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VAKIF AS INTENT AND PRACTICE: CHARITY AND POOR RELIEF IN TURKEY

Abstract
Through ethnographic and archival research conducted in Istanbul and Izmir, this article examines the dynamics and regulation of charitable giving in contemporary Turkey. The article is based on interviews I conducted with the volunteers, employees, and aid recipients of three civil society organizations that rely on charitable giving to fund their projects, which center on helping the poor and providing aid during and after wars and other disasters. I document how religious ideals of anonymous charitable giving for the sake of giving, without expectation of return, are closely intertwined with anxiety over finding a worthy charitable association and recipient. In doing so, I focus on *vakıf* as both a concept and a practice that gives meaning to charitable giving in Turkey. The increasing desire to document, define, and categorize the deserving poor as a way to justify the intent to give and to receive goes against the anonymity and immediacy of giving, thus riddling intent with ethical contradictions. I argue that attention needs to be paid to the intent, practice, and various forms of giving, and not just to the effects and outcomes of charity.

During the summer of 2009 I accompanied Mehmet,[1] a volunteer of Deniz Feneri Derneği (Deniz Feneri Aid and Solidarity Association [DF]), as he visited the homes of aid applicants.[2] He told a story of a former donor he had befriended who used to have a good income but became poor and needed help after the economy took a downturn. This man, when he had a job, gave to the needy in his neighborhood and at times volunteered at charitable associations. According to Mehmet, this was a very good example of how one can be rich one day and poor the next. As our car came to a stop in front of a half-built house of an aid recipient, Mehmet told me that this man gave what he could and volunteered when he could, and now God and DF were returning the favor. In the lives of people such as Mehmet and the donor/recipient he told me about, the charitable giving and receiving of time and money were important materially as well as emotionally. Moreover, the act of charity intertwined patronage, charity,[3] generosity, and welfare at the level of both the institution and the individual.

In Islamic philanthropy, charitable giving is not only a kindly act of generosity but also, up to a point, a requirement. Zakat, one of the five pillars of being a good Muslim, is the obligation that individuals have to donate a certain proportion of their wealth each

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year in order to physically and spiritually purify their yearly earnings that exceed what is required for the essential needs of a person or family. Through zakat, one repays a kind of debt and fulfils a duty by being charitable to the poor and the needy.[4] Aside from zakat, voluntary generosity is also highly valued in Islam. As one volunteer explained to me: "The poor's share is already contained within what the rich receive. So you need to give your zakat as it is due. You will be considered especially generous if you give even more than your share."

Sadaka is conceptualized as voluntary charity to aid public welfare. It includes any act of voluntary giving motivated by love, friendship, duty, generosity, compassion, or religion that goes above and beyond one's yearly duty of zakat. Although there is a distinction between the two terms, my research shows that in practice donors and volunteers in contemporary Turkey may not differentiate between the two very clearly and see giving, whether through zakat or *sadaka*, as a way to be a good Muslim. Giving one's time and energy as a volunteer is also highly valued and considered a form of charitable giving for those whom I met and interviewed. In fact, most saw this type of giving as even more impressive than donating money, since it meant personal involvement and being active in the organizations.

A recent turn, in the scholarship on political Islam and Islamist movements inside and outside Turkey, toward detailed studies of the micropolitics of governance in political parties, Islamic sects, Islamic identity politics, and Islamic publics constitutes the backdrop of my own interest in the study of charitable giving.[5] What unites this diverse literature is an emphasis on the relevance of everyday practice in defining what it means to be a Muslim in the contemporary world. I examine charitable giving as an everyday, required and/or encouraged, practice of being a good Muslim. In the practice of charitable giving, for both the donors and the recipients of aid discussed here, it becomes almost impossible to separate the various types of giving such as zakat, *sadaka*, monetary donations through associations, and donations of time and effort.

By focusing on *vakıf* as an important form of economic and spiritual transaction, I am interested in the ways in which the precepts and beliefs of Muslim practice are articulated through neoliberal principles of the privatization of welfare, individualism, and personal responsibility in a creative and productive manner. The meaning and practice of *vakıf* will be discussed in detail below. However, it is important to note here that in institutional terms, *vakıf*s are pious endowments or foundations that use their resources for specific purposes, while in practice, from the perspective of volunteers and donors, *vakıf* entails the selfless act of giving without an expectation of return. I am especially interested in how *vakıf* is defined and practiced by those who volunteer for, donate to, and work in charitable organizations. In particular, I am ethnographically concerned with the ways in which charitable giving mutually co-constitutes donors and volunteers as good Muslims while delineating the parameters of worthy recipients. I endeavor to show how Muslim actors fuse the local, informal, and private affair of giving to the needy with the more legal, formal, and public setting of charitable associations and foundations. In doing so, they re-imagine and romanticize the concept and practice of *vakıf* as a regulated solution to poverty.

Privatization of welfare, through cultivating and governing charitable impulses within the institutional "opportunity spaces" of civil society, also becomes one of the foundational building blocks of the neoliberal state.[6] Paradoxically, this ends up downplaying

or disregarding new forms of poverty resulting from neoliberal policies and crony capitalism, while putting the burden of proof of poverty on the poor. Such forms of charitable giving work against questioning the parameters and results of ongoing neoliberalization and the structural causes of poverty. I argue that religious values, such as being a good Muslim through charitable giving, are mobilized to address the challenges of neoliberalization and globalization in contemporary Turkey, making charity anthropologically significant in understanding responses to economic change.

INSTITUTIONS OF CHARITABLE GIVING IN TURKEY

The article is based on interviews and ethnographic and archival research I conducted in Turkey from 2007 to 2009 and during the summer of 2013 with the volunteers, employees, and aid recipients of three civil society organizations that rely on charitable giving to fund their projects: İnsani Yardım Vakfı (The Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief [IHH]), Deniz Feneri Derneği (Deniz Feneri Aid and Solidarity Association [DF]), and İstanbul Uluslararası Kardeşlik ve Yardımlaşma Derneği (Istanbul International Brotherhood and Solidarity Association [IBS]).

IHH was constituted as a *vakıf* (foundation). Its mission is broadly defined as helping those in need, and it partners with other associations both nationally and internationally on specific projects. As its website states, "the IHH's main objective [is] to deliver humanitarian aid to all people and take necessary steps to prevent any violations against their basic rights and liberties."[7] Several of the volunteers and employees I talked to at IHH identified the foundation as faith-based and specifically as Islamic. Even though IHH donates to those affected by natural disasters regardless of faith or geographic location (for example, it sent donations to Haiti after the earthquake), a cursory examination of its projects and donations show that most are targeted to Muslims and Islamic nations. IHH is also very active in politically charged faith-based missions, such as the Freedom Flotilla bringing aid to Gaza that was the target of an Israeli raid causing civilian casualties.[8] The main IHH offices are situated in Fatih, one of the strongholds of conservative Islam in Istanbul, and occupy two separate buildings: male employees are located in the conspicuous headquarters while female employees work at a discreet apartment complex on an adjacent street.

DF and IBS are associations that, unlike IHH, do not openly identify themselves as faith-based organizations, but their international projects are largely placed in Islamic nations and they are seen by the general public to be conservative organizations. Yet my more liberally minded friends and the liberal media saw all of these organizations as Islamic in nature. The reasons that DF and IBS chose not to identify themselves as faith-based associations were largely practical and economic. During my interviews, the presidents of DF and IBS noted that they wanted to be open to all donors and did not want to be associated with politics or specific constituents, as that might hurt their efforts to reach the poor. They emphasized that the background of the needy did not matter as long as the need was real and documented. All three organizations also provided donors the option to give to specific causes, such as Gaza, an identified disaster, or to help orphans, for example. Volunteers were also highly valued by all the organizations and in many conversations I witnessed a desire to find predictable and trustworthy volunteers, which was considered difficult. Volunteering at times enabled face-to-face interactions

with the needy; however, it might also mean activities such as packaging, translation, and data entry. Very few volunteers were among those who visited the needy at their homes to document and verify their need; I witnessed them personally only in DF, where donations were tracked much more carefully by the association through computer systems and software.

