversion of the Hegelian system. Moving from the religion, he comes to the critique of state and political liberty: "Political emancipation is at the same time the dissolution of the old society on which the state alienated from people, the sovereign power, is based."²⁹ Following that lines, he analyzes the character of feudalism as *directly political*. That means, the elements of civil life, to Marx, "were raised to the level of elements of political life in the form of seignior, estates, and corporations. In this form they determined the relation of the individual to the state *as a whole*."³⁰ And till the political revolution which overthrew this feudal power and made state affairs to become affairs of the people, the political character of civil society continued. Only after abolishing the old civil

²⁷ M. Shaw, (199?): "Civil Society" in: ed. by L. Kurtz, *Encyclopaedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict*, San Diego: Academic Press, pp. 269-78

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Users/hafa3/cs.htm>

²⁸ C. Pierson, (1997): "Introduction", in: ed. by C. Pierson, *The Marx Reader*, Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 7

²⁹ *ibid*, "On the Jewish Question", p. 45

³⁰ *ibid*, p. 45

society, it is broken up into its components; “on the one hand, *individuals*; on the other hand, the *material and spiritual elements* constituting the content of life and social position of these individuals.”³¹ To Marx, Feudal society was resolved into its basic element, man, however it was *egoistic* man. This man was the basis of the political state, to Marx, and he (egoistic man) was recognized by the state in the rights of man. Though the egoistic man gained liberty and the recognition of this liberty, Marx insists that, rather the recognition of the unrestrained movement of the spiritual and material elements formed the content of his life: “Hence man was not freed from religion, he received religious freedom. he was not freed from property, he received freedom to own property. He was not freed from the egoism of business, he received freedom to engage in business.”³² And laws arranged the relations between people, after the dissolution of civil society into its independent individuals. However, as mentioned above, the unpolitical man, as the member of civil society, is an egoistic man for Marx, who is the passive consequence of dissolved society; and therefore a *natural object*, a *natural man*. The reason is that political revolution resolved civil society without revolutionising its components and “it regards civil society, the world of needs, labour, private interests, civil law, as the basis of its existence”.³³ And following, Marx puts forward his solutions, firstly he distinguishes ‘real man’ and ‘abstract man’ and then finds the political emancipation of man in the reabsorption of abstract citizen by the real man:

“Man as a member of civil society is held to be man in proper sense, man as distinct from the citizen, because he is man in his sensuous, individual, immediate existence, whereas political man is only abstract, artificial man, man as an allegorical, juridical person...All emancipation is a reduction of the human world and relationship to man himself...Only when man has recognized and organized his own powers as social forces, and consequently no longer separates social power from himself in the shape of political power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished.”.(OJQ, 1843)³⁴

In *The German Ideology*, in 1845, Marx defines civil society as “the form of intercourse determined by the existing productive forces at all previous historical stages, and in its turn determining these.”³⁵ For Marx, civil society appears to be the true source and the actor of all history. That is since it is conceptualized as the whole commercial and industrial life of a given stage, and in that sense, to Marx; it transcends the State and the nation. However, the necessity to put itself categorically in its foreign relations as nationality forces itself, again, to get organized as State. The word, civil society (*Bürgerliche Gesellschaft*), for

³¹ *ibid*, p. 46

³² *ibid*, p. 46

³³ *ibid*. p. 47

³⁴ *ibid*. p. 47

³⁵ *ibid*, “*The German Ideology*”, p. 106

Marx is a product of property relationships in eighteenth century and civil society as such can only develop with the bourgeoisie.³⁶ And like in *The German Ideology*, in *Grundrisse*, Marx touches on the new era and the individual: “ It is only in the eighteenth century, in ‘civil society’, that the different forms of social union confront the individual as a mere means to his private ends, as an external necessity...Man is in the most literal sense of the word a *zoon politikon*, not only a social animal, but an animal which can develop into an individual only in society.”³⁷

