

**THE SELF AS ENTERPRISE: PRODUCING NEW MIDDLE
CLASS SUBJECTIVITIES IN MULTINATIONAL
WORKPLACES IN ISTANBUL**

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ABSTRACT

THE SELF AS ENTERPRISE: PRODUCING NEW MIDDLE CLASS SUBJECTIVITIES IN MULTINATIONAL WORKPLACES IN ISTANBUL

This thesis examines how the subjectivities of white collar members of the new middle classes in Istanbul, Turkey's globalizing city, are produced in particular ways in the spheres of education, work and consumption under the sway of neoliberalism, conceptualized as a form of governmentality that provides a particular mentality or manner of doing things. Based on qualitative fieldwork during which I interviewed 24 white collar employees working in the Istanbul branches of multinational companies, I argue that, through the process of subjectivation, white collar members of the new middle class are turned into subjects of neoliberalism and "enterprising selves" who are rational, competitive, autonomous, calculating and responsible individuals, and who need to continuously improve themselves. The subjectivities of these highly educated, productive selves in neoliberal work environments are shaped through the extension of the economy, based on market rationality, knowledge and calculation, into society where the social comes to be understood in economic terms. In the thesis, I emphasize that this subjectivity formation is never a smooth process, and hence, neoliberal subjects are actually fragile subjects whose reproduction of themselves is possible through certain costs. One of these costs is the prevalence of a cynical attitude among many white collar workers as there exists a distance between their critical consciousness and practices. Another finding of this study is that many of the informants are marked with anxieties and insecurities. As a conclusion, this thesis demonstrates that the formation of new middle class subjectivities is productive for global capitalism, it preempts social ideals such as collective action and solidarity among employees and contributes to the effacement of the public vis-à-vis an ever-expanding, isolated and exclusionary private.

Keywords: Neoliberalism, governmentality, subjectivity, the new middle classes, education, work, consumption, Turkey, Istanbul.

ÖZET

BİR GİRİŞİMCİLİK OLARAK BENLİK: İSTANBUL'DA ULUSLARARASI ŞİRKETLERDE YENİ ORTA SINIF ÖZNELİKLERİNİN ÜRETİMİ

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin küreselleşen kenti İstanbul'daki yeni orta sınıfın öznelliklerinin belli bir zihniyet veya edim tarzı sunan bir yönetimsellik olarak neoliberalizm çerçevesinde eğitim, iş ve tüketim alanlarında nasıl üretildiğini incelemektedir. Uluslararası şirketlerin İstanbul ofislerinde çalışan 24 beyaz yakalı çalışanla mülakatlar yaptığım niteliksel saha çalışmama dayanarak, öznelleştirme aracılığıyla yeni orta sınıfın beyaz yakalı üyelerinin her zaman kendilerini geliştirmeleri gereken rasyonel, rekabetçi, otonom, çıkarları doğrultusunda hareket eden ve sorumlu neoliberal özneler ve "girişimci benliklere" dönüştüklerini iddia ediyorum. Bu yüksek eğitilmiş, neoliberal çalışma ortamlarındaki üretken benliklerin ve tüketim toplumunun üyelerinin öznellikleri; piyasa rasyonelitesine, bilgisine ve hesaplamalarına dayanan ekonominin topluma nüfuz etmesi ve toplumsalın ekonomik terimlerle anlaşılmaya başlanması sayesinde şekillenmiştir. Bu tezde, öznelliklerin oluşumunun sorunsuz bir süreç olmadığı, neoliberal öznelerin, kendilerini yeniden üretmelerinin bir takım bedelleri olan hassas özneler oldukları vurgulanmıştır. Bu bedellerden biri eleştirel bilinç ve eylemler arasındaki mesafeden kaynaklanan sinik tutumun görüşmeciler arasındaki yaygınlığıdır. Bu çalışmanın bir diğer bulgusu ise birçok görüşmecinin endişe ve güvensizlik yaşadığıdır. Sonuç olarak bu tez yeni orta sınıf öznelliklerinin üretiminin küresel kapitalizm için üretken olduğunu, çalışanlar arasında kolektif hareket ve dayanışma gibi sosyal fikirleri geçersiz kıldığını ve sürekli genişleyen yalıtılmış ve dışlayıcı bir özel alanın karşısında kamusalın yok oluşuna katkıda bulunduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Neoliberalizm, yönetimsellik, öznellik, yeni orta sınıf, eğitim, iş, tüketim, Türkiye, İstanbul.

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To the “coded” ones

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEO Chief Executive Officer

E-MBA Executive Master of Business Administration

FMCG Fast Moving Consumer Goods

IMF International Monetary Fund

ISI Import Substituting Industrialization

IT Information Technology

MBA Master of Business Administration

NSC The National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*)

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I examine how the subjectivities of white collar members of the new middle classes in Istanbul, Turkey's globalizing city, are produced in particular ways in the spheres of education, work and consumption under neoliberalism. My study relies on qualitative fieldwork during which I interviewed 24 white collar employees working in Istanbul branches of multinational companies. I argue that neoliberalism is not only about governing states or economies but also governing individuals by providing a mentality or a manner of doing things (Dean, 1999; Gordon, 1991; Foucault, 2008; Lazzarato, 2009; Lemke, 2001; 2002; Read, 2009; Ong, 2006). In this new mentality, a particular form of subject, namely the neoliberal subject, the enterprising self or the homo-entrepreneur is fashioned. Here I define the neoliberal subject as a rational, competitive, autonomous, calculating individual who is responsible for him/herself, able to meet his/her own needs and pursue his/her own ambitions and desires, and who needs to continuously improve him/herself (W. Brown, 2003; Lemke, 2001; 2002; Read, 2009). The constitution of the neoliberal subject has become possible through a particular extension of the economy and market into society where social relations have come to be embedded in the economy (Foucault, 2008; Polanyi, 1944). In this shift, the discourse of economy which is based on market rationality, knowledge and calculation, becomes an entire way of life where many aspects of the social can be understood in economic terms (Escobar, 1995; W. Brown, 2005; Read, 2009). Moreover, in this process the production of subjectivities and particular subjects become productive for the capitalist mode of production (Read, 2003).

Turkey embarked upon a neoliberal path beginning in the early 1980s. The neoliberal reforms promoted by Prime Minister Turgut Özal in the 1980s ensured the liberalization of the Turkish economy and its integration with world markets. This first generation of economic liberalization that lasted into the 1990s was followed by a second generation of

neoliberal reforms in the 2000s whereby the transnational mobility of capital, the privatization of public enterprises and Turkey's integration into global production networks deepened (Cizre and Yeldan, 2005). Throughout these different phases of neoliberalism in Turkey, a new segment of the middle class emerged as a result of new alignments and polarizations within the middle class. Here, I define the new middle class as a group of salaried professionals, who acquire human capital in the form of education that provides them with social status and well paid jobs, have high disposable incomes and cultural capital, engage in various consumption practices and are located in urban contexts (Lange & Meier, 2009). Although, the new middle class is a heterogeneous category, in this thesis, I focus on one segment of it, namely the highly-educated white collar professionals employed in the Istanbul offices of multinational companies.

The few scholarly studies on the new middle classes in Turkey focus on the cultural surface of this class and emphasize their cultural features, life styles and consumption practices (Bali, 2002; Şimşek, 2005). Another group of studies analyzes the new middle classes spatially and examines their housing choices and practices within the context of the neoliberal restructuring of urban space (Ayata, 2002; Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008; Öncü, 1997). Although some of these studies speak to the entrepreneurship and individualism of members of the new middle class or address their fears and anxieties, I argue that they do not elaborate on the subjective realm nor do they examine through which set of governing practices values and fears are constructed and internalized, and turned into parameters of self-perception by the new middle classes.

This study will attempt to contribute towards filling such a gap in the nascent literature on the new middle classes in Turkey through investigating the subjective domain of a segment of this group. I believe that studying subjectivity is of crucial importance as it is a major dimension of human existence and, to ignore it diminishes "the sense of the human in the so-

called human sciences” (Ortner, 2005, p.33-4). Who are these people whose subjectivities are shaped in the process of acquiring cultural capital through education, who pursue certain lifestyles, engage in global consumption practices and choose to live in the new spaces of neoliberalism such as gated communities in Istanbul? Through which governing practices their subjectivities are shaped and they are turned into particular subjects? More importantly, how do they also shape and govern themselves in a particular manner? These are the main research questions that motivate this study.

In this thesis, I also take up the question of subject-formation with respect to the constitution of neoliberal subjects. I argue that individuals are not determined or mechanically turned into subjects through mechanisms of power. Therefore, I suggest that, the formation of subjects should be understood through the paradoxical process of subjectivation, in which individuals who are embedded in productive power relations turn themselves into particular subjects through acting upon themselves with technologies of self and engage in performative acts in a particular system of norms. This process is paradoxical as it provides conditions that cause the subordination of the individual but also the ways in which she/he can become a self-conscious subject (Butler, 1997, p.83).

Inspired by this approach to subject formation, I want to show how some white collar members of the new middle classes are turned into neoliberal subjects or enterprising selves in the spheres of education, work and consumption. I emphasize that these different spaces intersect in their constitution of an ideal subject who is a rational, competitive, autonomous, calculating and responsible individual. I show that in the sphere of education, members of the new middle classes are formed as rational, atomized, responsible and competitive individuals and they submit themselves to disciplinary practices so as to become the “winners” of the highly competitive education system in Turkey. They pursue a particular plan for education and life where being a successful student and entering into desirable departments of leading

universities in Turkey are presented as necessary to attain a comfortable life style. In this education hysteria, families become proximate agents of this plan for education as they perceive education as a means for upward mobility. In addition, the future members of the new middle class are expected to shape their university lives in a particular manner which will allow them to find jobs in multinational companies. Therefore, I suggest that higher education becomes a preparatory ground for corporate careers.

The second step of this plan is to get a job in multinational companies which are perceived as professional, modern, institutionalized and disciplinary workplaces and are attractive for members of the new middle classes in urban Turkey. In this second sphere, I argue that the subjectivities of members of the new middle classes are formed as responsible, competitive and organized employees who need to improve themselves continuously.

Following the sociology of organizations, I suggest that in these neoliberal work environments a new management discourse prevails which is based on workers' self-government and which employs a new form of control disseminated throughout the daily lives of employees and enforced through high tech communication devices. This new language of work, I argue, promotes the enterprising self who is an autonomous, self-regulating and productive self that "calculates about itself, and that works upon itself in order to better itself" (Du Gay 1996, p.60). In this new discourse of work, employees are expected to give their lives a specific entrepreneurial form (Lemke, 2001) and work upon their behaviors, feelings and appearances through self-control and self-management.

In this study, I indicate the sphere of consumption as the third site where the subjectivities of members of the new middle classes are formed as autonomous and self-regulating individuals who seek self-actualization and personal happiness through choice in the consumer society (Miller and Rose, 2008; Rose, 1990). I mention how keeping a certain life standard and pursuing certain consumption habits have become important for members of

the new middle classes. I suggest that they strongly desire to pursue consumption practices which were presented as elements of a comfortable life and which would give them a sense of belonging to the new middle class. However, I also argue that these consumption practices have never-ending characteristics as consumption acts upon an irrational realm of desires in the consumer society (Bauman, 2001). While the members of the new middle class cannot renounce these consumption practices, the centrality and importance of consumption in their lives as a realm where they search for happiness, constructed as a “materialistic life” as some of my informants put it.

Throughout this study, I claim that the neoliberal subjects are actually fragile subjects whose reproduction of themselves is possible through certain costs (Thrift, 2005). I underline that the formation of the neoliberal subjects bears certain psychic costs such as cynicism, overwhelming anxieties, fears and insecurities. In this thesis, I suggest that a cynical attitude prevails among members of the new middle classes in that they are critical of their workplace and consumption practices, but continue to pursue these practices. To use Sloterdijk’s (1988) terms, they are well aware of what they are doing but they still do it (also Zizek, 1989). Although they know what they are doing and are aware of the fact that they are being exploited in the workplace by turning themselves into responsible, competitive individuals in need of continuously improving themselves, that they are overwhelmed with anxieties, insecurities and stress, and aware of the centrality and importance of consumption in their lives which form materialistic lives, they still continue to engage in those practices.

I used qualitative research methods to prepare my thesis. I conducted 24 semi-structured in-depth interviews that lasted 1.5 hours on average with middle or senior managers in multinational companies’ branches in Istanbul. My interviewees worked in various departments such as marketing, sales, human resources, and finance in companies that operated in sectors such as FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods), banking,

pharmaceuticals, nutrition and foods, consulting, automotive, technology and tobacco. These companies, namely Proctor and Gamble, Unilever, Henkel, Roche, Danone, Peppers & Rogers, Pfizer, Nestle, Citibank, Deutsche Bank, Merrill Lynch and Value Partners are leading companies in their sectors, and finding a white collar job in one of their offices in Istanbul is highly competitive. I chose my respondents among workers in multinationals since these companies have become attractive workplaces for members of the new middle classes in urban Turkey. I spoke with 13 women and 11 men whose ages range from 23 to 38. Six of my interviewees were married and only three of them had children. Most of my informants had completed their secondary education in competitive public and private high schools that teach through the medium of foreign languages and had graduated from prestigious universities such as Boğaziçi University, Middle East Technical University, Koç University, Sabancı University, Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul Bilgi University, etc. 13 of the interviewees had MBA or E-MBA degrees from universities such as Koç, Boğaziçi and Bilgi. My informants mostly came from traditional middle class families in the metropolitan cities of Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.