Another difference was that IHH, which was constituted as a *vakıf*, could rely on long-term assets donated by its founders, while DF and IBS, as associations, relied solely on financial donations, whether from their founders or other donors. Thus, the latter two needed to maintain a more diverse pool of donors to stay viable. Yet, both associations had a conservative donor base and, just as IHH, received most of their donations during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Due to the public support of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, his wife, and other Justice and Development Party (AKP) government officials, DF was associated with the current conservative AKP government in the minds of many. However, none of these charitable institutions received any direct funding from the government while all three received national and international recognition for their work. Being a *vakıf* or an association defined the founding principles of these institutions, yet ongoing reforms since the formation of the Turkish Republic, including recent laws, enabled *vakıf*s and associations to tap into similar pools of charitable giving despite differences in how they were founded and the government agencies to which they reported.

*VAKIF*S AND ASSOCIATIONS

Generally defined, v*akıf*s are asset-based entities established with a minimum of one donor, an endowment, and a purpose to advance the common or public good. They have no members, yet they can have several founding trustees. In the Ottoman Empire, *vakıf*s were pious endowments or foundations constituted for a specified purpose, which might range from funding the operation of a mosque to providing for the poor in a specific neighborhood.[9] They had a registered deed with a judge; the deeds were irrevocable and unalterable once constituted. With the formation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, a separate public body affiliated with the Prime Ministry, Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü (the General Directorate of Foundations), was established to register and regulate foundations.

During the Ottoman period, *vakıf*s constituted one of the foundational and organizational benchmarks of society, shaping economic, social, and property transactions. Ottoman *vakıf*s were a collective undertaking to enhance the empire's hold over its subjects, projecting an "ideal of the Ottoman sultan as beneficent and just ruler, providing subsistence along with spiritual and intellectual support to his subjects."[10] Although they may not have been conceived in these ways, they served diverse purposes, from policing the poor to providing a way for the state to distribute welfare.[11] In the late Ottoman and early republican eras, *vakıf*s were joined by innovations in philanthropy that included associations and volunteerism.[12] Beginning with early attempts in the late 18th century, such as the founding of the Evkaf Nezareti, and continuing through the 19th century, state-led reforms gradually centralized *vakıf*s by confiscating their land and resources in an effort to fill the coffers of the state budget, which led to significant losses in revenue for *vakıf*s. Large and small *vakıf*s alike lost their effectiveness and

became part of a mixed economy of charity that also included governmental charities and private associations.[13] *Vakıf*s in the Turkish Republic are largely independent entities not directly controlled by the Turkish government or the state, although, as noted above, they are monitored by a state agency to ensure transparency and due process as legal entities shaped by economic and fiscal constraints.

In Turkey today, associations are registered and inspected by a different government agency, the Ministry of Interior Department of Associations (T. C. İçişleri Bakanlığı Dernekler Dairesi Başkanlığı). Associations are member-based entities; they have at least seven founding individuals/institutions and their purposes range from benefiting the public good to supporting specific groups of individuals (such as alumni associations).[14] Unlike *vakıf*s, which hold various types of property and income such as securities, real estate, rents, and money all devoted to a specific cause identified in their mission statements, associations are congregations of like-minded individuals and do not have assets devoted to specific projects.

With the introduction of the multiparty system in the 1950s, Turkey witnessed a significant growth in the number of associations, from 2,000 in the 1950s to 45,000 in 1972.[15] Despite tight regulation during the turbulent period of extreme left- and right-wing movements in the 1960s and 1970s, and restrictions on associations' activities following the coup of 1980, the association movement grew tremendously through the 1990s. *Vakıf*s also grew, becoming important in the Turkish Islamic mobilization of working-class and other non-elite communities within informal networks.[16]

According to data collected by the Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TUSEV),[17] in 2006 there were 4,364 active *vakıf*s in Turkey, compared with 71,240 active associations.[18] A more recent TUSEV report shows that the number of associations, foundations, unions, chambers, and cooperatives in Turkey reached around 150,000 in 2008.[19] V*akıf*s and associations can have secular and/or religious missions; however, *vakıf* as a term also has a religious connotation. *Vakıf*s are "conceived first and foremost to be pious acts, inspired by religious belief, aspirations to attaining Paradise, and the obligation of giving charity."[20] For many of the actors within the charitable civil society institutions discussed in this article, this theologically sanctioned history of *vakıf* framed the pious and economic transactions defined as *kendini vakfetmek* (donating the self), regardless of whether the institution was constituted as a *vakıf* or an association.

The blurring of the line between charitable *vakıf*s and associations in the minds of donors and volunteers can also be seen as a result of recent changes in Turkish law that have enabled the two kinds of organizations to tap into similar resources. According to the Law of *Vakıf*s, passed in February 2008, *vakıf*s can participate in transnational activities, form partnerships with other international institutions for specific purposes, open international branches, and collect donations for specific causes; they need only have assets equaling 50,000 YTL to be constituted as *vakıf*s.[21] In 2004, the AKP government passed the new Law of Associations,[22] enabling associations such as DF and IBS, which benefit the public, to collect foreign funding and develop partnership activities without prior government authorization; associations were no longer required to inform government officials of their meetings and internal audits within the associations were increased to ensure accountability. Hence, in contemporary Turkey, both *vakıf*s and associations are free to advertise their causes to receive donations from the public. With these changes in Turkish laws and regulations, civil society organizations such as

*vakıf*s and associations became effective and transparent conduits for zakat and other charitable donations, helping to counter the negative effects of increasing globalization and the neoliberal turn of the economy since the 1980s.

THE NEOLIBERAL TURN AND CHARITABLE GIVING

I visited DF again in the summer of 2013, as the Gezi Park protests raged on the streets of Turkey. As I helped enter aid recipients' data on the DF computers, we were interrupted by chants from outside. All of the government employees in Izmir had gone on a one-day strike to protest their inadequate pay and the authoritative measures of the government. A rally was taking place in one of the busiest traffic circles, right in front of the DF offices. Everyone flocked to the windows to watch the protesters, who had stopped traffic by their sheer numbers. One of the employees of DF remarked angrily:

> So they say they are protesting the government. I say there is work to do here! Come and do the work with us. Do something productive. They all destroy things and buildings and now stop people from doing their jobs and going places by stopping traffic. What right do they have to do this? If you want to help the government do better, we have work that you can do here. Give to the needy, do something that you actually should be doing instead of wrecking other peoples' property.

I asked if the protestors were not also doing the right thing by going on strike and resisting the neoliberal policies and unjust practices of the government that create poverty in the first place. The employee responded:

> We all know who these people are. They don't want Turkey to be stable and prosperous. This is political; it is not about justice and what is right. If that was the case, they would be volunteering and doing productive work like we are doing here. AKP is becoming the scapegoat for some people with certain political agendas. The government has done a lot for the economy and the poor; it is all of our responsibility to help the poor.

These comments suggest that *vakıf*s and associations are the bastions against poverty, and that productive citizenship involves participating in and supporting such institutions rather than using one's time to stop work and protest on the streets. Among the volunteers and employees present in the DF offices that day, there was no recognition that charitable giving allowed the neoliberal system to thrive by providing a sprinkling of generosity.