Although ‘A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy’ was written in 1859, Pierson states that it describes the intellectual position, Marx had arrived by 1845. In the famous ‘preface’ of the book, where Marx summarizes the guiding principles of his studies, indicates Marx’s arrival after studying Hegel’s ‘civil society’.³⁸ To Marx, men inevitably enter into the relations of production for the social production of their existence. The totality of those relations of production forms the economic structure of society which is defined as the basic structure on which legal and political superstructure, and forms of social consciousness arise. Thus, it is men’s social existence in the mode of production of material life that determines their consciousness, not vice versa. Furthermore, Marx stresses that, the conflict takes place between the material productive forces of society and the existing relations of production at a certain stage of development. And the changes in the economic structure lead to the transformation of the superstructure. However, Marx’s conceptualization of civil society as the relations that constitute the real base gave way to Bobbio’s critiques. Bobbio states that Marx’s ‘civil society’ appears to be “the complex inter-individual relations that are outside or antecedent to the state: the same pre-state sphere which natural law writers and, to some extent in their wake, the first economists starting with the physiocrats, called the state of nature or natural society”.³⁹ In addition to that, Bobbio, in the following page, by referring to *The Holy Family* (1845), takes attention to the similarity between the Hobbes’s state of nature and Marx’s civil society in order to prove that Marxian use of civil society is more reductive than Hegel’s.

Seligman argues that both Hegel and Marx used the idea of civil society to define the individual existence within a social whole beyond the particular interests and came up with different ends. Marx, following Hegel, conceptualized the civil society as a sphere of conflicts

³⁶ *ibid.* p. 107

³⁷ *ibid.*, “*Grundrisse*”, p. 183

³⁸ K. Marx, (1977): *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers: Moscow, pp. 19-23

³⁹ N. Bobbio, (1979): “Gramsci and the Conceptualization of Civil Society”, in: ed. by C. Mouffe, *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, RKP, p. 27

between particular interests which must be overthrown in another unity; nonetheless while for Hegel this conflict is resolved in the State, State for Marx embodied a submissive organ to the conflicting forces of civil society.⁴⁰ On the other hand, Marx's state theory should not be read so quickly, for its not being completely a closed state theory. It is, to some extent, open to interpretations of Marxists. And at least two different readings of Marx's works on the state theory can be identified.

Faulks, makes this separation according to *The Communist Manifesto* and *The Eighteenth Brumaire*.⁴¹ The first reading depends on *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels define state as an instrument in the hands of ruling class to coerce the propertyless class: "The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."⁴² That instrumental role of the state with the idea of 'dictatorship of proletariat'-a political transition period from capitalist to communist society⁴³-, as Faulks says, have had considerable influence on revolutionaries, like Lenin and Stalin and both extended the phrase of Marx and Engels, the dictatorship of the proletariat, "into a dubious rationale for the increasingly centralized state that emerged in Russia after the revolution 1917".⁴⁴

Second theory of state, as Faulks states, can be found in Marx's writings on France. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, Marx examines the reign of Louis Napoleon and cites three historical cases, each of which has been developed by subsequent Marxists. Faulks quotes that short passage to indicate the difficulty in identifying a uniform theory of the state in Marx's works.⁴⁵ These unformulated theoretical gaps within Marx's theory, or more correctly different versions of these positions, are taken and established by writers such as Poulantzas or Miliband under the title of 'relative autonomy of the state' and thus challenged by many marxists, like Barry Hindess and Paul Hirst.⁴⁶

"Under the absolute monarchy, during the first revolution, under Napoleon, bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Under the restoration, under Louis Phillippe, under the parliamentary republic, it was the instrument of class rule, however much it strove for power of its own. Only under the second Bonaparte

⁴⁰ Seligman, A.B. (2002): "Civil Society as Idea and Ideal", Chambers, S. And W. Kymlicka (eds.), *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society*, Princeton University Press: Princeton and Oxford, pp. 26-27

⁴¹ K. Faulks, (1999): *Political Sociology*, Edinburg University Press: London, pp. 32-39

⁴² C. Pierson, (1997): "The Communist Manifesto", in: ed. by C. Pierson, *The Marx Reader*, Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 130

⁴³ *ibid*, "Critique of The Gotha Programme", p. 274

⁴⁴ K. Faulks, (1999): *Political Sociology*, Edinburg University Press: London, p. 35

⁴⁵ *ibid*. p. 35

⁴⁶ A. Hunt, (1980): "Introduction", in: ed. by A. Hunt, *Marxism and Democracy*, p. 11

does the state seem to have made itself completely independent.” (Marx and Engels, 1962: 333)

As the last sentence for this part, the position, ‘the determinancy of the economic in the final analysis’, leads to diverse stances like Gramsci, Althusser, Poulantzas, Miliband and so on. And for the next chapter, Gramsci, who emphasizes the state as an important site of political struggle and allows it a high level of autonomy from the economic structure, will be the concern.