In order to reach my interviewees I used several methods. I posted messages on business social networking sites and sent emails to alumni databases. Also my friends who work in multinational companies and Koç University's career service helped me find interviewees. During the interviews I asked informants questions about their socio-economic backgrounds, their parents' occupation, their educational backgrounds, why they chose to study in particular departments and universities, their jobs, why they chose their professions, their company cultures, how their jobs affected their lives, their lifestyles and consumption practices. The interviews were semi-structured in order to allow informants to tell their narratives more freely, with little guidance.

I should state that this study does not claim to be a representative one. I focused on only a particular segment of the new middle classes in Turkey. The new middle classes also include high-level white collar employees in the national corporate sector and self-employed professionals in Istanbul, and other metropolitan and industrial cities in Turkey, but my focus is on the white collar managerial employees in multinational company offices in Istanbul. Thus, this thesis should be seen as a modest attempt and an exploratory study to understand how the subjectivities of some members of the new middle classes are constructed in the spheres of education, work and consumption. The findings of this exploratory thesis can hopefully be of use in the future for designing and conducting research that would be representative for broader segments of the new middle classes.

This thesis is composed of two main chapters. In the first chapter, which is devoted to developing the theoretical and conceptual framework of the thesis, I will discuss the concept of neoliberalism through using Marxist and Foucauldian perspectives. While I will use Foucauldian studies to neoliberalism, I will also introduce Marxist approaches (Harvey, 2005, Bourdieu, 1998) to neoliberalism which view it as an ideology that justifies the redistribution of wealth, the restoration of the power of economic elites and the creation of further social inequalities. Following Foucauldian studies, I will argue that neoliberalism should be understood as a form of governmentality where a certain mentality and manner of doing things is provided (Dean, 1999; Gordon, 1991; Foucault, 2008; Lazzarato, 2009; Lemke, 2001; 2002; Read, 2009; Ong, 2006). I will suggest that the neoliberal subject who is expected to be a rational, competitive, autonomous, calculating individual who is responsible for him/herself and able to meet his/her own needs and pursue his/her own ambitions and desires is fashioned in this new mentality. After conceptualizing the neoliberal subject, I will show that neoliberalism is a globalizing phenomenon (Harvey, 2005; England and Ward, 2007) that has modalities depending on its implementation in various geographical contexts (Collier, 2005;

Mitchell, 2004; Ong, 2006). I will point out the role of states in the different implementations of neoliberalism. Also in this chapter, I will dwell on the issue of subject formation through the works of Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault and Judith Butler in order to shed light upon the question of how the neoliberal subject is constituted. In this part, I will emphasize the process of subjectivation in which individuals who are embedded in productive power relations turn themselves into particular subjects through acting upon themselves with technologies of self and engaging in performative acts in a particular system of norms. I will also discuss the concept of the new middle class and try to provide distinctive features of this newly emerging group. I will define the new middle class as salaried, urban professionals who turn their human capital in the form of education into an economic one which enables them to acquire social status and well paid jobs, and to engage in certain consumption practices (Lange & Meier, 2009). I will briefly touch upon the neoliberal experience in Turkey since the 1980s, during which the new middle classes have emerged, whereas the “traditional” segments of the middle classes have declined. In this context, I will also critically discuss the nascent literature on the new middle classes in Turkey, which focuses on cultural practices and residential choices of this group, without going into a discussion of issues of subjectivity. Finally, I will discuss the methodology of the study.

Drawing on this theoretical discussion, in the second chapter of this thesis, I will analyze the narratives of my respondents. Firstly, I will focus on education in Turkey as a site where individuals are turned into competitive, rational and responsible subjects. Secondly, I will talk about the offices of multinational companies in Istanbul as crucial sites of the constitution of neoliberal subjects. Drawing on various works and through analyzing the responses of my interviewees, I will argue that the subjectivities of employees are constructed in particular ways in these neoliberal work environments. Throughout an analysis of the interviews, I also will address the anxieties, insecurities and stresses of my informants.

Additionally, I will highlight the cynical attitude that prevailed in the narratives of the interviewees.

In the second chapter, I will also address various issues that came to the fore throughout the interviews that I conducted. First, I will underline how informants constructed binary oppositions between the offices of multinational companies in Istanbul and Turkish national corporations in terms of West/East, professional/non-professional, impersonal/personal and so on. Secondly, I will suggest that the virtues of leadership and being eligible for teamwork that are emphasized as important elements of the corporate culture constitute myths which subjects are expected to acquire through working upon themselves. Then, I will also address the body as a site in which individuals act upon and try to shape in particular ways to affect their success at work. I will suggest that gender becomes a distinctive element in the narratives of the interviewees with respect to the relation that women form with their bodies, the traditional division of labor in their so-called modern marriages, and their role as working mothers. And lastly, in this chapter, I will analyze how consumption has become another site where individuals are shaped as autonomous and self-regulating persons who seek self-actualization and personal happiness through choice in the consumer society.

CHAPTER I: NEOLIBERALISM, GOVERNMENTALITY AND THE PRODUCTION OF SUBJECTIVITIES

I. Introduction

“The fact is capitalism penetrates much more
deeply into our existence”

Michel Foucault

Neoliberalism emerged as a concept to understand the macroeconomic, political and social restructuring processes that have been at work in the world since the 1980s. Among alternative conceptualizations such as disorganized capitalism, post-Fordism, flexible accumulation, or globalization, I will use neoliberalism in this study. Yenal (2009) argues that neoliberalism has become a common leitmotif in studies which try to account for economic, social and cultural changes in Turkey or that it is an empty signifier at certain instances, however, in this thesis, I focus on how it works on the ground. I analyze its concrete manifestations, its effects on subjects. For this reason, I conceptualize it as a mode of government of the individual, which is based upon the production of subjects and a new production of subjectivity. I will introduce Marxian theories of neoliberalism, Foucauldian theories of governmentality as well as studies that combine the former with the latter.¹ As Barnett et al. (2008) argue, although such a theoretical combination maybe a tentative and uneasy one, a coherent social theory of contemporary transformations can still be formed. On the one hand, we have Marxian accounts of political economic transformations and state restructuring, which provide us with insights into the descriptions of macro-level processes. On the other hand, we are concerned with micro-level processes of subject formation. Thus,

¹ For governmentality studies see Dean (1999), Gordon, (1991), Lemke, (2001), Rose, (1999); for studies that combine Marxist approaches with Foucauldian theories of governmentality see Ong, (2006), Read (2009), W. Brown, (2003), Lazzarato, (2009).

through introducing these two concerns or approaches, political and economic transformations can be approached together with the concomitant process of subject formation and the production of subjectivities. This can provide us a profound understanding of neoliberalism that entails both macro-level political, economic transformations and micro-level subject formations. In the end, “if there is such a thing as neoliberalism, then it is assumed that there must also be lots of neo-liberal subjects being hailed, more or less successfully, to order” (Barnett et al, 2008, p.625). Stated otherwise, the discussion of neoliberalism should also include a discussion of the subject which is hailed or interpellated in particular ways under the neoliberal regime.

In my analysis of neoliberalism, drawing on Foucauldian approaches, I will argue that neoliberalism is also about governing individuals by providing a particular manner of doing things in which subjects govern themselves through technologies of self that permit individuals to act upon themselves in order to reach certain ends. In this process, a particular subject, that is, a neoliberal subject, is fashioned. The neoliberal subject is a rational, atomized, competitive individual who calculates his/her actions and is responsible for him/herself. In the formation of the neoliberal subject we can observe the extension of the rationality of the market to a range of non-economic domains. In a similar vein, Karl Polanyi (1944) had suggested a long time ago that in a market society social relations are subordinated to the market. Before the market society, economy had always been a function of the social in which it is embedded. The attempts of establishing a self-regulating market in the nineteenth century constituted a deviation in this respect. Polanyi (1944) argued that the creation of a self-regulating market or a market economy separated from the social and political constituted a “market society”. In market society social relations are embedded in the economy rather than the economy being embedded in social relations. According to Polanyi (1944), this means the subordination of the substance of society itself to the laws of the market (p.71). To

put it differently, a self-regulating market brings subordination of the social to the market. In order to give an account how this process of subordination affects and shapes individuals, I will turn to Foucauldian studies.

While I claim that a particular form of subject, namely the neoliberal subject, is constituted in neoliberalism, I will also suggest that the formation of the neoliberal subjects entails continuous struggle, contradictions and complexities. The embracement of this particular form of subjectivity has never been a smooth process for subjects. Moreover, as Nigel Thrift (2005) suggests, the neoliberal subjects, in his terms “fast subjects,” maybe fragile subjects whose existence is possible through certain costs which might be too great to bear (p.136). Such costs can be prevalence of cynical attitude, overwhelming anxieties, fears and insecurities.

In this section, I will also take neoliberalism as a globalizing phenomenon. I will show how a particular mentality or manner of doing things under neoliberalism is diffused throughout the world. Moreover, states have played significant roles in the expansion of this neoliberal mentality. However, neoliberalism is not developed in the same way in different geographical contexts. Thus, I will argue that there are modalities of neoliberalism. To exemplify this, I will discuss Aiwa Ong’s work on neoliberalism in East and South Asian countries such as China, Malaysia and the Philippines.

After providing an account of neoliberalism and the formation of the neoliberal subject, I will present various approaches on the problem of the subject. In this section, I want to trace the following questions: 1) How can we understand the paradox of turning individuals into subjects who are enabled to act through operations of power which at the same time also bring their submission? 2) Can we form a notion of the subject which is not free from constraints of the operations of power and also not wholly determined by them? 3) How do subjects work upon themselves so as to contribute to their submission? 4) What are the

psychic costs of turning into a particular form of subject? 5) How can we conceptualize the distance between the consciousness of subjects and their actions? In order to provide answers to these questions I will try to present accounts of several thinkers on the issue of the subject and try to bring them together. Through these works, I will try to understand subject-formation with specific reference to the constitution of neoliberal subjects.

Also in this chapter, I will elaborate on the concept of the new middle class and examine the historical formation of this group. I will try to provide the main features of this newly emerging group with respect to their occupation, education and cultural characteristics. Moreover, I will argue that the new middle class does not constitute a homogenous group as there is great variation in the new middle class both within and across different geographies. And lastly, I will discuss whether we can conceptualize the new middle class as a transnational class.

After the discussion on the concept of the new middle class, I will analyze the historical development of neoliberalism in Turkey. I will emphasize the 1980s as the starting phase of neoliberalism during which the Turkish economy was liberalized and fully integrated into world markets. While the 1980s constituted the first-generation of neoliberalism, since the 2000s Turkey has entered the second generation of liberal reforms where transnational mobility of capital and global production networks are emphasized (Cizre and Yeldan, 2005). Throughout these different phases of neoliberalism in Turkey, a new segment of the middle class was formed as a result of new alignments and polarizations within the middle class. Departing from this point, I will elaborate on the new middle classes in Turkey with specific reference to their occupation, education, values and residential choices. And lastly, I will discuss in detail the methodology I used in my research.

II. Neoliberalism and Governmentality

In starting this section, I will analyze the phenomenon of neoliberalism. Following David Harvey, I will put forward a Marxian account of neoliberalism and try to provide a Foucauldian critique of it. For this purpose, I will use Foucault's late work on neoliberal governmentality and a body of literature that has built developed on it.

Harvey (2005) defines neoliberalism primarily as a theory of political economic practices according to which "human well-being can be enhanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills" (p.2). In order to achieve this, a system that is marked by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade should be favored and protected by the neo-liberal state. In the short history of neoliberalism (starting from the 1970s) all states throughout the world passed through some version of it and applied various neoliberal policies and practices. Neoliberalism conceives of itself as predicated upon the concepts of human dignity and individual freedom. It is argued that these traits can only be guaranteed by freedom of the market and trade. These concepts constitute the appeal of neoliberalism, Harvey notes. Beneath its appeal, by looking at the empirical evidence throughout the world, Harvey argues that neoliberalism has been from the very beginning about the reconstruction and restoration of the power of economic elites. The redistribution of wealth and increasing social inequality rather than producing wealth and income, can be characterized as structural characteristics of neoliberalism. Harvey presents the concept of "accumulation by dispossession" in order to understand how this redistribution has been achieved. The concept refers to the process through which dispossession of the rights and resources of certain groups became the main means of accumulation of wealth by the capitalist class. There are four main features of it, namely privatization, financialization, management and manipulation of crises, and state redistributions. Privatization of public assets, transfer of the property from public to

private ownership; the establishment of the financial system as the main center of redistributive activity through government deregulation; redistribution of wealth from poor countries to the rich by creating “debt traps” through management and manipulation of crises; and lastly the constitution of the neoliberal state as the primary agent of redistributive policies that reverse the flow from upper to lower classes, all create the neoliberal condition where few gain power at the expense of the many. Overall, Harvey (2005) concludes that neoliberalization can be understood as a *utopian project* which provides a theoretical frame for the reorganization of global capitalism as well as a political project that re-establishes the conditions for capital accumulation and for the restoration of the power of economic elites.

In a similar vein, Pierre Bourdieu (1998) claims that neoliberalism is a utopia of pure and perfect market, a pure mathematical fiction which has been based on abstraction from the beginning. However, for Bourdieu this utopian theory of neoliberalism which is desocialized and dehistoricized is capable of making itself true more than ever. Harvey (2005) notes that this strong discourse has achieved to justify itself and legitimize every action it takes in order to reach its goals. In order to explain how this justification process works, he uses Gramsci’s concept of “common-sense,” that is, the sense held in common and constructed through “long-standing practices of cultural socialization often rooted deep in regional or national traditions”(2005, p.39). According to him, the construction of consent to neoliberalism became possible when its premises of individual libertarianism and consumerism became the common-sense which eventually shaped our ways of thought, the way many of us interpret, live and understand the world.