Since the early 1980s, Turkey has experienced a burgeoning of civil society that parallels the neoliberal turn of the economy. As Turkey opened its markets to economic liberalization and globalization, the rising conservative bourgeoisie saw civil society organizations as legitimate venues of donations, on the grounds that these institutions would be more accountable and less corrupt than the state, providing checks and balances on the misuse of governmental power. This perspective was supported by the Turkish state, which saw conservative civil society organizations as democratizing agents with a mission of social justice.[23] Also, civil society organizations, including women's organizations, were perceived to be inherently less problematic than the politically identified left/right organizations of the 1960s and 1970s, whose activism and violence preceded and precipitated the 1980 military coup.[24] Recent research on Turkey has extensively documented the gradual neoliberalization of the economy through privatization,

deregulation, and the retreat of the welfare state from the provision of public goods since the 1980s.[25]

The development of state welfare organizations in Turkey was limited even during the hyperstatist era of the pre-1980s, when the economy was more fully controlled by the state. Despite the fact that etatism was the official strategy employed by the state in relation to both the economy and society, when it came to dealing with poverty the government assumed very limited responsibility in the realm of social assistance and chose to appeal to private and religious charitable giving, making it very difficult to dissociate private acts of benevolence from public assistance. Although the state's concern over poverty and destitution was real, this concern did not translate into any serious investment of fiscal resources.[26]

In the 1980s, the neoliberal restructuring managed by Turgut Özal's Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi [ANAP]) constituted a radical departure from the state's previous orientation toward the domestic market and state protectionism.[27] The general election in 1983 was a turning point in the historical transformation of the Turkish economy, which accelerated in the 1990s and was embraced fully by the current Justice and Development (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi [AKP]) government and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. This involved a movement away from the maximization of national welfare through the attainment of full employment and provision of social services by the state to the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture in both the public and private sectors. The AKP 2002 party program states that it

> favors the market economy . . . It recognizes that the State should remain, in principle outside all types of economic activities . . . It regards the realization of the ethical values appearing with the mixture of international norms with our cultural values, in every area of economic activities, as a precondition of continuous and sustainable growth.[28]

The program does concern itself with mitigating social vulnerabilities and risks; it focuses on the redistribution of opportunity rather than income and does not pose a challenge to neoliberal policies. As noted by Atasoy, the ongoing economic reforms of the AKP aim for a new assemblage that infuses neoliberalism with an Islamic ethic in which patron-client ties, familial ties, and the informal economy are central.[29] One should note that such traditional values and institutions are also crucial in the effective functioning of the free-market economy and neoliberal capitalism. An unqualified individualism would entail ever-increasing state intervention in society and the economy to guarantee social cohesion, which is antithetical to the free-market economy and minimal governmental intervention, both mantras of neoliberal capitalism.[30] In many ways, private charitable giving supports neoliberal restructuring by providing resources to the public that the state does not.

The AKP established and still thrives on an extensive welfare network that delivers food, fuel, clothing, and money to families in dire status; it helps people get jobs and pay the educational bills of their family members.[31] The party also depends heavily on the private-sector philanthropy of entrepreneurs for the provision of social welfare, which closely resembles Turgut Özal's approach to social welfare.[32] However, while Özal focused on immediate relief to those in desperate need,[33] Erdoğan has prioritized the economic and social inclusion of those who are poor, with an emphasis on growth, social stability, and fiscal responsibility coupled with a communitarian reliance on civil

society, neighborhood associations, and the traditional family supported by a regulatory state. For Erdoğan, the privatization of welfare, with an emphasis on entrepreneurship, is the key to addressing the social problems that result from neoliberal policies. Institutions such as DF, IHH, and IBS, as well as the extended family, take center stage in Erdoğan's provision of welfare. The AKP embraces capital accumulation, neoliberal growth, and a religious-moral outlook that encourages social solidarity and emphasizes the moral obligation to return your blessings back to your community through charitable giving and volunteerism.[34]

Under the AKP government, scholars note that the state-Islam relation can be theorized as a "politics of engagement" rather than struggle; charitable giving has became increasingly instrumental in such "politics of engagement."[35] As the AKP downsized and privatized the welfare services of the state, charitable institutions and associations handled the societal effects of neoliberalization, such as increasing poverty and displacement. As one interviewee noted: "If it weren't for civil society organizations such as Deniz Feneri, we would have civil war in Turkey by now. These organizations deal with the poor and the needy so they feel some sense of security; the state does not do that job." One might argue that the Gezi protests in Turkey show how the AKP government's "politics of engagement" has cracked under the weight of authoritarian neoliberalism; however, my conversations in the offices of organizations such as DF show that the charitable giving of time, money, and other resources is seen by many as a productive way to support a government that is trying to do its very best.

Charitable giving has not only aided neoliberal restructuring but also provided a sense of belonging and emotional relief for donors and volunteers. This can be observed in the conversations I had with two women I met, Elif and Sema, who spent considerable time, energy, and money in volunteering and donating to charitable organizations. For them, *vakıf* was more than an institutional marker; it represented a unique transaction between the donor and the recipient.

"YOU DONATE YOURSELF, YOU FIND YOURSELF AND OTHERS": *VAKIF*'S MEANING AS PRACTICE

As mother and daughter, Sema and Elif were volunteers of DF, assisting with aid package preparations, clothing distributions, and donation booths. Sema was a forty-two-year-old housewife. She had gotten married when she was twenty-one and immediately migrated with her husband from the Black Sea Region to one of the large urbanized city centers in Turkey. Elif was born a year later. Sema's husband sold produce at a local bazaar and gradually gained enough money to buy his own shop. Elif had recently graduated from high school and was preparing for the university exam, while her younger brother Sedat was doing his mandatory military service in southeast Turkey.

Elif got involved with several charitable associations when she was in high school: she volunteered for DF and she and her father donated money to IHH. Sema started to volunteer in order to keep an eye on Elif. "Elif was going to visit homes of aid recipients to do social surveys to document their living conditions and I just could not let her do that on her own, so I tagged along. We became volunteers, both of us, and then I got hooked." Sema had also been active in her neighborhood; she had been helping out a poor family who had migrated from the southeast region to settle in a rundown apartment

complex nearby. She would take food to the family and had petitioned the *muhtar*[36] to donate wood to the family so that they could heat their apartment during winter. Sema's husband, Süleyman, had invested in a construction company, but his business partner ran off with the money. The family saw this as a test of their family ties and commitment to God. Despite these hardships, Süleyman was considering investments in the future and the family was doing well.

For Sema and Elif, their participation in civil society organizations legitimated their intent to do good by finding a worthy recipient; charitable associations and *vakıf*s made sure the recipient was worthy of donations. When explaining to me why she didn't differentiate between IHH and DF as a *vakıf* and an association, respectively, Elif said:

> We see poor people and we try to help out, but how can we be sure that we know we found those that really need our help? I feel like that is what IHH and DF offer. They do the work and find those who are really in need . . . I feel a sense of peace [*huzur*] when I volunteer at DF. I donate my time; I donate myself [*kendimi vakfediyorum*] and they welcome that with open arms.

I asked Elif what she meant by *kendini vakfetmek*; by that time I had heard this phrase several times. She responded:

> It is the ability to give without expecting anything in return, but also to know that you are finding the right people to give and the right cause. It is giving for God's approval [*Allah rızası*]; it is meeting your religious, moral obligation. It is giving for a specific cause that you want to give for. *Vakıf* I guess is that; that is why I don't see that much of a difference between IHH and DF. They both practice *vakıf* [*her ikiside vakıf işindeler aslında*].