Political Theory of Gramsci

Although Gramsci did not use the term ‘relative autonomy’ of the state, throughout his writings it can be sensed in an implicit form. In Gramsci’s works, the main proposition appears to be the impossibility of state analysis without a thorough understanding of civil society. However, as Simon and Cohen and Arato state, that kind of a coherent analysis is hard to find through the passages in the Selected Prison Notebooks. Especially, reader gets more confused by the unclear definitions of civil society (sphere of hegemony) and the state (sphere of coercion) and then by putting them together in an *integral state*.⁴⁷

Gramsci suggests that “by state should be understood as well as government apparatuses of hegemony”⁴⁸ (SPN, 261) and in another passage he writes that state is “the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only maintains its dominance but manages to win the consent of those over whom it rules” (SPN, 244). Simon notes that this view is summed up in the statement that state is “political plus civil society, in other words, hegemony protected by the armour of coercion”. (SPN, 262). For Gramsci, Simon argues that “this is the *integral state* opposed to the state in the ordinary sense, which he sometimes calls ‘the state-as-government’ and which he also terms ‘political society’”.⁴⁹ Simon explains this confusion with regard to Gramsci’s using the term ‘state’ both in its ordinary sense and in the sense of *power*. And he concludes that Gramsci’s intent is to suggest that “the social relationships of civil society are relations of power as much as are the coercive relations of the state.”⁵⁰ In other words, hegemonic class exercises power over subordinate classes in civil society in addition to the state power.

⁴⁷ R. Simon, (1982): *Gramsci’s Political Thought: An Introduction*, Lawrance and Wishart: London, p. 68-72

⁴⁸ A. Gramsci, (1973): *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. and trans. by Q. Hoare and G. N. Smith, Lawrance and Wishart: London, p. 261

⁴⁹ R. Simon, (1982): *Gramsci’s Political Thought: An Introduction*, Lawrance and Wishart: London, p. 72

⁵⁰ *ibid.* p. 72

In understanding Gramsci's civil society, one of the key terms is 'hegemony' which was also employed by Lenin in a different sense. While for Lenin, hegemony was a strategy for revolution which the working class and its representatives should adopt to win the support of majority, Gramsci extended this term with the practices of capitalist class and its representatives in gaining state power and maintaining that power after it has been achieved.⁵¹ So the term 'hegemony' was transformed from a strategy into a concept by Gramsci. Since hegemony is defined as a relation between classes and other social forces, a hegemonic class can be identified which "gains consent of other classes and social forces through creating and maintaining a system of alliances by means of political and ideological struggle".⁵²

The concept of hegemony, nonetheless, is related to a number of other concepts which altogether constitute the real meaning of hegemony. Simon draws an outline for the concept of hegemony and defines the concerning terms⁵³. For instance, Gramsci uses *economic corporate/hegemonic* dichotomy, which implies that working class can only be a hegemonic class once it goes beyond the economic-corporate struggles, and 'be prepared to make compromises so as to become the national representative of a broad bloc'. That is also related to Gramsci's concept of *national-popular*, that means a class can not achieve the leadership, and become hegemonic, if it does not take into account the popular and democratic demands and struggles. Thus, as Simon stresses, hegemony both has a class and national-popular dimension. Moreover, social relations of civil society do not only result in class struggles, but also result in popular-democratic social movements without class character. Thus, working class in advanced capitalist societies, to Gramsci, has to build alliances with such social movements within civil society and then establish strategies which constitutes their *war of position*. However, bourgeoisie has its own strategies not to abandon the hegemonic power, and thus the strategy of bourgeoisie against working class is to reconstruct its hegemony through the agency of the state, which is called *passive-revolution*. Hence, then the struggle of working class is an *anti-passive revolution*. Moreover, the shift from economic corporate to hegemonic phase within the struggle of working class necessitates a transformation in the political consciousness of the new alliance, and for that ideology works as the cement to bind a bloc of diverse classes and social forces. That process of ideological struggle was called *intellectual and moral reform* by Gramsci. This list of terms

⁵¹ *ibid.* p. 22

⁵² *ibid.* p. 22

⁵³ *ibid.* pp. 21-28

can be prolonged, but lastly can be noted that *civil society*, the sphere of class struggles and popular-democratic struggles, is the sphere where hegemony is exercised.