Jason Read (2009) says that although Harvey provides us with a comprehensive account of neoliberalism throughout its brief history, he does not explore how it became a common-sense. While Harvey underscores the role of neoliberalism in shaping our ways of thought through incorporating into our common-sense, he does not elaborate on the processes

by which it does so, especially at the level of individuals. Both Harvey's and Bourdieu's approaches to neoliberalism lack a micro-level understanding of how neoliberalism works. Neoliberalism entails not just ways in which states or economies are governed, but also the government of the individual, a particular manner of living. According to Lemke (2002), the reason of this omission can be found in their conceptualization of neoliberalism as an ideology in its negative sense or a "faulty theory," a misrepresentation of reality. By perceiving neoliberalism as an ideology, they disregard the nexus of power, knowledge and technologies of self within which neoliberalism operates. On the contrary, Foucauldian approaches argue that neoliberalism constitutes a form of governmentality, "a manner of doing things." This body of work is based on Foucault's lectures at the College de France from 1970 to 1984 published as *The Birth of Biopolitics* where he develops his ideas on neoliberalism through tracing its origins back to the thought of a group of German thinkers, called ordoliberals (McNay, 2009, p.20). These lectures were designed to be on bio-politics but they diverged from this intention, as Foucault (2008) states "...I really intended to talk about bio-politics, and then ... I have ended talking at length and maybe too long, about neoliberalism" (p.185). In these lectures he analyses eighteenth-century classical liberalism and German and American neoliberalisms. Examining such contemporary phenomena of his times, namely neoliberalism, was unusual in Foucault's work, as Luis McNay states (2009). Moreover, the lectures were delivered just before the rise of the New Right political agenda and the consolidation of the neoliberal regime in the world scene. Thus, Foucault made his remarks on neoliberalism before it became hegemonic and powerful throughout the world. However, as McNay notes, despite the fact that neoliberalism has undergone so many changes since then, especially Foucault's insights into the marketization of social relations still holds importance (2009, p.56).

In his lectures at College de France, Foucault analyses the shift from liberalism in the eighteenth century to German ordoliberalism, and more recently American neoliberalism, through tracing “a tradition running from Hobbes, Hume and Adam Smith to Milton Friedman, Friedrich Hayek and Gary Becker” (Foucault, 2008 cited in McNay, 2009, p.57). He argues that in the transition from liberalism to neoliberalism, the focus of economic activity has changed. Classical liberalism was directed to exchange and naturalize the market as a system with its own rationality that is the most efficient agent to distribute goods and services, and thus, should be separated from the state. As Read (2009) states, Foucault underlines the point where the market becomes more than a particular institution or activity, but constitutes a basis for the reinterpretation and critique of state power. At that point, in classical liberalism, exchange which was the main focus of the market became the general matrix of society according to Foucault (Foucault, 2008 cited in Read, 2009, 27). Within this matrix it became possible to talk about the exchange of certain freedoms for rights and liberties just like goods and services are exchanged in the market. When we arrive at neoliberalism, Foucault argues, that this process of making economic activity the general matrix of social and political relations has extended, but with a shift in its focus from exchange to competition. Foucault argues that “homo economicus” which refers to “a particular ‘anthropology of man’ as an economic subject” was redefined in the neoliberal era as a competitive creature rather than an exchanging one as it was defined under the classical liberalism (Foucault, 2008 cited in Read, 2009, p.28). Through this shift, the way in which human beings make themselves and are made subjects is changed.

According to Dean (1999), Foucault defined neoliberalism as entailing the production of a new regime of truth and a new way in which people are made subjects. This form of government does not merely refer to the practices of the state and its institutions but indicates more broadly “any rational effort to influence or guide the conduct of human beings through

acting upon their hopes, desires, circumstances” (Xavier, 2005, p.1). Moreover, it is not only about the government of individuals through multiple agents and authorities but also the government of one’s self through technologies of subjectivity. In Foucault’s work, these two tendencies are sought to be grasped together, using the concept of governmentality. As Thomas Lemke (2002) argues, governmentality constructs a link between Foucault’s seemingly different research interests of the technologies of domination, rigid structures of power that restricts subjects, and the technologies of self through which subjects act upon themselves through productive power relations. As Barnett et al. note “[t]he analytics of governmentality inserts itself at the intersection between technologies of domination and technologies of self” (2008, p.638). With the concept of governmentality, Lemke (2002) argues, Foucault corrects his previous conception of subjectivity which was limited to docile bodies and which put too much emphasis on the process of discipline. The concept refers to mentalities of government or an “art of government” which addresses not only government that the political usage of the term implies today, but also its meaning that was employed until the eighteenth century. Government until the eighteenth century also included “problems of self-control, guidance for the family and for children, management of the household, directing the soul, etc.” (Lemke, 2002, p.2). Thus, through incorporating this historical usage of the term to his analysis of government, Foucault expands the term from its meaning of governing by states or the governing of economies. Therefore, he enables us to approach government to include also the issue of how subjects are governed and govern themselves and how their conducts are shaped through any rational attempt whether in the family, schools, work or hospitals (Xavier, 2005). Thus, governmentality can take various forms “from the guidance of families to the ethics of care and the management of the soul” (Mitchell, 2006, p.389).

III. Government of One's Self and the Formation of the Neoliberal Subject

While government implies government of populations through institutions such as the state, it also indicates shaping the behaviors of individuals. Foucault (1977) argues that power is not only concentrated or monopolized in institutions but also diffused and directed on the bodies of individuals, which points to a micro-physics of modern power. Foucault elaborates on this micro characteristic of power in his work on the *History of Sexuality* (1979b), where he explains how individuals shape their sexual and reproductive conduct in a certain manner which is connected with the issues of national policy and power. Foucault refers to this form of politics as biopolitics and technologies of power as biopower. Biopolitics perceives subjects as members of a population and is concerned with matters of life such as health, birth rates, etc. of the population and also the social, cultural, environmental, economic and geographic conditions under which members of the population live (Dean, 1999, p.99). By biopower Foucault refers to a form of power that penetrates the entire life of the population through embracement of it by every individual who governs his/her actions accordingly. As Antonio Negri and Micheal Hardt (2000) argue, the highest function of biopower is to administer life, “the production and reproduction of life itself” (p.24). Biopolitics acts upon the bodies of subjects through providing a plane of knowledge on how to live, the manner of living and it thus transforms particular kinds of relations that the human beings have with themselves. According to Gordon (1991), Foucault reintroduced this concept of biopower in his lectures at College de France and articulated it into his theorization of neoliberal government. As Ong (2006) notes, neoliberal governmentality can be understood as the most recent development of biopower that governs human life and is based on market knowledge and calculations that create forms of subjection as well as subject-making. Drawing on Foucault, Italian post-Marxist studies also deploy the concept to re-theorize contemporary

capitalism. For instance, a proponent of this wave, Lazzarato (2009) suggests that the production and reproduction of life promotes capitalist distribution of power and wealth, and the construction of a new form of subject.

This new form of subject can be called the neoliberal subject, the enterprising self or homo-entrepreneur. In neoliberal governmentality, people are governed and govern themselves through the principles of interest, investment and competition. Following Foucault's approach, Read (2009) states that human beings have nearly turned into calculators and the discourse of the economy becomes an entire way of life, a common-sense in Harvey's words, in that "everything for which human beings attempt to realize their ends, from marriage, to crime, to expenditures on children, can be understood 'economically' according to a particular calculation of cost for benefit" (Read, 2009, p.28). Neoliberal governmentality provides a particular extension of the economy across all of society, as Laval states, "All actions are seen to conform to the fundamental economic ideas of self-interest, of greatest benefit for least possible cost" (Laval in Read, 2009, p.31). Rather than being a material entity the economy provides "a way of producing human subjects and social orders of a certain kind" (Escobar, 1995, p.59). And in neoliberalism all aspects of human life come to be understood in terms of market rationality, and every action can be judged with the considerations of profitability, notes Wendy Brown (2003). As the subject of economic thinking expands, instead of collective political solutions to problems, we encounter the individualized/market based ones such as "gated communities for concerns about security and safety; bottled water for concerns about water purity; and private schools for failing public schools" (Read, 2009, p.35).

It was this mentality of individualism, calculation, attempts to profit, ideas of self-interest that neoliberalism constitutes and in which people govern themselves. According to Read (2009), the worker in neoliberalism is also redefined and has now become human capital whereas his/her salary or wages become the consequence of investment in his/her

skills. Subjects themselves are turned into human capital and expected to work on themselves in order to achieve the best return of their investment on themselves. As Read states (2009), they are the individuals whose every action from learning a computer software program to whitening their teeth can be seen as an investment in their human capital. Thus, homo-economicus is actually the “homo entrepreneur” as Foucault argues, “an entrepreneur of himself” whose motto can be described with the words of interest, investment and competition (Foucault, 2008 cited in Read, 2009, p.28). As Wendy Brown (2003) argues, “homo-entrepreneur” is expected to be a rational, calculating individual who is responsible for him/herself and able to meet his/her own needs and pursue own ambitions and desires. They are seen as fully responsible for their actions, they are “companies of one” in Read’s (2009, p.31) words, without taking into account the possible constraints on their actions such as unemployment, limited welfare rights, etc. If they fail, it should be because of them, it should mean that they mismanaged their lives, which means the depoliticization of the social (W. Brown, 2003).

Neoliberalism renders its subjects responsible which in turn transforms social problems such as unemployment, poverty and so on into problems of “self-care” (Lemke, 2001, p.202). Neoliberalism gathers together a responsible and moral individual and economic-rational individual. In this particular ethical formation of selves, responsible individuals are expected to make rational choices by calculating costs and benefits and should solely be responsible for them. In this way, neoliberalism pushes individuals to “give their lives a specific entrepreneurial form” (Lemke, 2001, p.202). Individuals are expected to be entrepreneurs of themselves who should organize various aspects of their lives and thus engage in the “continuous business of living” (Yurchak, 2003, p.75). Yurchak (2003) argues that the formation of the neoliberal subjects pertains to how personal identity and relations are managerialized and the meaning of life is capitalized (p.73). As Rose (1996) states,

individuals live “as if running a project of themselves: they are to work on their emotional world, their domestic and conjugal arrangements, their relations of employment and the techniques of sexual pleasure, to develop a style of being that will maximize the worth of their existence to themselves” (p. 157). The formation of the neoliberal subjects has never been a smooth process. It entails continuous struggle, contradictions and complexities and becomes possible through certain costs. As I will elaborate on in the subsequent sections of this chapter, such costs can be cynicism, overwhelming anxieties, fears and insecurities.

After defining the neoliberal subject, now we can ask through which institutional mechanisms the neoliberal-subject is fashioned. I will argue that the formation of the neoliberal subject becomes possible through multiple actors, organizations, and agencies. As Rose (1999) points out, governmentality analyses do not reduce all this heterogeneity of authorities to politics. Although, the state occupies an important place in the governmentality literature, rationalities of government are not merely related with the state. There are a variety of spaces and authorities where the conduct of individuals is shaped in a particular manner.

IV. Modalities of Neoliberalism and the Role of the State

As I stated in the beginning, neoliberalism is a globalizing phenomenon (Harvey, 2005; England and Ward, 2007). Nearly all states around the world deal with some version of neoliberalism (Harvey, 2005). The ideas and effects of neoliberalism circulate around the world. Nigel Thrift (2005) argues the cultural circuit of capitalism, which refers to management discourses and ideas produced through a multiplicity of agencies, travels around the world. According to Thrift (2005), management knowledge is constructed through business schools, management consultants, management gurus and the media, and provides a continuous critique of capitalism that enables it to be reborn from its crises and contradictions

(2005, p.6). Additionally, management knowledge cannot be confined to Western geographies, Thrift (2005) notes. Such ideas which not only shape people's work lives but also the rest of people's lives as well have been produced in many parts of the world.

However, neoliberalism is also "glocalized" meaning that it is shaped by combinations of global-national-local interactions (Collier, 2005). There exist various ways of implementation of neoliberalism in different geographical contexts "as a result of individual geographies of urban, regional and national development, historical formations of liberalism and social democracy and class relations" (Mitchell, 2004, p.393). Among these various elements, the diverse role of states has become an important factor in the existence of variants of neoliberalism. For instance, Aiwā Ong (2006) argues that there emerged different forms of neoliberal governmentality through different treatments of various segments of the population by states in Asian countries such as Malaysia and the Philippines. Ong (2006) criticizes governmentality scholars such as Nikolas Rose (1999) who suggest that advanced liberal democracies in the West govern through making their citizens "free": free populations, self-managing and self-enterprising individuals. According to Ong (2006), such approaches focus merely on Western contexts, and countries which they define as advanced liberal democracies. She states that in non-Western contexts through differential treatment of different segments of the population, states form alliances with the global market and contribute to the fashioning of neoliberal-subjects. She suggests that in Asian countries, the neoliberal state employs different forms of power in order to treat different segments of the population. She (2006) defines two cases, namely "exception to neoliberalism" and "neoliberal exception" where we can observe such different treatments. In the first case, the repressive forms of power and techniques of surveillance are applied to various segments of the society such as workers, migrants and ethnic minorities. Whereas in the second case, technologies of subjectivity and forms of "pastoral power," that is a caring form of power that

is concerned with the well-being of individual, are employed. According to Ong (2006), in this second case, the state attempts to create a middle class who is expected to internalize entrepreneurial values such as responsibility, competition, calculation and thus play the game of global capitalism and attract foreign capital. In neoliberal exception, the subject population is governed through their freedom, their ability to choose among competing strategies at the power/knowledge nexus and cultural normativity. These free subjects pursue a successful education in the desirable departments of desirable universities, internalize entrepreneurial norms, and play the game of global capitalism mainly in multinational companies. However, not every member of society is given the right to be in the neoliberal exception, ethno-racializing schemes are utilized in the creation of the middle class citizen. For instance, Ong (2006) gives the example of preferred Malays and their different treatment by the government in terms of the construction of their subjectivities and integration to the global market. Thus, neoliberal exception uses already available schemes of preferred citizens and fosters it.