In response to my question about what would constitute a just cause for her, she explained: "For me, it is finding the right person to give to, which is important. It is also not only about that person, but helping out his or her family. We hope that our money and time goes to educate, help, and give people hope."

From the perspective of donors such as Elif, *vakıf* was the giving of both time and money to those who are in need without expecting anything in return; in this sense, it was closely intertwined with having good intentions, which, in turn, led to the ability to find the worthiest of recipients. They explained that in modern times, when it is difficult to trust people, one way to make sure that the recipients had the right intent and to guarantee the purity of the donors' own *vakıf* was to trust that the organizations acting as intermediaries would find the right recipients.

How did they conceptualize *vakıf* in relation to their active contributions to the poor neighbors around them? Was that also a form of *kendini vakfetmek*? Sema noted,

> I think that what everyone does, however little, is important, but *kendini vakfetmek* is different from giving to your neighbors occasionally. From my perspective, *vakıf* has a purpose. You are driven and devoted and you also invest in the places you donate to. I feel like I know the people at DF . . . *Vakıf* entails being loyal to them. That is what I think. It is being loyal to a cause you believe in and giving your all for it. How can I say this, you donate yourself and you find yourself and others [*nasıl söylesem, kendini vakfedersin, kendini ve başkalarını bulursun*]. I get an immediate feeling of peace [*huzur*], comfort [*rahatlık*]; I give a little bit of what I have.

Here, *vakıf* was more than an institutional space; it was ideological and practical loyalty to a charitable community. The sincerity of institutional and donor intent resulted in

feelings of peace (*huzur*) and comfort (*rahatlık*) for volunteers such as Elif and Sema. Yet that same intent enabled further neoliberalism and evasion of responsibility by the state, resulting in distrust and discontent. As one young volunteer I talked to at a bazaar that sold food and clothing to raise money for *Kimse Yok Mu*?, another charitable association in Turkey, pointed out:

> I am spending my time here because I gave up trying to pass the exams to get a state job. They made it so difficult. I took that exam three times now with no success. It used to be that state jobs were the best and most secure and now there are fewer of them and they make everyone compete and it is so hard. I can't find a job so at least I try to spend my time productively here and contribute what I can. I did not participate in the protests because I do not agree with the tactics of the protestors and all that they are saying, but I can understand being frustrated because you can't find a job and you feel hopeless. I think the government is trying to do its best, but it is not enough. I don't beat pots and pans, but I understand.

This volunteer was referring to the Gezi protests, during which people beat pots and pans at 9:00 pm all over the country in protest of the violent tactics and authoritarian measures of the AKP government.

Charitable associations provide a unique space where, as the volunteer above noted, "discontent" becomes "productivity." Ironically, though, it is through productivity that these associations work to contain such discontent toward the state. The state is conceptualized as an entity trying to do its best, but failing and thus needing the support of the charitable associations. The practice of *vakıf*, defined by the volunteers as the giving of the self in service to others, does what the state is not doing: it unites people and provides for those in need. In turn, the communities of giving provide citizens with the power to make decisions about how they want to spend their time and money without the interference of the state, while freely associating with like-minded individuals. With their increased prevalence, the biggest challenge shouldered by associations and *vakıf*s alike has been how to document, catalog, and account for the rational mechanics and instrumentality of giving while encountering the troubling social experiences of those who are in need.

INTENT (*NIYET*) AND INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

In her work on Indian philanthropy, Erica Bornstein contrasts the formalized, regulated, and legislated institutionalization of giving through charity organizations with the spontaneity of direct and impulsive giving to the poor.[37] In the case of Turkey, however, it may be more productive to see these two types of giving—the regulated and the spontaneous—as giving meaning to each other. For many of the donors I interviewed, such as Elif and Sema, selfless giving and emotional connection to the poor were made possible through the regulative and accountable work of charitable institutions.

On an institutional level, both charitable associations and *vakıf*s faced the religious and secular obligation to be transparent and accountable to donors and volunteers through regulatory practices.[38] The regulation of expenses and correspondence was extremely important for all civil society organizations I visited. This was partially due to the extensive patronage ties that often bind both business and personal dealings in Turkey, which have been documented within various types of associations and political activities,[39]

state institutions,[40] economic transactions,[41] local and national politics,[42] and everyday life.[43] These suspicions needed to be avoided if civil society organizations were to thrive and one way to accomplish this was through extensive audits and regulatory bureaucracy.

IHH had an internal board of inspection, declared its income and expenses online, and reported to the General Directorate of Foundations. DF also had an internal board of inspection, external audits, declared its income and expenses online, and had an ISO Quality Certificate, which entailed regular inspections. Both institutions welcomed questions from donors and volunteers about their expenses. During the time of this research, IBS did not have an online reporting of its income and expenses, but it had internal and external audit procedures. DF had written its own software system to track all aspects of aid distribution; the software, YOP, documented phone calls from aid recipients and donors, all aid decisions made by the association, and detailed information on aid recipients and donors. I have discussed the development and logistics of this software and other forms of institutional checks and balances elsewhere,[44] but what is important to note here is that YOP categorized aid recipients and donors separately. This enabled the association to protect the contact information of its donors while providing donors, volunteers, and employees detailed information on aid recipients.

From the perspective of the organization, a primary reason for this was the desire for anonymity on the part of the donors. Many I talked to noted the importance of donors' trust that their private information would be protected, and explained that one reason donors did not want their names known was that they feared the poor recipients might show up on their doorsteps. The identities of the donors were extensively protected by the charitable associations. As a researcher, I was not allowed to enter the YOP site that listed contact and other information related to donors. The donors and volunteers I talked to emphasized *kendini vakfetmek* as a form of unbounded, unrequited gift that, ideally, should be tied neither to the giver nor the recipient: the giver remained anonymous and usually disconnected from the aid recipient, who also remained anonymous to the donor. However, the recipient's anonymity was only protected if the donor wanted it to be. If the donor desired to know where his/her donations went, he/she was provided with the recipient's name and address. The practice of *vakıf*, in principle, as described by the donors and volunteers, did not rest on or expect reciprocity between the donor and the recipient. The donor did not have any expectations from the recipient, yet had the power to know who the recipient was. Regardless of the premise of lack of expectation of return, in many ways *vakıf* was the embodiment of the impossibility of an unrequited gift.

In contrast to the ideal of "no return and expectancy" in Derrida's notion of the unrequited gift,[45] for these donors and volunteers, *vakıf*'s importance was in the intent of donating in the name of God with His grace in mind. The prayers of the needy were instrumental in gaining the grace of God; charitable giving was in fact tied to requitement in the form of prayer, which in turn created the need to regulate the gift's distribution. The donors received a return from the givers through their prayers. The importance of this was evident in several advertisements and postings on social networking sites utilized by the charitable associations. DF recently circulated a photo of an anonymous, faceless hand open to heavens in prayer to God, with a caption that read: "Hands open in prayer for those who extend a helping hand." Since prayers were obtained from those in need, documenting the "real" needy became important to both the donor and the

charitable institutions. The prayers of the needy were forms of spiritual payment for the distribution of the gift of giving. As the needy prayed, those prayers also elevated the donor. Hence, monitoring and making sure the needy were really in need constituted a large part of the work done by these organizations.