For the concept of civil society, Simon notes that after studying different confusing passages a definition of civil society can be constructed which is that “it comprises all the ‘so-called private’ organizations such as churches, trade unions, political parties and cultural associations which are distinct from the process of production and from the public apparatuses of the state.”⁵⁴ Following, it has to be stated that all these components of civil society are the result of ‘a complex network of social practices and social relations’ which also includes the struggle between two fundamental classes, capital and labour. The organizations of civil society is separated from the institutions and apparatuses of state, for its not having a monopoly of coercion. Thus, Gramsci identifies three sets of social relations in the capitalist society: (a) the relations of production, the basic relation between labour and capital, (b) the coercive relations that characterise the state, and (c) all the other social relations that make up civil society.⁵⁵ Also, civil society includes family as well, which has a distinctive position within civil society for the domestic roles of women in the household.

Civil society, if to summarize what has been discussed, as Simon states, is the sphere of political and ideological struggles where workers, capitalists and others participate in, and where trade unions, political parties, religious bodies and variety of other organizations come into existence.⁵⁶ So, civil society appears to be not only the sphere of class struggles, but also the sphere of all popular-democratic struggles in which people are grouped according to their sex, race, religion, nation and so on. Thus, for Gramsci, the struggle for hegemony between the two fundamental classes takes place in civil society.

Unlike Hegel and Marx, as mentioned in the first two chapters, Gramsci did not include the capitalist economy on the level of civil society. Indeed, his conception of civil society, although being a follower of Marx, generated from Hegel. Cohen and Arato stress that unlike Marx, he turned to the doctrine of *corporations* for his inspiration, rather than to the system of needs.⁵⁷ Bobbio defines Gramsci’s civil society as “the sphere where ideological apparatuses operate and whose task it is to exercise hegemony and through

⁵⁴ *ibid.* p. 69

⁵⁵ *ibid.* p. 69

⁵⁶ *ibid.* p. 69

⁵⁷ J. Cohen and A. Arato, (1992): *Civil Society and Political Theory*, MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, p. 142

hegemony to obtain consensus.”⁵⁸ So it is a turn from material relations to ideological/cultural relations. Chambers explains this turn towards to cultural sphere in two senses that marks a break with the economic reductionism of Marx. First, like Cohen and Arato’s argument above, civil society is no more considered as a system of needs, but a system of ideas, values, ideologies and interests in sociological and political terms. Second, ‘the central role of hegemony leads to the semiautonomy of the world of ideas from the economy’. And the causal connection between ‘base and superstructure’ is rejected since the superstructure encounters a more complex relationship with the base.⁵⁹ Due to that shift from economic relations to ideological/cultural domain, Gramsci turned to be one of the most cited figures in marxist literature and his conceptualization of civil society through hegemony could give rise to new studies in political theory and has inspired many sociologists and political scientists till today.

Conclusion

Throughout this article, the main concern was the theoretical roots of civil society and its location vis-a-vis the state. Therefore, Hegel, who made the first separation between state and civil society, is the first figure I did mention. Marx, the second figure in this study, had inverted Hegel’s philosophy and located civil society within economic relations in his early writings and then dealt with capitalist mode of production mainly in his later works. Nevertheless, in the first half of twentieth century, Marx’s ideas were, this time, converted by an Italian marxist, Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci’s contributions to the civil society discussions, and reconceptualization of base/superstructure relation echoed among a considerable amount of marxists. In that sense, going back in the timeline, what I aimed in this study was to trace that line of civil society discussion, following Hegel, Marx and Gramsci.

⁵⁸ N. Bobbio, (1979): “Gramsci and the Conceptualization of Civil Society” in: ed. by C.Mouffe, *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, RKP, p. 29

⁵⁹ S. Chambers, (2002): “A Critical theory of Civil Society”, in: ed. by Chambers, S. And W. Kymlicka, *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, p. 91

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