Although Ong's approach is useful to account for different forms of neoliberal governmentality in various geographical contexts, her approach has problems. For instance, her perspective cannot account for how technologies of power applied in one case can also be employed in another one. We can argue that in cases of "exception to neoliberalism" not only are repressive measures employed on particular segments of society such as the poor and workers, but through technologies of subjectivity, they are also expected to internalize entrepreneurial norms and act as self-reliant citizens. Thus, rather than drawing clear-cut distinctions between these two cases in terms of technologies of power applied, maybe we can use them as sites where the intensity of certain forms of power applied to different segments of population varies as compared to other forms. Parallel to this, Ong's analysis also reproduces the so-called West/East binary and fails to see how different technologies of

power are diffused in and affect different contexts so as to invalidate any attempts of separation among them.

Thrift (2005) also emphasizes the role of the state in the creation of enterprising subjects. He argues that states fashion enterprising subjects in accordance with the cultural circuit of capital. States have become more aligned with global corporate interests and have entered into the business of producing appropriate subjects for global capitalism. States want and promote a new model of citizen, who is a self-willed subject, an active factor in production in order to help states compete economically (Thrift, 2005, p.98). He analyses the Singapore case and suggests that the Singaporean state has made significant changes in the education system in order to form new, more entrepreneurial citizens.

However, even if the state does not make any attempt at producing enterprising subjects, also by deliberately withdrawing itself from certain spheres such as the economy and education, it can still contribute to this task. For instance, the withdrawal of the state from the education system through privatization as well as leaving a space for multinational companies where they can enjoy a certain autonomy can be thought in that manner. Therefore, states, through their very absence also contribute to the production of enterprising subjects. To put it in a different way, states are the promoters of the creation of neoliberal-subjects both through interventions as well as through deliberate non-interventions.

V. The Problem of the Subject

Having presented an analysis of neoliberal governmentality and the particular form of subject that it constitutes, now I want to carry out a discussion on the problem of the subject with reference to subjectivity, subject-formation or the “architecture of self” in Saba Mahmood’s (2001, p.217) terms, and the question of agency. First, I want to discuss what subjectivity means and then move on to the issue of subject-formation. While analyzing

subject-formation, I do not want to fall into deterministic or voluntaristic accounts of the subject. Therefore, I will argue that subjects are not fully determined through the system of social norms in which they are embedded. They are not mechanistically made through structural formations. However, they also do not stand in a position where they can be free from the restrictive effects of social norms and operations of power. In order to pursue such conceptualization of the subject, I will mention Louis Althusser's and Michel Foucault's theories of the subject. Then, I will present Judith Butler's account of the subject which departs from the works of Althusser and Foucault. Following Butler, I will claim that individuals, through acting upon themselves with technologies of self and engaging in performative acts, are produced as subjects in a particular system of norms. Rather than underlining linguistics and the symbolic process of signification which are emphasized as forming subjects in Butler's account, I will emphasize practical contexts and spaces in which symbols acquire meaning and construct various regimes of power and discipline (Mahmood, 2001). Stated otherwise, I do not want to propose a symbolic or linguistic analysis of subject formation but rather develop an account which addresses the material formation of the subject through reiteration of social norms in particular spaces.

Additionally, drawing on Butler's conception of melancholy and loss as inherent phenomena in the production of heterosexual subjects, I will argue that each subject formation bears its psychic cost. I will emphasize the concept of cynicism drawing on the works of Peter Sloterdijk and Slavoj Žižek to point out the cost of the formation of the neoliberal subject. However, I will not conceptualize cynicism in a functionalist manner, as a tool for self-defense of subjects in order to block "the colonization of self" as Fleming and Spicer (2003) suggest in their studies on organizations. Rather, I argue that subjects do not have autonomous and free inner spaces as social norms penetrate much more deeply into subjects and form their subjectivities in a particular manner. For that reason, I argue that cynicism just provides an

unhappy consciousness and a discursive realm where subjects can construct their narratives at best. Moreover, I will also introduce Engin Isin's concept of the neurotic subject in order to discuss how neoliberal subjects are actually fragile subjects who are marked with anxieties, insecurities and fears.

As Ortner (2005) notes, subjectivity, or what we may call the interiority of the subject, is the realm of perceptions, affect, thought, desire and fear. It is the realm where people construct meanings in their lives and constitute their identities. However, subjectivity is always under the effect of historical settings, institutional processes and cultural forms. Political, economic and social formations shape this affective realm, and are inherently linked with it. To put in another way, subjectivities are not pre-given entities but constructed through political, economic and social structures. Ortner (2005) says that in the new culture that economic, social and political formations have brought, a particular kind of subjectivity is fashioned which establishes the conditions of existence of such formations. Subjectivities also have histories and therefore, neoliberal subjectivity is not all that new a phenomenon since different subjectivities were also formed under the Fordist regime of capital accumulation. Additionally, subjectivities are complex and they are formed in a process of the ongoing work of reflexivity, monitoring the relationship of the self to the world. In this process a subject partially internalizes and partially reflects upon and at some instances can react against a set of circumstances in which he/she finds him/herself (Ortner, 2005).

In Foucault's works subjectivity and subject also occupy an important place. In his works, he mainly deals with the question of how power constitutes subjects. According to Foucault (1982), individuals are turned into subjects through different modes in history. Inquiries that give themselves the status of science such as economics define subjects as worker, and produce a particular plane of knowledge upon this subject. Secondly, the dividing practices produce particular subjects such as mad and sane and act upon these subjects

through constructed expert knowledge. Lastly, and more importantly, individuals turn themselves into subjects, through learning certain norms and defining themselves with them such as the process in which men learn heterosexuality and recognize themselves as subjects of sexuality. Here the term subject has a double meaning: “subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self knowledge” (1982, p.212). The first condition forms a restrictive way of subjection whereas in the latter case individuals themselves promote this process. Moreover, also subjectivation and subjectification refer to different processes. The former concept refers to ways in which others are turned into subjects through restrictive means and governed at the power/knowledge nexus. The latter concept on the other hand underlines the ways individuals turn themselves into subjects and govern themselves through technologies of self which “permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and a way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or morality” (Foucault, 1988, p.208).

It can be claimed that Foucault’s conception of subject in his later works have diverged from the former ones such as *Discipline and Punish*. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault emphasizes how the disciplinary mechanisms form subjects and, as Butler criticizes, he presents a unilateral theory of subject-formation. In this work “it’s as if the prisoner is simply made, it’s as if somehow the prisoner is constituted almost mechanistically” (Bell, 1999, p.164). However, in his later works, with the notions of subjectivation and technologies of self, it can be claimed that Foucault corrects this mechanical and unilateral theory of subject-formation. In this latter account of subject formation, he emphasizes how individuals who are embedded in productive power relations act upon themselves and turn themselves into subjects. They undertake this task with their own consent, meaning that nobody makes

them to act in a particular manner through coercive operations. Subjects are enabled to act through productive power relations instead of repressive mechanisms. However, a particular plane of knowledge, truth, is created through power relations that are materialized in multiplicity of authorities and institutions. In this plane of knowledge, subjects define certain virtues such as happiness, perfection, etc. in particular ways. As an effect, subjectivities of individuals are also formed within this plane of knowledge as to reach these virtues. Therefore, subjects who are embedded in productive relations of power which enables them to act, work upon themselves, their actions, desires to reach certain virtues and therefore contribute to their submission by themselves not as passive agents but rather as active ones.

In order to clarify this condition of the subject, Mahmood (2001) gives the example of a virtuoso pianist who submits herself to particular disciplinary practices (training) and hierarchical structures (apprenticeship), in order to acquire the ability and thus agency to play the piano with mastery. Such form of agency is generally understood as docility in that the subject in this condition can be shaped in a particular manner through disciplinary mechanisms. While docility is addressed as lack of agency, according to Mahmood (2001), it refers to “malleability” for the subject to gain certain skills, in this case playing piano (p.210). This agency entails continuous struggle, effort rather than being passive. If we think agency in such a way, then we can see “the practical ways in which individuals work on themselves to become the willing subjects of a particular discourse” (2001, p.210). Such agency is not autonomous rather it acts upon itself in order to attain certain virtues “in accord with a particular discursive tradition” (ibid.).

Foucault’s conception of subjectivation can be read together with Louis Althusser’s notion of subjection. According to Althusser (2008), individuals are transformed into subjects as ideology hails or interpellates them as subjects. Even the most common hailing practice of “Hey, you there!” can function as such. As the individual recognizes that the hailing is

addressed to him/her, even through this quotation practice, she/he becomes a subject. Another example that Althusser gives, in order to explain how through interpellation individuals are turned into subjects, is the case of an unborn child. Althusser (2008) states that an unborn child is always-already a subject; how and in what ways this child is expected in the familial ideological configuration gives him a subject position (p.50). Before its birth, it is certain that the baby will bear its father's name and thus have an irreplaceable identity. After it's born, through rearing and education she/he will become a sexual subject (girl or boy) and then learn its position in the family.

In the process of interpellation there is also the "Other Subject", "Subject par excellence" in whose name ideology interpellates individuals as subject, notes Althusser (2008). Through interpellation of individuals on the behalf of the Subject, individuals both recognize themselves as subjects and also recognize the Subject, and therefore, their subjection to the Subject is ensured. It is in their subjection to the Subject that subjects interpellated as "free" subjects who work by themselves. Althusser (2008) argues that this is the point where the ambiguity of the term subject lies:

In the ordinary use of the term, subject in fact means: (1) a free subjectivity, a centre of initiatives, author of and responsible for its actions; (2) a subjected being, who submits to a higher authority, and therefore stripped of all freedom except that of freely accepting his submission. This last note gives us the meaning of this ambiguity, which is merely a reflection of the effect which produces it: the individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection, in order that he shall makes the gestures and actions of his subjection "all by himself". There are no subjects except by and for their subjection. That is why they "work all by themselves" (p.56).

Therefore, parallel to Foucault's concept of subjectivation which underlines how subjects turn themselves into subjects through technologies of self, Althusser also emphasizes how the individual recognizes himself as a free subject in his subjection to a higher authority or the Subject and freely accepts his subjection and acts according to his subjection all by himself. Despite the divergence of these thinkers, both of them agree that there is subordination in the process of subject constitution (Butler, 1997, p. 5). They both question the very moment where individuals themselves accept, contribute to and act through their subjection and turn into subjects. They both try to account for the formation of subjects in their freedom by themselves. They both underline how certain mechanisms turn individuals into subjects not through repression but through enabling them to act. And the paradox of this process is that subjects freely act according to the very mechanisms of their subjection. In Althusser's analysis what is at the center of subjection is ideology, while Foucault emphasizes power relations and the production of truth, knowledge as an important element as ensuring subjection. Judith Butler departs from this theoretical intersection and develops her notion of subjection through considering Althusserian and Foucauldian accounts of subjection together.

Butler (1997) argues that subjectivation is a paradox in that it provides conditions that cause the subordination of the individual but also the ways in which she can become a self-conscious subject (p.83). As she states:

“subjectivation” denotes both the becoming of the subject and the process of subjection- one inhabits the figure of autonomy only by becoming subjected to a power, a subjection which implies a radical dependency.... Subjection is, literally, the making of a subject, the principle of regulation according to which a subject is formulated or produced. Such subjection is a kind of power that not only unilaterally acts on a given individual as a form of domination, but also activates or forms subject. Hence, subjection is neither simply the domination of a subject nor its production, but designates a certain kind of restriction in production (p.83-4).

Therefore, what we see is a “radical dependency” between mechanisms of power, subjection, subject-formation and agency or autonomy of subjects. According to this view, subjects are constituted through mechanisms of power or productive power relations that enable them to act. In this process subjects are not fully determined or dominated but always inhering ability to act in unpredictable manners which defines their agency. But this agency and ability, capacity to act does not imply an autonomous, unrestricted realm of action; rather it should be seen as a product of operations of power which constitute subjects. Stated otherwise, subjects cannot be thought as free from the operations of power, mechanisms of subordination but rather as constituted by them in a particular manner. However, they also cannot be reducible to such operations, as they have the capacity to act not always in accord with the relations of power that constitute them as self-conscious subjects.

In her account of gender, Butler tries to show both that subjects are not fully determined by the heterosexual norms and that there are no subjects who exist autonomously from such norms. Through the notion of performativity, she (1993) argues that subjects exist through performative acts. Subject-formation becomes possible through repeated performance of norms and the repetition of socially established norms. Therefore, subjects must be performatively constituted in order to recognize themselves as subjects. At that point we should state that Butler underlines discursive performativity and symbolic or linguistic processes of recognition. Thus, she pays more attention to how subjects are constituted through discursive practices “that produce what it names” (1993, p.13).