Almost all of the informants I interviewed saw their participation in these charitable communities as a form of purification. It is indeed the payment of zakat that purifies wealth; for the volunteers I talked to, donations of time and effort were also a form of purification and resulted in peacefulness. Although in the interview quoted above, Sema was not referring to zakat but to giving in general, purification—the root meaning of zakat—allowed the believers to expiate sin and give up a portion of their wealth.[46] Such gifts "must be free and unstinting—in the manner of God's divine grace, fadl."[47] The immediate contentment, peace, and purity Sema and Elif felt were due to this sense of emotional release and community formation through giving, regardless of whether or not that giving was a part of their formal zakat. In many ways, for Sema and Elif, donating time and effort was as important as giving their yearly zakat. Giving itself was a form of contentment, purification, and release. Their intent to give intertwined instrumentally rational action (giving to better the lives of people) with personal emotion (feeling empathy for the recipient) and traditional action (an Islamic obligation or duty to give to those who are in need).[48] The selflessness of giving and the ability to find and document "real" poverty produced strong emotions and a spontaneous empathy.[49] Institutions such as associations and *vakıf*s simultaneously legitimized the intent of the donor while defining the ideal recipient of such intent. The genuineness of intent was legitimized by the institutions that did the legwork and found the right recipient while unburdening the donor from directly facing that recipient unless it is was their desire to do so.

When I asked one of the two founders of IBS about the understanding of charitable giving espoused by the organization, his response showed the importance of *vakıf* as a central conceptual framework. He and his business partner wanted to create an association to contribute to causes they deemed important. In this interview, he gave me a book by Osman Nuri Topbaş, *Vakıf, İnfak, Hizmet* (Vakıf, Infaq, and Service), also found in the archives of DF. Topbaş is the well-known spiritual leader and teacher of the Nakşibendi order of Sufism in Istanbul. "Read this," he stated:

> You will know of *infak* [*infāq*] if you read this. That is what charity is . . . giving to please God. *İnfak* was in our *vakıf* tradition. It goes back to Ottoman times; it is part of our religion. *Vakıf* is for service and we are here for service as well by doing the work of making sure what is donated [*vakfedilen*] goes to its proper place. This is a big responsibility that guides us.[50]

İnfak was defined by Topbaş and the founder of IBS as spending benevolently to please God.[51] However, unlike more impulsive forms of giving documented in other contexts, such as giving to beggars on the streets,[52] donations with the intent to please God entailed personal or institutional regulation and responsibility. In fact, Topbaş clearly noted in his book that the person who gave his/her zakat was responsible for doing the research to ensure that his/her donations went to those who were really in need; if not, the donation was nullified. If the donations were made to a *vakıf* or an association, this responsibility was lifted from the donors themselves and was shouldered by the institutions.[53] The

institutional regulations such as audits, reports, and computerized categorizations of aid distributions were some of the ways of ensuring the intention of the charitable institution.

This reaffirmed the Islamic belief that the basis of all religious acts is intention (*niyya, niyet*) and that without true intentions actions such as charitable giving were null and void. The process of giving connected the true intent of the donors with the intention of the organizations. This meant that the intentions of the organizations mattered and had to be properly documented in order to ensure that the donations were reaching those who truly needed them. *Niyet* should be the "result of sincere belief."[54] Several volunteers pointed out the importance of *niyet* during my interviews. As a regular volunteer for IBS noted,

> *Niyet* is in the hadith and the Koran. Honesty is about the purity of *niyet*. When you donate you are supposed to give from your heart; it is an emotional thing and the best kind of giving happens anonymously. IBS enables that. We make sure we find the right recipient for our donors who trust us.

This idea of anonymity hearkened back to the Christian adage from Jesus's Sermon on the Mount, which also forms part of the corpus of the hadith in Islam: "When you do some act of charity, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Matthew 6.3). More important, *niyet* became an affirmation of the sincerity of the donor's belief. Yet, in significant ways, this affirmation relied not only on the donor but also on charitable institutions as guarantors of the realization of donors' intent.

Due to the secrecy surrounding donors, I was not provided with information about or introduced directly to donors. However, I met some donors through the information gained from volunteers. I was also able to talk extensively with those who donated their time and aid in-kind and made modest monetary donations. As one regular donor to IHH (he used to donate to DF as well) pointed out to me:

> I don't pray as I am supposed to, but this is one thing I do always, which is donate. For me, donating to an organization I trust is a way of making sure that what I give goes to the right place and the right person. Also, I do not want people at my door begging. I hate that; it is shameful. I do not condone beggars and it is very uncomfortable. It is not right for our religious feelings as well. This way there is no begging: the association looks at all who apply and their job is to make sure the donations go where they need to go.

This donor liked remaining anonymous and letting the institutions do the job of selection for him.

This relationship between donor and donee is only possible through the charitable institutions. As bridges between the needy and the donor, the institutions became the trusted sources that regulated the truthfulness of the intent of the recipient.

FINDING THE DESERVING POOR

> Meryem's husband had died three years ago when he was hit by an ax during a fight . . . Her kids had made a makeshift structure out of plastic in the backyard and they were staying there. This woman with six kids who had lost all trust in her neighbors: how could she have asked for help and from whom? DF heard about Meryem and her children. Everything was going to be done so that

they could live like human beings . . . Skilled workmen endured hardships to construct the house. The family was settled in the house. Now Meryem saw that somebody did care about them.[55]

I was reading Meryem's story, published in DF's monthly magazine, which is distributed to donors and made available to volunteers, when Kerem, an employee of the organization, agreed to take me along to visit families for the social survey.[56] He told me we would also visit some of the families he thought were most worthy of donations, and while driving he told me the stories of these families he had grown to know and love. Among them were a family of four (husband, wife, and two children, aged 14 and 9); two families with women as household heads (the husband of one had passed away and that of the other had abandoned the family); a family of five whose father was a school janitor and could not properly take care of his growing family; and a man who appeared to have a severe mental problem, living with his two small children in an extremely ill-kept house. His wife had left him and the children and residents of the neighborhood had been taking care of them by bringing them food to eat.

We spent a couple of hours at Asiye's house. Her husband had passed away from a terminal disease two years earlier; she had a sixteen-year-old son, Selim, who attended high school, and a seven-year-old daughter who had just started elementary school. Asiye suffered from a chronic illness, leaving her tired all the time. For Kerem, she was a model woman: "Here is a woman who is worthy of everything. She was destitute after the husband died, but she tried to survive by cleaning floors instead of going down a wrong path." From Kerem's perspective, the first family with the male head of household did not need help: the father was healthy and able so he needed to stop "being lazy" and find a job. The family with the father who had mental problems was also not ideal, since no matter what aid was given to them he would not spend it well. Yet Asiye was the ideal donee. In this sense, the politics of gender played a role in who was pictured as an ideal and real poor person, reiterating the role of men as breadwinners and the role of women as caretakers and victims of circumstances.

Magazines and online websites of associations and *vakıf*s discussed in this paper were filled with stories of women like Asiye and Meryem. Another employee of DF spoke about a beggar who used to come to the door of the Izmir branch; the organization refused to help, since it did not want to encourage begging, which would disturb the peace in the streets. If an aid recipient was seen begging on the streets, his or her aid was discontinued.[57] Having an older male in the household who could work or having property generally disqualified you from receiving assistance. Sudden changes in fortune were taken into account when giving aid, as in the earlier example of Mehmet, but it was always assumed that the aid would be discontinued when the man found work to sustain his household. The same expectation was not present when the head of the household was a female who had no help from relatives. Thus, the great majority of aid applicants and recipients were women and their families. As Kerem noted:

We owe it to our donors to find the rightful recipients. With any charitable giving that is very important, but it is especially so in cases of zakat and giving that is done with religious intent . . . The donors' desire is to give, to share, which is Godly and our commitment is to make sure their desire to give meets the right recipient who desires to receive.