As system of norms depends on repetition, it also carries the possibility of failure, discontinuation or appropriation for purposes other than the consolidation of norms (Mahmood, 2001). Thus, even the notion of performativity underlines the constraint of social norms as constitutive of subjects it also suggests that subjects are not fully determined by such constraints and there is always a room for agency, to act differently, as the reiteration of

social norms that bring constraint may fail or maybe appropriated differently. Therefore, through the concept of performativity Butler forms a theory of agency in which individuals are able to resist the norms and disrupt their reiteration (Mahmood, 2001). “The iterability of performativity is a theory of agency, one that cannot disavow power as condition of its own possibility” (Butler, 1999, p.14). As I mentioned before, Butler says that in Foucault’s approach of subject formation, especially in his former works such as *Discipline and Punish*, we see nearly a mechanistic, unilateral constitution of the subject. Butler found such an account problematic as it cannot address the vulnerability or unpredictability of subject-constitution (Bell, 1999, p.164). But when we account for the very possibility of the failure of reiteration of norms that constitute subjects and the disruptive ability of subjects, then the vulnerability and unpredictability of subject-formation can be theorized.

In her analysis of gender and its performative construction through heterosexual norms, Butler (1997) argues that the relinquishment of the object of desire which is needed in order to constitute gender identity entails a loss which is not directly expressed but created a melancholic condition. The melancholia stems from heterosexual norms which defines what will and will not be a lovable object, what will and will not be a legitimate form of love (in Bell, 1999, p.170). According to Butler (1997) heterosexual norms bring the repression of all homosexual desires and forms of love and thus entail a loss of homosexual object and upon this loss femininity and masculinity formed. And this loss produces gender melancholy.

It can be interesting to think whether such a psychic cost (melancholia) can be found in the processes of subject formation through different norms. I think it is important to take into account how formation of subjects inhering certain psychic costs as a result of what is foreclosed, excluded as to make this formation possible. Departing from this point, I suggest that we can see such costs not only in the constitution of gender through heterosexual norms, but also in the constitution of particular subject formations through other social norms. Each

subject formation actually brings its psychic cost. For instance, can we also find ourselves in melancholic conditions when we perform certain social norms that define what forms of lives will be recognized as a successful, happy and healthy life? Does a person who performs a healthy diet and shaped by the discursive tradition of healthy individual and healthy life and constructs a healthy individual identity also have such a loss? Just like heterosexual norms repress homosexual desires, can we also argue that health regimes repress desires of eating tasty food as they are unhealthy? If so, doesn't this repression also entail a loss, something lacking for the subjects? Doesn't production of other identities have their psychic cost? Thus, my question is, just like Butler proposes loss and melancholic condition as the psychic costs of the constitution of gender, can we also conceptualize psychic costs of other subject formations? For instance, can we argue that as an addition to melancholia, cynicism, anxieties and insecurities can also be such psychic costs in the constitution of the neoliberal subjects?

The formation of neoliberal subjects, produce an unhappy consciousness and forms cynical subjects. Sloterdijk (1988) argues that this unhappy consciousness which marks cynic subjects is "an enlightened false consciousness. It has learned its lessons in enlightenment, but is has not, and probably was not able to put them into practice. Well off and miserable at the same time, this consciousness no longer feels affected by any critique of ideology; its falseness is already reflexively buffered" (p.5). The cynic subjects who have such an unhappy consciousness are not dumb according to Sloterdijk (1988), they are aware of the falseness of their consciousness and they "see the nothingness to which everything leads" (p.5). They are well aware of what they are doing but they still do it. Theirs is a condition of disavowal, as Zizek (1989) notes: "I know very well but still..." (p.18). Contrary to Marx's description of ideology as "they do not know it but they are doing it," drawing on the work of Sloterdijk, Zizek (1989) states that:

they know what they are doing but still they are doing it. Cynical reason is no longer naïve, but is a paradox of an enlightened false consciousness: one knows

the falsehood very well, one is well aware of a particular interest hidden behind an ideological universality, but still one does not renounce it (p.29).

Moreover Sloterdijk (1988) states that cynic unhappy consciousness also carries a permanent doubt towards its actions. However, this doubt does not prevent them from keeping on doing things, as they can repress their symptoms of unhappy consciousness such as depression under control and can remain able to work (1988, p.5). Sloterdijk (1988) states that it is precisely the ability to work “in spite of anything that might happen, and especially after anything that might happen” that is crucial in cynics. They do not renounce their actions even when they recognize the very falseness behind them. However, while being able work and not renounce, cynics also have a feeling about themselves of being victims and of making sacrifices. Behind their capable images there is an “offensive unhappiness and need to cry”, (Sloterdijk, 1998).

Fleming and Spicer (2003) apply this notion of cynicism to organization studies and underline how employees take a cynical attitude towards norms of organizations. The authors argue that even if employees are cynically enlightened about how the corporate sector is exploitative, they act as if they do not know it is the case (p.164). Fleming and Spicer (2003) argue that cynicism forms an “inner free space” or a “breathing space” a sense of “self-outside the power” for employees (p.164). And it is this dis-identification process, taking a cynical attitude towards work that makes employees behave efficiently in their jobs (p.167). Cynic employees distance themselves from norms and values of organization and the very self-breathing space it creates enables them to act as if they believe in the culture of the organization (2003, p.169). For this reason, the authors also perceive cynicism as a disruptive force that facilitates forms of resistance. What is problematic in Fleming and Spicer’s analysis is their conception of cynicism nearly in a functionalist manner so as to form a sphere where subjects can be autonomous and free from operations of power that bring their submission.

They perceive cynicism as a self-defense mechanism of subjects in order to block “the colonization of self” (2003, p.159). I argue that such an autonomous sphere for subjects is not possible as individuals become subjects and recognize themselves as subjects through their submission to social norms that they perform. Thus, rather than perceiving cynicism as creating an autonomous realm where subjects can form resistance, I suggest that cynicism provides “an offensive unhappiness and need to cry” as Sloterdijk (1988, p.5) notes, and a discursive realm where subjects can construct their narratives.

Engin Isin (2004), on the other hand, criticizes the literature on governmentality and its portrayal of the neoliberal subject as rational, self-sufficient, calculating, responsible, autonomous and governed in and through its freedom. For him, biopolitics does not account for the governing of subjects, as it takes the neoliberal subject, who is autonomous and competent to shape its actions through calculations as to be healthy, happy and wealthy, at its center. On the contrary, Isin (2004) notes that such a competent subject does not exist as it does not have the capacity to meet the demands of social life; its capacity is overestimated by the governmentality literature. Thus, Isin (2004) argues that the neoliberal subject is from the very beginning forms a phantasy. It maybe a phantasy to conceal the neurotic subject and citizen that we encounter today (Isin, 2004, p.232). However, he also notes that the neoliberal subject and neurotic subject are not mutually exclusive concepts rather they produce each other.

The neurotic citizen refers to a subject who governs its conduct on the basis of its anxieties and insecurities rather than rationalities (Isin, 2004, p.223). According to Isin (2004) the neurotic citizen is governed through neurosis meaning that the subject that is governed is “less understood as rational, calculating and competent who can eliminate risks and more as someone who is anxious, under stress and increasingly insecure and is asked to manage its neurosis” (p.225). The occurrence of the neurotic citizen also addresses a new type of politics,

neuropolitics, and power, neuropower, both of which are not concerned with eliminating or curing the anxieties and insecurities of the neurotic citizen but managing them (ibid.). If biopower governs the conduct of its citizen for its health, wealth and happiness, neuropower is directed to tranquility, serenity and security; if neoliberalism formed a rational and calculating subject, neoliberalism acknowledges “an anxious and affective subject whose freedom is released in response to insecurities it faces within the requirements of tranquil, serene and secure species-bodies” (Isin, 2004,p.232). Thus, we encounter a subject that is not a neoliberal one who can rationally calculate and determine the ways of achieving health, wealth and happiness. Rather, it is the neurotic subject, Isin argues, whose anxieties are targeted and then tried to be managed and tranquilized (ibid.).

Departing from Isin’s discussion of the neurotic subject, I argue that neoliberal subjects are also marked with and governed by their anxieties, fears and insecurities. However, I argue that such anxieties, insecurities should be seen as a result or cost of their “rational choices” rather than of them being irrational, as Isin suggests.

VI. The Concept of the New Middle Class and the Turkish Context

In this section, I will elaborate on the concept of the new middle class and examine the historical formation of this group. Also, I will try to provide the main features of this newly emerging group with respect to their occupation, education and cultural characteristics. Moreover, I will also argue that the new middle class does not constitute a homogenous group as there is great variation in the new middle class both within and across different geographies. And lastly, I will discuss whether we can conceptualize the new middle class as a transnational class.

After the discussion on the concept of the new middle class, I will analyze the historical development of neoliberalism in Turkey. In this process, I will argue that a new

middle class has emerged as a result of transformation of the middle classes in Turkey under the impact of neoliberalism. Finally, I will elaborate on the new middle classes in Turkey with specific reference to their occupation, education, values and residential choices as discussed in the relevant scholarly literature.

A. An Inquiry into the New Middle Class

The concept of the new middle class refers to a group of salaried professionals, who acquire human capital in the form of education that provides them with social status and well paid jobs, and who have high disposable incomes and cultural capital, engage in various consumption practices and are located in urban contexts (Lange and Meier, 2009). Their education, income, cultural features and mentalities position them in a different class position compared to other groups in the society. They do not belong to either the upper or the lower strata of society, but occupy an in-between position (Lange and Meier, 2009). According to Wright (1978) this class position is contradictory, as its members carry common characteristics of both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. They have control over the means of production to a certain extent and share the rewards of capital but they also bear the mark of the proletarian condition. As Fernandes (2000) argues in her analysis of the Indian middle class, liberal economic restructuring also brings practices such as downsizing and retrenchment which creates a contradiction in the position of the new middle class. The processes of retrenchment and increased job insecurity makes the new middle classes resemble industrial working classes, whereas with their high salaries they are identified with the new rich.

The roots of this contradictory class position can be traced back to the nineteenth century. According to Lange and Meier (2009), the emergence of this new segment of society is closely linked with the changing social and entrepreneurial structures after the Industrial

Revolution in Western Europe and the US. The new middle classes are both the result and drivers of the shift of economic activity from rural areas to cities. Similar to Europe and North America, also in developing countries, the new middle classes emerged as a result of larger economic, political and cultural changes. However, the emergence of the new middle classes in developing countries took different forms from classically industrialized countries.

Whereas in industrialized countries the new middle classes emerged as a result of industrial processes, in developing countries the state also played an important role in the construction of middle classes within which the new middle classes were later going to be formed. In such contexts, the state promoted an indigenous middle class employed in public services in line with nation-building and modernization processes (Kessler, 2001). The opening of economies to world markets and market liberalization created a new segment within the middle classes in developing countries. In this process the service sector has expanded and cities became sites of financial, business and professional services.

As Fernandes (2000) notes, the new middle class emerged as a beneficiary of this liberalization process and it consists primarily of professional white collar employees in the private sector, particularly in multinational companies in cities. They are associated with the new economy, the service sector and professional workforces in the private sector. In this restructuring process, the traditional middle classes working in the public sector were marginalized and a segment of the middle class, namely the new middle class working in private and multinational enterprises benefited. Additionally, multinational companies have become attractive workplaces for the new middle classes with their high salaries and perks such as company cars, housing, entertainment allowances, etc. The educated young urban professionals have been able to gain high-salaried positions in such companies. The aspiration to become new middle class leads to giving more value on education, particularly business education and MBA degrees (Fernandes, 2000). MBA degrees became an important asset and

strategy of skill accumulation for the new middle classes which would “add value” to their human capital and make them more marketable in the liberalizing labor markets (2000, p.94).

On the other hand, the new middle class does not constitute a homogenous group and it embodies internal differences both in socio-cultural terms as well as specializations (Lange and Meirer, 2009). Thus, instead of talking about a single class maybe a class composed of different groups should be discussed with respect to the new middle class (Lange and Meier, 2009). As Fernandes (2006) argues, there is great variation in the new middle class both within and across different geographies. For instance, she states that in defining the new middle class with respect to occupational position, we should not only include upper tiers of the professional-managerial workforce but also include other white-collar jobs such as secretarial-administrative jobs (2006, p.24). Fernandes also addresses the differences of the new middle classes across geographical contexts. As she (2006) states:

For instance, the new middle class in late-developing countries maybe smaller in terms of size (in proportion to the national population), may lack access to similar levels of infrastructure (such as roads and electricity), and may present an emerging rather than a stable socioeconomic group. In late-developing nations, the new middle class is still in an emerging relationship with traditional segments of the middle class that are still largely dependent on state employment (p.26).

Fernandes (2006) suggests that accounting for these differences between advanced industrialized contexts and late-developing ones is important as Western categorizations of the new middle class have created “an ideal type [against] which the non-Western middle class have been measured” (p.27). The new middle class in developing countries is always judged in terms of a standard to be met that is developed through comparisons with respect to north America and Europe (2006, p.27). According to Fernandes this makes the middle class in non-Western contexts “an overladen (though understudied) sociological category” (ibid.).

Some studies emphasize the global characteristics of the new middle classes and attempt to include the new middle classes into a singular category of the transnational elite. For instance, Leslie Sklair (2001) developed the concept of Transnational Capitalist Class (TCC) in order to account for the effects of globalization on stratification. According to Sklair, global capitalism and the culture-ideology of consumerism has shaped TCC since the 1980s. TCC includes corporate executives, globalizing bureaucrats and politicians, globalizing professionals, and consumer elites who are the primary force in the constitution of the global capitalist economy. They are powerful and influential actors, whose economic interests are highly globally linked rather than being local, are outward-oriented rather than inward-oriented, share similar life-styles, and consume of luxury goods and services. However, it is difficult to conceptualize the new middle class as TCC, because the latter group is a propertied class who owns or controls transnational capital whereas the former one does not have to be necessarily propertied and that influential.² After discussing the concept of the new middle class, now I will briefly mention the historical development of neoliberalism in Turkey.

B. Neoliberalism in Turkey

The 1980s is the starting phase of neoliberalism in Turkey. On the September, 12, 1980 the Turkish military took over political power in Turkey. As Keyder (2004) argues, the military coup was a response to the economic impasse and the political clashes between the political right and leftist groups. Keyder says the military regime provided a suitable ground in order to undertake a radical restructuring of the economy with minimum resistance. Under military rule, the import substituting industrialization (ISI) was replaced with an export-oriented industrialization model (Zurcher, 1997; Keyder, 2004). The National Security

² See also Robinson (2004) for a critique of Sklair's conceptualization of TCC.

Council (NSC) in whose hands the political power was gathered ensured the liberalization of the financial system and thus, Turkey's integration into world markets in line with IMF agreements. Under the rule of the NSC, the package of economic and social policies that had been introduced on January, 24, 1980, before the military coup took place, was consolidated. This package of measures became crucial in Turkey's integration into world markets and liberalization of its economy. Rutz and Balkan (2009) summarize the main elements of the package as "the gradual removal of trade restrictions towards full commodity trade liberalization, the liberalization of the interest rates and the exchange rate regime, the privatization of industries and public services such as education, and the elimination of price controls and subsidies" (p.18). While ensuring the liberalization of the economy, the military regime also suppressed opposition groups and destroyed trade unions.

Following the military rule of the NSC, the liberal-conservative Motherland Party under the leadership of Turgut Özal came to power. According to Öniş (2004), Özal was a critical figure as he ensured a successful transition to neoliberal economy thanks to his effective leadership. In the Özal era liberalization policies were maintained and Turkey implemented neoliberal reforms with the liberalization of commodity trade and flexibilization of its labor markets (Cizre and Yeldan, 2005, p.388). In 1989, with the deregulation of the capital account, Turkey's full financial liberalization was achieved (ibid.). There was considerable discursive attention paid to the middle classes in this period. Turgut Özal underlined the importance of improving the conditions of the middle class, what he called the *orta direk* (middle pillar). Özal made promises to improve the economic and social condition of the middle classes after the 1979 crises. However Özal's policies had adverse effects on the middle classes. As Balkan and Rutz (2009) state these policies undermined the condition of the majority of the traditional middle classes.

As Cizre and Yeldan (2005) argue, while the economic reforms of the 1980s can be defined as Turkey's first-generation economic liberalization, the period starting in 2000 can be termed "second-generation marketization reforms" (p.338). According to the authors both rounds of reforms aim at the establishment of free market capitalism. But in the second-generation of market policies "transnational mobility of capital and global production networks were far more pronounced than before" (2005, p.339.). Throughout these different phases of neoliberalism which entailed certain structural adjustments such as state redistribution, financialization, and privatization new alignments and polarizations occurred within the middle class in Turkey. Thus, a new middle class "in the globally integrated sectors like exports, financial services, banking, tourism, media, advertising..." emerged at the expense of the impoverishment of the conditions of core middle classes (Balkan and Rutz, 2009, p.19). As Balkan and Rutz (2009) state "the new middle class diverged from the core middle class [who were generally employed in the public sector as medium-level civil servants] resembling a capitalist class more and more, while the core middle class, in turn began to resemble the lower middle and upper working classes" (p.23). Additionally, as Öncü (1997) also argues, the formation of this new middle class was a result of the transformation of middle classes by strengthening the upper segment of the middle class at the expense of degrading conditions for the lower middle class who were faced with the future of downward mobility. We can see that a similar process also occurred in India where liberalization brought about the inclusion of new middle classes in new employment opportunities and rising salaries whereas the traditional middle class, such as public sector employees, were marginalized (Fernandes, 2000, p.89).

C. The New Middle Class in Turkey

Ahiska and Yenal (2005) conceptualize as the new middle class the privileged group composed of engineers, managers, economists and salespersons who usually work in multinational companies and have relatively high wages (p.62). This small but growing segment of urban, professional, highly educated global middle class has become the “winners” in contemporary global capitalism and enjoys its benefits. The new middle classes who are identified with the new rich include white collar, professional workers who are working in the private sector especially in the multinational companies. As Balkan and Rutz (2009) state, during the neoliberal era many educated young professionals turned their cultural and educational capital into economic capital and were integrated with the global economy in which there was a constant demand for special individuals with special education for specific occupations (p.24). The members of the new middle class fulfilled such a demand and were integrated into the profits of global capitalism in Istanbul in which middle classes are affected by the neoliberal ideology and policies more than the rest of country (ibid.).

Turkey’s major financial and commercial center Istanbul has undergone important changes since the 1980s through the attempts to re-position Istanbul as a global city (Aksoy and Robins, 1996, p.58). Keyder (2005) argues that like other globalizing cities in the third world, Istanbul, the third-world metropolis as he calls it, also has undergone a rapid integration into global markets since the 1980s. The service sector in marketing, accounting, management, banking and finance has flourished as a result of the entrance of transnational economic powers into the city. The growth of the service sector constitutes a thin layer of the society composed of a group of young urban professionals who are able to operate in global markets and have adopted global consumption habits and lifestyles (Keyder, 2005). While this

small segment of the population that can be defined as the new middle class has benefited from its incorporation into the world economy, the rest of the population has witnessed this integration process without partaking in its benefits (Keyder, 1999). As Keyder (2005) argues the polarization and poverty in the city became significant in the 1990s. The urban setting of the city also demonstrated this as new complexes which were “landscaped, expensive, inaccessible and forbidding to outside population” were built for the small populations who became corelike, meaning that they resemble their counterparts in the core countries in terms of salary, education and consumption, whereas shantytowns burgeoned in order to meet the accommodation need of new immigrants (Keyder, 1999).

Unfortunately, the new middle class in Turkey is generally an understudied group. There are a few academic studies conducted on this corelike, small population. In this thesis, I will mention the studies of Ali Şimşek (2005), Hayri Kozanoğlu (1993), Ayşe Öncü (1997), Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu (2008) and Sencer Ayata (2002). Through these works I will try to present the main features of the new middle classes in Turkey. I argue that although these studies reveal the values of entrepreneurship, individualism or address certain fears and anxieties of the new middle classes in Istanbul, they do not elaborate on this subjective realm and analyze how new middle class subjectivities are shaped in particular ways. Despite this dearth of scholarship, however, I should mention two significant master’s theses (Zeybek, 2006; Yıldız, 2009) that are concerned with the subjectivity formation of new middle classes in Turkey.

Şimşek (2005) states that the new middle classes in Turkey are white collar workers and come from middle or lower middle class families. He underlines that they are employed in the service sector that has flourished in the neoliberal era. The main features of the Turkish new middle classes which are also referred to as “yuppies” are being graduates of a good university, knowing foreign languages and having a concern for developing their careers

(Şimşek, 2005; Kozanoğlu, 1993). Education has become a crucial element that constitutes the new middle classes. For instance, families from different segments of the middle class emphasized the importance of education and had desires of higher education for their children (Şimşek, 2005). Moreover, families make sacrifices in order to prepare their children to enter into a university (Kozanoğlu, 1993). Kozanoğlu (1993) calls this concern with education in the middle class families “education hysteria.”

After a successful education life, the new middle classes in Turkey are expected to find good jobs with higher salaries. According to Kozanoğlu (1993), the dependence on salaries in order to make a living differentiates the new middle classes from other wealthy (*varlıklı*) classes. The incomes of the new middle classes are generally above the average of the society (Kozanoğlu, 1993). Generally the new middle classes have developed consumption habits and have a lifestyle which is not suitable for saving (Şimşek, 2005; Kozanoğlu, 1993). Thus the money and ability to consume have become important tenets of the new middle classes.

Kozanoğlu (1993) argues that the collectivist young social type of the 1960s was replaced with another type whose mentality is about money and power in the 1980s around the world. The new middle classes came to fore in the atmosphere of the 1980s which was marked by the idea of entrepreneurship, success, competition, individualization and being adaptable (Kozanoğlu, 1993; Ahıska and Yenal, 2005). They are obsessed with power and also perceive money as an instrument to gain power (Kozanoğlu, 1993). Moreover, the new middle classes have the continuous desire to rise and they give importance to status. Regarding their consumption patterns, Kozanoğlu (1993) argues that they constantly want more and have the mentality of “*hep daha hep daha*,” meaning that they always desire to make more money, to engage in more luxury consumption practices and to raise their status. Another feature of the new middle classes is the importance they attribute to their appearance,

which they try to improve through going to fitness clubs (Kozanoğlu, 1993). They also try to develop personal relationships that may benefit them at work. And lastly, he (1993) emphasizes the concern of the new middle classes for continuous self-development.

The new middle classes in Turkey are also discussed with reference to their housing preferences. It is argued that the new middle class prefers to live in gated communities or residence towers that are mainly located in the peripheral areas of the city (Bali, 2002; Şimşek, 2005; Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008). Öncü (1997) notes that the myth of the ideal home which is defined as far from city life, its crowd and mess has constructed sterile living places for the new middle classes. According to Öncü (1997), the myth of the ideal home was not only buying a house but a certain life standard which brings elite people together where they can do sports, raise their children in safe environments, etc. Thus, it promises the modern life style that the new middle classes desire where they can be far from the city and also feel safe. She (1997) mentions that the myth of the ideal home has also become a symbolic criterion for the integration of global workplace culture which is not only about working in the corporate sector with laptops, knowing English, etc. but also sharing a certain lifestyle (p.102).

Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu (2008) have also examined the residential spatial arrangements that transform the urban space in Istanbul in the past two decades. The authors point out the rapid growth of gated residential compounds which causes the “gating of the city” as they call it, that are “enclosing new forms of wealth and new forms of relations and non-relations that take shape in between gates” (p. 6). Through focusing on the residential spaces of Göktürk and Bezirganbahçe, the authors suggest that different forms of wealth and poverty growth in the city are interdependent processes. In their analysis of Göktürk, which is mainly populated by members of the new middle classes, the authors mention that the lives of residents are spatially limited as the city has become smaller for them. They also state that the

residents have limited contact with other social groups as they have only contact with their nannies, delivery boys, etc. Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu (2008) emphasize that the residents of Göktürk pursue “inward-looking and isolated lives” as they search for security which is not possible in the city (p.40). This concern for security leads the residents of Göktürk to turn into their families and to have “child-centric” lives which indicates an expansion of the private and the collapse of the domain of urban public life (Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008, p.41).

In his study on suburban areas of Ankara, Ayata (2002) underlines the specific features of the new middle class such as their emphasis on orderliness, desire for predictability and the maintenance of their class distinctions. He says: “In the case of Ankara, and indeed Istanbul too, what they dislike is the unstable, unpredictable and impermanent nature of social relations, which they tend to associate with the ‘uncivilized’ masses” (p.28). Thus, the clean, orderly suburbs which are far from the center of the city, construct symbolic boundaries through which residents differentiate themselves from other groups in the society. Ayata (2002) also underlines that the discourse on sexual equality has become important for the secular middle class identity which emphasizes companionship in marriage and the equal share of household chores. Another feature of the new middle classes according to Ayata is the emphasis they put on individualization as they regard the civilized person an individual one who can act autonomously and can control his/her emotions, and knows how to behave in public. Lastly, he mentions autonomy, rationality, secularism, rule of law and environmental sensitivity as the new middle class values in suburbia.

VII. A Summary of the Conceptual Framework of This Thesis

In this thesis, I am going to discuss how the subjectivities of some members of the new middle classes in Istanbul, Turkey’s globalizing city, are produced in particular ways in the spheres of education, work and consumption under neoliberalism. In order to pursue this

line of inquiry, I argue that neoliberalism, as a globalizing phenomenon which has different forms, is not only about government by states or the governing of economies but also governing individuals by providing a mentality or a manner of doing things. In this new mentality, I suggest that a particular form of subject, namely the neoliberal subject, which may also be called the enterprising self or the homo-entrepreneur, is fashioned. I conceptualize the neoliberal subject as a rational, competitive, autonomous, calculating individual who is responsible for him/herself and able to meet his/her own needs and pursue his/her own ambitions and desires. I understand the formation of the neoliberal subject as a result of a specific extension of the economy into social relations.

I also emphasize that individuals are not mechanically turned into neoliberal subjects. Rather, they are constituted as particular subjects through the paradoxical process of subjectivation which emphasizes how individuals who are embedded in productive power relations act upon themselves and turn themselves into subjects. I argue that in this process we encounter active subjects who submit themselves to certain disciplinary mechanisms through technologies of self so as to attain certain virtues such as happiness, perfection and so on. I also underline that in this process of subject formation individuals actively contribute to their submission. I suggest that the constitution of the neoliberal subjects bears certain psychic costs which form cynical subjects and which mark them with anxieties and insecurities. I use the concept of cynicism in order to understand the distance between the performative acts of the subjects and their consciousness. I suggest that through cynical attitude individuals remain able to continue to act in certain manners of which they are in fact critical. I also discuss the concept of the neurotic subject in order to understand how neoliberal subjects are marked with anxieties and insecurities. But rather than arguing that neoliberal subjects are less rational, competent and thus marked with anxieties and insecurities, I claim that their anxieties and insecurities should be seen as results or costs of their rational choices and actions.

Starting in the 1980s Turkey implemented a neoliberal economic model. In this process we have encountered the emergence of a new middle class through new alignments and polarizations within the traditional middle class in Turkey. I define the new middle class as a group of salaried professionals, who acquire human capital in the form of education that provides them with social status and well paid jobs, have high disposable incomes and cultural capital, engage in various consumption practices and are located in urban contexts (Lange and Meier, 2009). Although the concept of the new middle class points to a heterogeneous group, I focus on only one segment of it, namely the highly-educated, urban, white collar professionals employed in multinational companies' offices in Istanbul. The scholarship on the new middle classes in Turkey generally focuses on the cultural surface of this class or examines them in terms of their residential preferences. Although some of these studies reveal the values of entrepreneurship and individualism or address this class' concern for security and order, I argue that these studies do not elaborate on this subjective realm. Thus, in the next chapter, through analyzing the narratives of my interviewees, I will try to shed light upon this little examined issue by using the theoretical framework and concepts that I presented above. But before this, I will discuss the research methodology that I used in this thesis.