In Islamic history, finding the worthy recipient has always been central, especially in the case of zakat. There are eight different categories of proper donees for zakat, including the poor (*al-fuqarāʾ*) and the needy or the very poor (*al-masākīn*). The definitions of these tend to be context bound. *Al-masākīn* may be understood as those who are deprived of any kind of property and who cannot even evaluate their own needs.[58] The Qurʾan is clear about the fact that people who are unable to work deserve to be helped (Qurʾan 51:16–19, 70:24–25). Yet begging is considered shameful and the reputations of poor people may be taken into account in deciding whether they should be considered the deserving poor.[59] What is most important is the purity of the intents to give and to receive, which inform and affirm each other. Zakat, and any charitable giving with a religious purpose, is not a handout; ideally, it is a transaction in which each party participates with honor and dignity. To avoid shaming the recipient, it is necessary to keep her/him anonymous.

Here, the claim (*hak*) of the poor on the wealth of the rich constitutes the basis for the obligation to be charitable in general and to pay zakat in particular. As Michael Bonner notes in his discussion of poverty and charity in early Muslim communities, the idea of *haqq* (*hak*) guided redistributive practices in early Islam and in pre-Islamic periods as well. The distribution of surplus wealth through sacrifices and other means may have been a way to gain more followers of Islam.[60] Several Qurʾanic verses (51:19 and 70:24) stress *haqq*. A full discussion of the complex meanings of *hak* is beyond the scope of this article. What is important here is to understand how the organizations and donors that are the focus of my study used and discussed the concept of *hak* as a way to legitimate these transactions. The distribution of wealth depends on people's endowments; charity becomes the way to balance out such differences of wealth in the interest of society.[61] The claim of the needy on the riches of the wealthy within the parameters of different forms and ideals of giving such as *vakıf*, charity stones, zakat, and *sadaka* are reminiscent of the Western ideal of humanitarianism in that they also highlight moral obligation, the accountability of the givers, and the entitlements of the recipients.[62] Yet for such entitlement to be justified, the poverty of some people, such as Asiye and Meryem, is showcased in the media as a sad consequence of individual or familial failure. In this sense, charitable giving is contextual and time bound. The prominence held by Asiye and Meryem as suffering mothers is a time-dependent and not a timeless one. It is their current circumstances that legitimate the aid they receive. Yet, ironically, a fuller discussion of the political, economic, and social context of such poverty is usually absent from the pictures and stories of those who are in need. The larger question of who or what is accountable for the sufferings of Asiye and Meryem is not discussed in the representations of them in magazines or journals or in the missions and policies of charitable organizations.

It is true that charitable giving sparks much devotion. Lara Deeb details how Shiʿi women volunteers in Beirut spend hours in volunteer work and are deeply passionate about their commitment. As she notes, for these women, "a great debt was owed to God for absolutely everything" and volunteering was a way to fulfill that debt.[63] This same sentiment was reiterated to me by several volunteers in Turkey, who saw the time and effort spent in volunteer work pleasurable instead of tiresome. As Meryem, a young volunteer of DF in Istanbul, explained to me when I asked her what charity meant for a devout person:

Just praying and fasting is not enough. One needs to be a part of the community. One needs to notice the poor and the needy. We also need to remember that what God gave, God can take away. If I have a lot of money now, it is not all mine. It is also the money of the poor. God wants us to give to feel peace; the poor's *hak* is always part of what we own and what we have. We have to give that back to the poor.

Although charitable giving is important in creating these ties of belonging and inner peace, it can only do this through the monitoring of the needy. The needy must be authenticated and made visible and countable. This creates an ideal, and gendered, deserving poor recipient in the widow, the destitute, and the orphan. The ideal of not shaming the poor through showcasing their poverty is not always followed, as anonymity is a privilege reserved for the donor.

Poverty is a result of risks, crises, bad decisions, or other unexpected events that happen to the family; it is not seen as a result of social stratification. In a sense, a widow has more *hak* than a male breadwinner who cannot find a job to sustain his family as a result of neoliberal policies, which offer precarious part-time jobs, such as construction and service. The gendered assumption is that any man who is healthy is obligated to provide for his family no matter the circumstances and it is his fault if he cannot find a job; however, a woman, especially a widow with children, is vulnerable and should not work but take care of her children at home. That makes her the deserving poor. Hence, the actual reasons why a man cannot find a stable job are not questioned and gender stereotypes play a role in how aid decisions are made. Charitable giving, then, can be seen as serving the consciences of the conservative bourgeoisie while rescuing a few poor people without challenging the structural causes of such poverty.[64] In many ways these organizations treat poverty as a symptom that can be addressed through charitable giving or job training. Although at times aware of the limitations of what they are able to provide, they do not advocate for the type of deep-rooted social change demanded in the Gezi protests: a critical questioning and dismantling of neoliberal forms of governance that increase inequalities. DF attempted to address these issues at an academic conference in Istanbul in May and June 2003 and in published volumes that came out of the conference, as well as in related research by academics at DF; however, such a conference has been put together only once and did not result in significant changes in DF or governmental policies concerning poverty.

CONCLUSION

Neither faith-based nor lay forms of charity have ever been free of politics, propaganda, or ideology. In the context of contemporary Turkey, the intent to give and the need to receive have become powerful indicators of horizontal and vertical social ties that sustain, reinvent, and reinforce social networks and enable people to identify their peers as those who give for similar reasons in similar ways. *Vakıf*, as a religio-economic transaction, entails the creation of such horizontal and vertical ties between the givers and the receivers of donations, acting as a constant reminder that, God willing, anyone could be both recipient and giver of the gift of donation. Yet the current emphasis of charitable organizations and donors on accountability, documentation, and categorization creates rigid boundaries between the giver and the recipient. Due to the need for accountability,

the recipient cannot be guaranteed anonymity; the donors can demand to follow their donations and even meet the recipients. This goes against the religious ideal of keeping both the donor and the recipient anonymous.

Charitable giving entails responsibility and signals the impossibility of drawing boundaries between hospitality, generosity, welfare, and patronage. In practice, for both the donors and the recipients of the donations discussed here, it is impossible to draw lines to isolate the various types of giving such as zakat, *sadaka*, monetary donations through associations, and donations of time and effort. More generally, the decline of the welfare state and of government responsibility toward the poor does not alter the spiritual importance of zakat and *sadaka*; in fact, it enhances their relevance. The dynamic growth of *vakıf*s and voluntary associations in Turkey provides the rising conservative middle classes a claim to public presence and authority while formulating communities of trust and dependencies centered on the common goal of helping the needy. However, these communities have never been static or free of contention. The increasing desire to document, define, and catalog poverty and the deserving poor has become a way to justify *kendini vakfetmek* that goes against the anonymity and immediacy of giving through the constant monitoring of the recipients. Charitable institutions end up legitimizing the spontaneity and purity of *vakıf* as an authentic transaction and potentially a permanent solution to poverty (if everybody fulfills their obligations and duties to the poor, there would not be any poverty). Simultaneously, charitable giving depoliticizes the issue of social inequalities and deepening neoliberalism.

In a sense, *vakıf* as a transaction exemplifies the productive fusion of neoliberal discourse with proper performance of piety through the redistribution of resources via zakat and *sadaka*. Sociologists, historians, and anthropologists have written extensively on the flexibility of neoliberal governmentality: that while promoting a reduction of public expenditures, a free, unhindered market capitalism with continual growth also entails managing varied aspects of social life such as religious conduct, family relations, state and individual responsibilities, and, as my research demonstrates, proper charitable giving.[65]

Vakıf as a transaction works productively to re-imagine and revive so-called "traditional" forms of giving to family, friends, community, and neighborhood by effectively situating giving within the constant regulation, monitoring, and accountability of civil society. Yet such charitable giving, in turn, furthers the reach of neoliberal governmentality through the strategy of developing "indirect techniques for leading and controlling individuals without at the same time being responsible for them."[66] Private and individual relief efforts through various forms of charitable giving absolve the government of responsibility for providing its citizens with social welfare and services. *Vakıf*, a form of affective, charitable transaction, becomes an important embodied practice that simultaneously constitutes the donor and the recipient while governing their proper conduct as liberal and pious individuals.