VIII. Research Methodology

In this section, I will discuss my choice of respondents and companies, the ways through which I reached the interviewees, the meanings that informants attributed to my study and position, as well as my subjective experience of speaking with white collar employees of multinational companies.

I conducted 24 semi-structured in-depth interviews that typically lasted one and a half hour. During the interviews, I asked informants questions about their socio-economic

backgrounds, their parents' occupation, their educational background, why they chose to study in particular departments and universities, their jobs, why they chose their professions, their company cultures, how their jobs affected their life in general, their lifestyles and consumption practices. I talked with 13 women and 11 men whose ages ranged between 23 to 38 (See Table 1 for the characteristics of the interviewees. All interviewee names are pseudonyms). Six of my informants were married and only three of them had children. They were working as middle or senior managers at the Istanbul branches of multinational companies. Only one of the interviewees, who used to work in a multinational company before, was working in a family owned business at the time of the interview. My interviewees worked in various departments such as marketing, sales, human resources, and finance at multinational companies' offices in Istanbul in various sectors such as FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods), finance, pharmaceuticals, consulting, automotive, technology food and tobacco. These companies, namely Proctor and Gamble, Unilever, Henkel, Roche, Danone, Peppers& Rogers, Pfizer, Nestle, Citibank, Deutsche Bank, Merrill Lynch and Value Partners are leading companies in their sectors, and finding a white collar job in one of them in Istanbul is highly competitive. I chose my respondents working in multinationals since these companies have become attractive workplaces for members of the new middle classes in urban Turkey as they offer higher salaries and perks such as company cars, housing, health insurance, etc.³ During the interviews I saw that there is a common belief among interviewees that multinational companies are more modern, professional, institutionalized workplaces where impersonal relations prevail and employees are rated according to their performances. On the contrary, Turkish companies are seen as unprofessional, non-institutionalized, "Oriental," and as operating through a "Turkish mentality" and clientalist relations. I will

³ See Fernandes (2000) for a similar situation regarding Indian new middle classes.

discuss this distinction between multinationals and Turkish companies later on when I analyze the narratives of my interviewees.

I did not limit my study to employees of FMCG companies or a particular department such as marketing since there are differences between different departments and companies in terms of workplace culture and expectations from employees.⁴ Yet, when we look at the narratives of interviewees who are employed in different sectors at different multinational companies, we can see many similarities. This is because the discourse of work and particular subjectivities it constructs are disseminated throughout the private sector. Although this situation can be experienced more intensely in certain departments such as marketing and in particular sectors such as FMCG, it cannot be confined to these cases. Moreover, when selecting my interviewees I tried to keep the number of male and female interviewees close to each other. This allowed me to see how gender also plays an important role in the subjectivity construction of my respondents. .

My interviewees have studied in prestigious universities such as Boğaziçi or METU in Turkey. Only one of my interviewees completed her undergraduate education abroad. 13 of my informants held MBA or Executive MBA degrees from private universities such as Koç and Bilgi. MBA degrees constitute a new face of private education in the form of self-investment. As Fernandes also argues with respect to India, MBA degrees have become an important asset and strategy of skill accumulation for the new middle classes which will “add value” to their human capital and make them more marketable in the liberalized labor market (2009, p.94). Parallel to this, Read (2009) also argues that the salary and wages of workers under neoliberalism is defined as a consequence of investment in one’s human capital. Just like private lessons and private universities, MBA programs provide market-based solutions to develop human capital in the form of education with a market value.

⁴ For a study that focuses on a single sector, see Yıldız (2009).

Another feature of the interviewees was that they all came from different layers of the middle class. While most of them came from traditional middle classes and their parents were either teachers or civil servants, some of them came from upper middle class families. Moreover, most of the interviewees come from metropolitan cities such as Istanbul, Ankara or Izmir but there are also exceptions to it as some of them came from provincial cities such as Balıkesir and Çorum.

I used several methods in order to reach my interviewees. I joined LinkedIn which is a business-oriented social networking site and used frequently by white-collars in Turkey. I posted messages to LinkedIn describing the content of my study and reached some of my respondents in this way. Secondly, I used Koç University's Alumni Database and contacted a few of my respondents from there. And lastly, my friends working in multinational companies, and Koç University's Career Service helped me find interviewees. These different methods have enabled me to conduct interviews that are marked with different motivations of interviewees. For instance, the respondents whom I have reached through LinkedIn and the Koç University alumni database had more self-reflexivity meaning that they were able to reflect on themselves, their experiences and lives in general. In contrast, the interviewees whom I reached through friends came to the interview by request and were more motivated to help out a master's student. While there were some respondents who had a critical stance towards their own lives, there were those who developed success stories throughout the interviews. I will come this point later, when I discuss the meanings the interviewees attributed to my position as a researcher.

For one and a half years I have been living near Maslak, a neighborhood that Bali (2002) defines as the "Manhattan of Istanbul" with its high business towers, shopping malls. If one visits Kanyon, an upscale shopping mall in Istanbul, one can see at lunch time young, well dressed, fresh-faced people walking fast, with blackberries in their hands. One can also

come across them at the Starbucks Café, in upscale fitness clubs or at fancy restaurants in particular neighborhoods such as Nişantaşı. Therefore, one can encounter the community of white-collar, professional, young urban employees in Istanbul if one's path runs tangent to the exclusive public spaces in which they lead their lives bracketed off from the daily social life in Istanbul.

Nearly six months ago, I got a glimpse of their worlds through the interviews I conducted with them. As an academician I have never worked in the corporate sector, even though one can argue that academia has also gradually been turning corporate such that private universities are embracing business models and students are perceived as customers, notes Nalbantoğlu (2003). During the interviews, I continuously questioned this boundary between academia and the corporate sector, my position as a researcher and an academician and my respondents' position as upper and middle level managers working in multinational companies. I had also been exposed to operations of power similar to them through education. Coming from a lower middle class family I was also raised with aspirations of mobility to upper middle classes. I still remember how my father constructed education as our only salvation through which we can declare our independence as women in Turkish society. More importantly, I was not only expected to study but also to give a particular form to my education in a plane of knowledge in which the choices that one should make for upward mobility and a comfortable life are defined. For instance, one should enter either into best high schools (Anatolian high schools, private high schools or science high schools), choose the Science track in high school, where one can only choose the tracks that are defined as having job guarantees, proving good job opportunities and a comfortable life, and enter into top universities.⁵ I still remember the disappointment of my family when I decided to choose the Turkish-Math track instead of Science track in high school. What I wanted to say so far is

⁵ In Turkish high schools when students complete the tenth grade, they are expected to choose tracks leading to certain specializations. There are three tracks: Turkish-Math, Science, Social Science and Languages.

that as a researcher I share a similar background as many of my informants, especially with respect to the issue of education.

Although I cannot claim that I have a very different position and background from my interviewees, according to them, I was also not from their world. For that reason, they felt that they could discuss and question “the rules of game” of their worlds with me. At this point, I should say that their worlds are not only spatially limited and have boundaries, but also limited in terms of the relationships that they have established with others. Generally, they do not construct relations with lower socio—economic groups, as Yeliz (32), working as a brand manager in an international nutrition and foods company, stated that she only saw the guy who brings drinking water to her home and the security guard of her gated community as members of lower socio-economic groups. They generally have social contact with people from similar socio-economic backgrounds, people from Istanbul’s white collar community, in the words of Ayça (34), a senior manager in a major international bank. Therefore, they have a limited environment in terms of people they contact and I was an outsider in this respect. However, I argue that my outsider position did not present limitations but rather enabled my respondents to talk and discuss their lives more comfortably as I was outside of their field of competition and thus I was not dangerous for them. In their environment they tried their best to fulfill the norms that they accept as given, while they could question them when talking with me. Hence, most of the interviews ended with the respondent’s surprise of what they told me during the interview. With little guidance, interviewees described their educational and professional lives, consumption practices and talked about how these three realms affected their selfhoods. Generally, after I turned off the tape recorder, they said that they also asked the same questions, that I had asked them, to themselves but never voiced their answers in this way. Their self-reflexivity, critical thinking on themselves also brought about interesting questions such as how they experienced this critical gaze that they bring to their lives? How

did they manage this consciousness and awareness about their conditions and also continue to act so? Through deploying the concept of cynicism, I will discuss these questions in my thesis.

Another view of the interviewees regarding my fieldwork can be summarized as the feeling of being subject matters on which a master's thesis will be written. Such respondents were generally the friends of my friends and tried to help me, allocate one and a half hour to me in their very busy schedules. These respondents, who were less critical about themselves, viewed me as a person whom they would tell their success stories. Being confident about their positions, they naturalized virtues such as being competitive, efficient, rational, responsible individuals and attributed positive meanings to them.

Lastly, I should mention that this study does not claim to be a representative one. Rather, it is a modest attempt and an exploratory study to understand how the subjectivities of some members of the new middle classes are constructed in the spheres of education, work and consumption in Istanbul. My informants are only a part of the new middle classes in Turkey, therefore, I cannot reach general conclusions about the process of subjectivity construction of all members of the new middle classes in Turkey based on their narratives. The new middle class in Turkey is a heterogeneous category. For instance, white collar workers working in private Turkish companies can also be considered as the members of the new middle classes. Moreover, I could only interview a few senior managers; I mostly talked with middle managers working in multinational companies. I also could not talk with members of the new middle class working in sectors such as advertising, media and entertainment, and so on. Therefore, by taking these limitations into account, I should emphasize that my research is an exploratory one rather than being representative. Although this study is not representative, some of the findings can be generalized and projected to other segments of the new middle classes. Most often, different segments of the new middle classes

also have educational capital, work as urban professionals, pursue similar consumption patterns and live in gated communities. Thus, the findings I present in the next chapter can shed some light on the issue of subjectivity construction, and can hopefully inform the research design of future studies on the new middle classes in Turkey.

TABLE 1

| ID | Age | Sex | Sector | Position | Marital Status | Children | University | Department | MBA/E-MBA |
|---------|-----|-----|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Ayça | 34 | F | Banking | Senior Manager | Single | N | Boğaziçi University | International Relations | Y |
| Seda | 38 | F | Banking | Senior Manager | Married | Y | METU | Economics | Y |
| Mine | 27 | F | Pharmaceuticals | Product Manager | Single | N | Boğaziçi University | Chemistry | Y |
| Vildan | 32 | F | Food-products | Sales Development Manager | Single | N | METU | Food Engineering | Y |
| Uğur | 31 | M | Banking | Sales Trader Vice President | Single | N | METU | Civil Engineering | Y |
| Tolga | 37 | M | Pharmaceuticals | Territorial Manager | Single | N | Istanbul University | Business Administration | Y |
| Orhan | 27 | M | Consulting | Management Consultant | Single | N | Koç University | Computer Engineering | N |
| Efe | 29 | M | Paper-based consumer products | Territory Manager | Married | N | Ege University | International Relations | N |
| Mete | 31 | M | Automotive | Supplier Development | Single | N | Istanbul Technical University | Mechanical Engineering | Y |
| Melda | 30 | F | Pharmaceuticals | Marketing Product Manager | Single | N | Istanbul University | Pharmacy | N |
| Aylin | 33 | F | Pharmaceuticals | Human Resources Management | Single | N | Marmara University | Public Administration | Y |
| Ufuk | 28 | M | Technology | IT Specialist | Single | N | Koç University | Computer Engineering | Y |
| Orçun | 27 | M | Consulting | Consultant | Single | N | Koç University | Electric and Electronics Engineering | N |
| Burcu | 28 | F | FMCG | Brand Development Manager | Single | N | Sabancı University | Economics | Y |
| Oylum | 27 | F | Tobacco | Assistant Brand Manager | Single | N | Sabancı University | International Relations | N |
| Yeliz | 23 | F | Nutrition and foods | Brand Manager | Married | N | Ege University | Food Engineering | Y |
| Başar | 23 | M | FMCG | Field Executive | Single | N | Boğaziçi University | Electrics and Electronics Engineering | N |
| Batuhan | 34 | M | Music | Booking Manager | Single | N | Istanbul University | Business Administration | N |
| Ulaş | 26 | M | FMCG | Sales Department | Married | N | Koç University | Business Administration | N |
| Irmak | 37 | F | Shipping | Marketing Manager | Married | Y | Marmara University | Business Administration | N |
| Aysel | 32 | F | FMCG | Group Brand Manager | Married | Y | Georgetown University | Economics | Y |
| Sertaç | 37 | M | FMCG | Factory Finance Manager | Single | N | Istanbul Technical University | Mechanical Engineering | Y |
| Ceyda | 28 | F | FMCG | Sales Manager | Married | N | Boğaziçi University | International Relations | N |
| Ayşe | 33 | F | FMCG | Human Resources Management | Married | N | Istanbul Technical University | Industrial Engineering | N |

CHAPTER II: CREATING THE SUBJECTS OF NEOLIBERALISM: SUBJECTIVITY CONSTRUCTION IN THE SPHERES OF EDUCATION, WORK AND CONSUMPTION

I. Introduction

In this chapter, through analyzing the narratives of my informants, I will discuss how the subjectivities of the members of the new middle classes in Istanbul, Turkey's globalizing city (Rutz and Balkan, 2009) are produced as rational, responsible, competitive, calculating individuals who need to improve themselves continuously in the spheres of education, workplaces of global production and consumption. I argue that these processes are part of neoliberal governmentality, which includes not only government by states and of economy but also refers to the government of the individual, a particular manner of living.