NOTES

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[1]Names and other information about the individuals have been changed, and some interviews and information have been aggregated, to ensure anonymity. This was necessary because some of the volunteers and employers I talked to were very active and well known in the organizations, so it would have been almost impossible to keep confidentiality otherwise. I met most of my interviewees with the help of the organizations mentioned in the article; once I had initial contact, I was able to meet other donors and volunteers with the help of those I interviewed.

[2]As part of the process of documenting the legitimacy of potential aid recipients' need, DF sent volunteers unannounced to their houses to fill out a survey form and gather more data. This was called "the social survey." The volunteers made note of what the applicant owned and talked to her neighbors and local stores to get more information, which aided the association in deciding the proper aid amount, level, and type. I discuss this process and other technological tools used by DF in Damla Isik, "The Specter and Reality of Corruption in State and Civil Society: Privatizing and Auditing Poor Relief in Turkey," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 32 (2012): 57–69.

[3]Amy Singer highlights possible motivations of charitable giving as "a reflection of a donor's wishes, inspired by spiritual, social, economic, or political motives, possibly including self-interest and ambition. Attaining paradise in the afterlife or social standing among the living, seeking economic advantage through tax reduction or protection of property, and consolidating the support of constituencies all constitute possible motives for what may be termed charitable or beneficent acts." Amy Singer, "Serving Up Charity: The Ottoman Public Kitchen," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35 (2005): 481–92.

[4]Amy Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); T. Kochuyt, "Gods, Gifts and Poor People: On Charity in Islam," *Social Compass* 56 (2009): 98–116; idem, *Constructing Ottoman Beneficence: An Imperial Soup Kitchen in Jerusalem* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2002); Timur Kuran, "The Provision of Public Goods under Islamic Law: Origins, Impact, and Limitations of the Waqf System," *Law and Society Review* 35 (2001): 841–97.

[5]See, among others, Brian Silverstein, *Islam and Modernity in Turkey* (New York: Palgrave and Macmillan, 2011); Daromir Rudnyckyj, *Spiritual Economies: Islam, Globalization, and the Afterlife of Development* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2010); Jenny White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics* (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 2002); Sam Kaplan, *The Pedagogical State: Education and the Politics of National Culture in Post-1980 Turkey* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006); Nilüfer Göle and Ludwig Ammann, eds., *Islam in Public: Turkey, Iran, and Europe* (Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2006); and Jeremy Walton, "Horizons and Histories of Liberal Piety: Civil Islam and Secularism in Contemporary Turkey" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2009).

[6]Hakan M. Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); idem, "Is There a Turkish Islam? The Emergence of Convergence and Consensus," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 24 (2004): 213–31.

[7]http://www.ihh.org.tr/en/main/pages/hakkimizda/114.

[8]A group of civilian ships organized by IHH, which carried 750 humanitarian workers and loads of humanitarian aid, was intercepted and attacked by Israel on international waters in May 2010.

[9]On different types of *vakıf*s within the Ottoman Empire, see Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies*; and John Robert Barnes, *An Introduction to Religious Foundations in the Ottoman Empire* (Leiden: Brill, 1986). For detailed information on *vakıf* regulation, registration, and organization structures, see Jonathan Benthall and Jerome Bellion-Jourdan, *The Charitable Crescent: Politics of Aid in the Muslim World* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003). The website of the General Directorate of Foundations contains valuable information and data on current *vakıf* legislation in Turkey: see http://www.vgm.gov.tr/.

[10]Singer, *Constructing Ottoman Beneficience*, 165.

[11]Mine Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor and the Politics of Benevolence, 1800–1952* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); idem, "Religious Prerogatives and Policing the Poor in Two Ottoman Contexts," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35 (2005): 501–11; Janine A. Clark, *Islam, Charity, and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2003); Sandra Cavallo, "The Motivations of Benefactors: An Overview of Approaches to the Study of Charity," in *Medicine and Charity before the Welfare State*, ed. Jonathan Bary and Colin Jones (New York: Routledge, 1994), 46–62; Murat Çızakça, "Cash Waqfs in Bursa, 1555–1823," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 38 (1995): 313–54; Gabriel Baer, "The Waqf as a Prop for the Social System, 16th-20th Centuries," *Islamic Law and Society* 4 (1997): 264–97.

[12]Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies*.

[13]Throughout *Constructing Ottoman Beneficience*, Singer documents how *vakıf* reforms were part of modernization efforts that created centralized institutions and bureaucracies, including governmental ministries that controlled poverty distribution. Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan, in *The Charitable Crescent*, note how, at the start of the 19th century, between half and two-thirds of all property in the Ottoman Empire was held as waqf. See also Barbara Lethem Ibrahim and Dina H. Sherif, eds., *From Charity to Social Change: Trends in Arabic Philanthropy* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2008). T.C. Başbakanlık Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü (T.R. Prime Ministry Directorate General of Foundations) and the civil society organization Türkiye Üçüncü Sektör Vakfı (Third Sector Foundation of Turkey) both track contemporary philanthropic endeavors in Turkey. See http://www.vgm.gov.tr/ and http://www.tusev.org.tr/tr.

[14]For a definition and discussion of associations, see Filiz Bikmen, *Türkiye'de Hayırseverlik, Vatandaşlar, Vakıflar ve Sosyal Adalet* (Istanbul: TUSEV, 2006).

[15]Fikret Toksöz, "Dernekler," *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 2 (Istanbul: Iletisim Yayinlari, 1983), 377.

[16]White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey*; Jenny White, "Civic Culture and Islam in Urban Turkey," in *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*, ed. Chris Hann and Elizabeth Dunn (London: Routledge, 1996), 141–53.

[17]Established in 1993 by Turkey's leading civil society organizations, TUSEV has "grown to a supporting network of over 100 associations and foundations that share a vision of strengthening the legal, fiscal and operational infrastructure of the third (nonprofit) sector in Turkey." See http://www.tusev.org.tr/en. To accomplish this mission, TUSEV regularly conducts research and releases reports on the sector's role, needs, and dynamics.

[18]Bikmen, *Türkiye'de Hayırseverlik,* 14.

[19]Kristina Kamp, "Starting Up in Turkey: Turkey's Top NGOs," *Today's Zaman*, 18 March 2009, http:/www.todayszaman.com/tz_web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=169902.

[20]Singer, *Constructing Ottoman Beneficence*, 25.

[21]For the full text of the Waqf Law, Law Number 5737, see http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.5737.pdf (accessed 6 January 2014).

[22]For Law No. 5253, see http://www.alomaliye.com/5253_sayili_kanun_dernekler_kanunu.htm (accessed 6 January 2014).

[23]E. Fuat Keyman and Ahmet İçgüdü, "Globalization, Civil Society, and Citizenship in Turkey: Actors, Boundaries, and Discourses," *Citizenship Studies* 7 (2003): 219–34; Ayşe Buğra, *Kapitalizm, Yoksulluk ve Türkiye'de Sosyal Politika* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008); Nilüfer Göle, "Toward an Autonomization of Politics and Civil Society in Turkey," in *Politics in the Third Turkish Republic*, ed. Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994); E. Fuat Keyman, "Globalization, Civil Society and Islam: The Question of Democracy in Turkey," in *Globalizing Institutions*, ed. J. Jenson and B. De Sousa Santos (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

[24]Yesim Arat, "Contestation and Collaboration: Women's Struggles for Empowerment in Turkey," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 4, *Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Resat Kasaba (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 388–419.

[25]Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, Ümit Yeldan, and Erinç Yeldan, "Politics, Society and Financial Liberalization: Turkey in the 1990s," *Development and Change* 3 (2000): 481–508; White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey*.

[26]Ayşe Buğra, "Poverty and Citizenship: An Overview of the Social-Policy Environment in Republican Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39 (2007): 33–52.

[27]For a comprehensive survey of early Turkish neoliberalism during the period of Turgut Ozal, see Ziya Onis, "Turgut Ozal and His Economic Legacy: Turkish Neoliberalism in Critical Perspective," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40 (2004): 113–34.

[28]AKP, AK Parti Kalkınma ve Demokratikleşme Programı (AK Party Program for Democratization and Development), http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/eyayin/gazeteler/web/kutuphanede%20bulunan%20dijital%20kaynaklar/kitaplar/siyasi%20parti%20yayinlari/200707239%20ak%20parti%20demokratiklesme%20ve%20kalkinma%20programi%202003/200707239%20ak%20parti%20demokratiklesme%20ve%20kalkinma%20programi%202003.pdf (accessed 5 July 2013).

[29]Atasoy, Yildiz, "The Islamic Ethic and the Spirit of Turkish Capitalism Today," *Socialist Register* 44 (2008): 121–40.

[30]F. von Hayek, "Individualism: True and False," in *Individualism and Economic Order* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 1–32.

[31]This is discussed in detail in White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey*.

[32]For a more detailed discussion of policy and identity similarities between Özal's ANAP and Erdoğan's AKP, see Simten Coşan and Aylin Özman, "Center-Right Politics in Turkey after the November 2002 General Election: Neoliberalism with a Muslim Face," *Contemporary Politics* 10 (2004): 57–74.

[33]In 1986 Özal's ANAP established the Social Solidarity Fund (Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Tevfik Fonu) in order to distribute relief to those in dire need through transfers of food and fuel. Informally, the fund has been called Fukara Fonu–Fak Fuk Fon (Poor Fund). This approach, however, did not curb the rising inequalities in income distribution from the 1980s to 2002.

[34]Cihan Tuğal, "Islamism in Turkey: Beyond Instrument and Meaning," *Economy and Society* 31 (2002): 85–111.

[35]Berna Turam rightfully notes that we need to reevaluate the generalization of an ongoing struggle between a secular Turkish state and Islam. As she demonstrates in her ethnographic work, viewing the main cleavage in Turkish society as that between Kemalism and Islamism is a problematic overgeneralization of a complex political environment of constant adaptation. For her, Islam and the state are in a state of engagement rather than struggle. Berna Turam, *Between Islam and the State: Politics of Engagement* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007). See also Ahmet Insel, "The AKP and Normalizing Democracy in Turkey," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 102 (2003): 293–308.

[36]A *muhtar* is an elected head of government of a village or a neighborhood.

[37]Erica Bornstein, "The Impulse of Philanthropy," *Cultural Anthropology* 24 (2009): 622–51.

[38]Ayşe Kadıoğlu, "Civil Society, Islam, and Democracy in Turkey: A Study of Three Islamic Non-Governmental Organizations," *Muslim World* 95 (2005): 23–41.

[39]White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey.*

[40]Catherine Alexander, *Personal States: Making Connections between People and Bureaucracy in Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[41]Jenny White, *Money Makes Us Relatives: Women's Labor in Urban Turkey*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge Press, 2004).

[42]Esra Özyürek, *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006); Turam, *Between Islam and the State.*

[43]Yael Navaro-Yashin, *Faces of the State: Secularism and Public Life in Turkey* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002).

[44]Isik, "The Specter and Reality."

[45]Jacques Derrida, "Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money," trans. P. Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[46]Michael Bonner, "Poverty and Economics in the Quran," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35 (2005): 391–406; Amy Singer, *Constructing Ottoman Beneficence*.

[47]Mark R. Cohen, "Introduction: Poverty and Charity in Past Times," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 25 (2005): 34–60.

[48]Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1 (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1978).

[49]Leona Anderson, "Generosity among Saints, Generosity among Kings: Situating Philanthropy in South Asia," in *Philanthropy and Cultural Context: Western Philanthropy in South, East, and Southeast Asia in the 20th Century*, ed. S. Hewa and P. Hove (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1997), 185–202; Bornstein, "The Impulse of Philanthropy."

[50]A concise discussion of *infāq*, zakat and *ṣadaqa* can be found at http://www.irfi.org/articles/articles_101_150/charity_in_islam.htm (accessed 6 January 2013).

[51]Osman Nuri Topbaş, "Allah'a Verilen Karz-ı Hasen (Güzel Borç–Infak)," http:/www.osmannuritopbas.com/altinoluk-dergisi/allah-a-verilen-karz-i-hasen-guzel-borc-infak.html (accessed 2 August 2010).

[52]Bornstein, "The Impulse of Philanthropy"; James Laidlaw, "A Free Gift Makes No Friends," *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute* 6 (2000): 617.

[53]Osman Nuri Topbaş, *Vakıf, İnfak, Hizmet* (Istanbul: Erkem Yayınları, 2008), 131.

[54]Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies,* 57.

[55]Gamze Dönmez, "Yeniden Başlamak," *Deniz Feneri Derneği Tanıtım ve İletişim Dergisi* 15 (2007): 30–31.

[56]Please see note 2.

[57]Historically, giving to beggars was not considered negative. As Singer (*Charity in Islamic Societies,* 155) discusses, Muslim texts document the fact that beggars and Sufis were tolerated before the 19th and 20th

centuries. With modernization and urbanization, the vagrant poor gained a negative connotation. See also Ener, *Managing Egypt's Poor,* 26–49; and Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Essential Foucault: Selections from the Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*, ed. N. Rose and P. Rabinow (New York: New Press, 1977), 229–45.

[58]Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan, *The Charitable Crescent,* 10.

[59]For a longer discussion on the politics of charitable giving, see ibid.

[60]Michael Bonner, "Poverty and Charity in the Rise of Islam," in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts*, ed. Michael Bonner, Mine Ener, and Amy Singer (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2003), 13–31.

[61]Kochuyt, "Gods, Gifts and Poor People"; Timur Kuran, "Islamic Redistribution through Zakat: Historical Record and Modern Realities," in Bonner et al., *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts*, 275–93; F. Osella and C. Osella, "Muslim Entrepreneurs in Public Life between India and the Gulf: Making Good and Doing Good," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15 (2009): 202–21; Kuran, "The Provision of Public Goods."

[62]Harri Englund, "Extreme Poverty and Existential Obligations: Beyond Morality in the Anthropology of Africa," *Social Analysis* 52 (2008): 33–50; Bornstein, "The Impulse of Philanthropy."

[63]Lara Deeb, *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 195.

[64]AyşeBuğra and Çağlar Keyder, *Poverty and Social Policy in Contemporary Turkey,* http://www.spf.boun.edu.tr/docs/WP-Bugra-Keyder.pdf (accessed 12 November 2011).

[65]Thomas Lemke, "The Birth of Biopolitics: Michel Foucault's Lecture at the College de france on Neoliberal Governmentality," *Economy and Society* 30 (2001): 190–207; John Clark, "Dissolving the Public Realm? The Logic and Limits of Neoliberalism," *Journal of Social Policy* 33 (2004): 27–48; Silverstein, *Islam and Modernity in Turkey.*

[66]Lemke, "The Birth of Biopolitics," 201.