With this aim, firstly, I will focus on education in Turkey as a site where individuals are turned into competitive, rational and responsible subjects. In order to acquire human capital in the form of education which is expected to improve their class positions, the interviewees submit themselves to particular disciplinary practices in order to become "winners" in the education system. Through acting upon themselves and shaping their behaviors in certain manners individuals turn themselves into successful students. However, I will argue that this process also brings their submission. In this education race, they act in accordance with particular discourses or plans which define primarily what being a successful person means and what constructs a better, comfortable and a happy life.

Secondly, I will address workplaces of multinational companies as crucial sites of the constitution of the neoliberal subjects. Drawing on various works and through analyzing the responses of my interviewees, I will argue that the subjectivities of employees are constructed as responsible, competitive and organized employees who need to improve themselves

continuously whereby direct control over employees is reduced and replaced with a new form of control that is disseminated throughout the daily of employees, and the management relies on workers' "self-government." I will suggest that the formation of the subjectivities of employees in particular manners through self-governing becomes productive for both multinational companies as well as global capital. Moreover, I will argue that this subject-formation also bears its psychic costs such as the prevalence of cynical attitude in the case of some interviewees who develop an awareness and a critical gaze towards their lives, as they cannot renounce the practices they continuously criticize. Also we can see how overwhelming anxieties, insecurities and stress effect interviewees, from the narratives of some respondents.

I will also address various issues that came to the fore throughout the interviews that I conducted. First, I will underline how informants constructed binary oppositions between the global workplaces of multinational companies and of private Turkish local companies such as West/East, professional/non-professional, impersonal / personal, and so on. Secondly, I will suggest that the virtues of leadership and being eligible for teamwork, emphasized as important elements of the corporate culture, constitute myths which subjects are expected to acquire through working upon themselves. I will also examine discourses about the body as a site which individuals act upon and try to shape in particular ways to affect their success at work. I will also say that gender becomes a distinctive element in the narratives of the interviewees with respect to the relation that women form with their bodies, the traditional division of labor in their so-called modern marriages, and their role as working mothers.

And lastly in this chapter, I will analyze how consumption has become another site where individuals are shaped as autonomous and self-regulating persons who seek self-actualization and personal happiness through choice in the consumer society.

II. Formation of Neoliberal Subjects through Education

Before analyzing how the subjectivities of my interviewees are formed at work, I want to emphasize the role of education as contributing to the formation of neoliberal subjectivities and subjects. I will argue that in the competitive education system in Turkey where education is valorized in the construction of a comfortable future both by middle class families and education institutions, members of the new middle class are turned into rational, competitive and responsible individuals. In this discourse of education it is emphasized that through their personal efforts the competitive, atomized and responsible individuals can become successful students and can attain upward class mobility through turning their educational capital into economic capital.

As Balkan and Rutz (2009) argue, education is presented as a primary asset in the construction of a comfortable life and improving the class condition of the middle classes in Turkey. Education is seen as an investment in the human capital of subjects which consequently enables them to find jobs with better salaries and thus to acquire the new middle class life style. In their study which explains how markets, the neoliberal state and families contribute to the creation of privileged new middle classes through forming educational hierarchies, Balkan and Rutz (2009) state that there exists a “plan” for education in Turkey. The children of middle class families are expected to follow this plan which begins at birth and leads to getting into a highly ranked university, and then finding a good job and having a happy marriage (2009, p.16). In this plan, cultural capital in the form of education becomes crucial for producing and reproducing class. In a similar vein, Ahiska and Yenal (2005) also underline the importance of education in the creation of a new middle class in Turkey.

Balkan and Rutz (2009) state that education in many countries is seen as creating human capital which has a price in the market and helps states to compete economically (p.6). Therefore, states also give the education system a particular form and create educational hierarchies through reforms that have “institutionalized and legitimated the values and

practices of a new middle class" so as to achieve this task (Balkan and Rutz, 2009, p.39). States determine the rules of particular exams such as the high school entrance exam and university entrance exam, and the setting for competition in education. As a result of all these adjustments a very competitive educational field is shaped. In this process, families become proximate agents who underline the importance of education and encourage their children for education (Balkan and Rutz, 2009, p.14). While for the new middle class families education becomes a means for reproducing the class condition of their children it can be argued that for lower middle class families education is perceived as an asset through which upward mobility can be achieved.

During my fieldwork, I saw that education had a decisive role in the lives of my interviewees.⁶ Most of my informants stated how in primary and secondary education, they were expected to compete continuously in order to enter a better high school and eventually a high ranked university. Thus, throughout these long years spent in education institutions they were expected to form themselves as competitive, responsible and rational actors in order to become successful in this competition and acquire human capital in the form of education. Many of my interviewees mentioned particular disciplinary practices they applied such as studying hard, going to private courses, and making sacrifices from their social lives in order to become successful in the education race. Most of them refer to education as the primary site where they have turned themselves into competitive, rational and responsible actors. However, they were not passive agents who were determined by the education system mechanistically. Rather, they turned themselves into successful students through applying certain disciplinary practices and governed themselves as such. In this education race, my informants acted in accordance with a particular discourse, or plan as it is described above, which primarily defines what being a successful person means and what constructs a better,

⁶ For a similar finding see Yıldız (2009).

comfortable and happy life. Thus, they acted on themselves in this particular plane of knowledge. In this plan while entering a good high school is defined as a first step to have a comfortable life, one should enter into desirable departments at prestigious universities such as Boğaziçi University or Middle East Technical University (METU) and eventually find a good job. Most interviewees perceive a good job to be located in multinational companies, which they construct as modern workplaces with respect to their salaries and various benefits.

Ayça (34), a senior manager in a major international bank, referred to this plan and the particular plane of knowledge within which they govern themselves, as a “code.” She argued that there exists a “code” for the children of middle class families to do everything perfect:

It is like you are coded to do everything perfect. It is maybe because of how you are brought up especially in the cases of children of civil servants or middle class families. You need to save yourself. You take certain tests and when you become successful they encourage you. And then, as if there is no other option in life, you should find a white collar job.

Aylin (33), a human resources manager in an international pharmaceutical company, also believed that she was coded:

There is a well-defined path for you in our society. You are expected to go to the best schools. In primary school we start to study in order to enter Anatolian high schools. We enter into Anatolian high schools and then we study to enter into a good university. Our next mission was to find a good job and the next one is finding a husband and to marry and raise your kids. Also in your career you always think what’s next, a position is never enough for you, and you need to move to a higher one...Why? Because we are coded in that way.

From what Aylin and Ayça said, we can see the effect of the plan for education and also for life for the children of the middle class families. Both Ayça and Aylin emphasized how they are expected to give their lives a specific form through becoming successful students in the education system.

By taking into consideration how “virtues” such as being competitive and responsible are emphasized during education, we can argue that education nearly becomes a site for a person’s preparation for corporate life. Kozanoğlu (1993) argues that the generation of the 1980s had already embraced their role in the corporate life during their student lives. For instance, Sertaç (37), a factory manager in leading FMCG, stated that competition at work is not a new thing as they have been always competing in the education system and already got used to run towards an aim. Başar (23), a sales field executive in a leading FMCG, said that he has not see a more competitive place than the department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering at Boğaziçi University. And lastly, Ulaş (26), also working in the sales department in well-known FMCG, argued that entering into desirable departments of prestigious universities was not enough; one should also shape his university life in a particular manner that will eventually allow him to find a job in multinationals. He stated that one should enter university clubs as well as do internships, thus live his university life in a particular way so as to find employment in multinationals.

Following the narratives of the interviewees, we can argue that education has become an important site where subjectivities of the new middle classes are formed as competitive, rational and autonomous individuals in accordance with corporate life. At the nexus of the state and the market, the education system is given a particular form which is mainly marked by competition so as to create human capital that will enable states to compete economically (Thrift, 2005). A particular plan for education and life is defined for students and is constructed as the way to reach certain virtues such as a comfortable, happy life. Moreover, families from different segments of middle classes also promote this plan for education with their aspirations for their children to either reproduce their new middle class position or with desires of mobility from lower to upper middle class positions. Within this process, we encounter active individuals who became successful in this very competitive education

system through performing norms of being a successful student. This situation became possible through interpellation of the interviewees as successful students both within their families and in education institutions and through the process of subjectivation in Foucauldian terms, whereby individuals actively and freely form and discipline themselves in particular manners, and turn themselves into subjects who perform the norms of this plan for education or the “code” as my informants called it.

III. Subjectivity Construction at Work

In this section, I will discuss how the subjectivities of the members of new middle classes are shaped as responsible, competitive ambitious, calculating, planned-organized, and self-interested individuals who continuously need to improve themselves. With this aim, firstly I will touch upon some studies in the sociology of organizations which examine how subjectivities of employees are shaped in the new management discourse and then I will analyze the narratives of my informants with respect to work.

The sociology of organizations discusses that decentralization, flexible production and new technologies, new management strategies and a new language of management have become dominant in the government of organizations since the 1980s (Flecker and Hofbauer, 1998). Thanks to this shift in the discourse of management, the subjectivities of employees are constructed as responsible, self-reliant, bold, willing to take risks, competitive, calculating, self-interested, ambitious, individualized and autonomous (Du Gay, 1996). In this new management discourse, the way work is managed and waged and the social psychology it entails have undergone a change (Holmes, 2002). Meanwhile, the advocates of the new discourse of work, such as the Human Relations School, Quality of Working Life Movement etc., attempt to reform employment relations so as to make work more meaningful for those performing it (Du Gay, 1996). Through this new managerial thought, work is discursively

reproduced as an arena of self-fulfillment or self-actualization of the worker, where creativity, responsibility and taking risks are valorized and the worker becomes the manager of his or her own activity as long as it serves the company to profit (ibid.). According to advocates of this new managerial thought such as Rosebeth Moss Kanter, companies have to adopt this new form of organization, in her terms, “post-entrepreneurial flexibility,” and depart from bureaucratic organizations in order to survive in the “dislocated, decentered, increasingly competitive and chaotic” neoliberal global economy (Kanter 1990, cited in Du Gay, 1996, p.62). In this shift to “flexibility,” entrepreneurial styles of management from bureaucratic organizations, traditional virtues of work such as reliability, performance of one’s duties or obedience are rarely emphasized whereas “responsible decision makers,” “entrepreneurs,” “self-managers” and “self-developers” are underlined as the main traits of the “model worker” (Flecker and Hofbauer, 1998, p.104). Additionally, direct control of employees have decreased and management now relies upon the new model worker’s self-control and self-government according to values such as self-reliance, responsibility, boldness, etc. which constitute the “neoliberal project of enterprise culture,” as Du Gay notes (1996, p. 56-58). As Du Gay says, in this enterprise culture, companies seek and promote the “enterprising subject or self” who is an autonomous, self-regulating and productive self who “calculates about itself, and that works upon itself in order to better itself” (1996, p.60).

Thus, the government of organizations has become to rely heavily on the ethical self-government of individuals in which, as Foucault argues, the kind of relationship individuals ought to have with themselves is provided and individuals have turned themselves into moral subjects of their own actions (1984, p.352). Such ethical self-government or discipline can be observed through techniques of employees such as “self-examination by means of drawing up strengths-and-weaknesses charts, goal setting and monitoring of goal realization, ongoing self-monitoring by means of recording deficiencies and improvements, or the imagination of

pleasurable experiences and ‘positive self-talk’ aimed at self-motivation and reinforcement” (Flecker and Hofbauer,1998, p.113).

Weidner (2009) argues that the nature of work today is not looking for skill or knowledge but certain personal features and dispositions, the most important one among them being governing one’s life as an enterprise. Employees are advised to “make a project of themselves,” meaning that they are expected to work upon themselves and develop a life which will “maximize the worth of their existence to themselves,” notes Du Gay (1991, p.55). Although direct control of employees decreases and companies rely more on self-government of individuals they take measures in order to ensure the unification of the goals and objectives of the company with the personal aims of employees and the utilization of “autonomy” and “creativity” of employees according to the organization’s point of view (Du Gay, 1996, p.61-2). A strong company culture accompanied by vision statements, continued trainings of employees, shared principles and values, the images of companies, active socialization programs as well as managing cultural characteristic of work environment can all be seen as such measures which operate as technologies of power (Deetz, 1998, p.156). According to Deetz (1998), in working environments where such technologies of government are employed and direct control is diminished, employees develop a false sense of liberation and autonomy wherein employees’ consent appears and “members actively subordinate themselves to acquire money, security, meaning or identity” (p.159). As Burawoy (1985), who added a subjective dimension to the Marxist labor process theories, argues, in such contexts of advanced labor control systems employees participate and strategize their own subordination (p.10). Employees use themselves for their own strategized employment and careers, through self-surveillance and control of their bodies, feelings, dress and behaviors (Deetz, 1998). The competition among peers, the fear of loss of position, pursuing an expensive life-style all contribute to employees’ strategized subordination. Such self-management or self-control of

employees which entails a management of their inner world along the normative lines drawn by self and professional knowledge, benefit managerial interests more than the employees (Deetz, 1998, p.164).

However, this self-management of employees is not confined to the workplace as we are encountered with the emergence of a new form of power in contemporary societies. Deleuze (1990) argues that Foucault's concept of disciplinary form of power, which according to Megan Brown (2003) Foucault defined as "characterized by mechanisms for eternal training and assessment, such as continuing education, frequent training seminars for office workers and competitive, flexible wage hierarchies based on performance" (p.715), is replaced with control. The contemporary societies are control societies according to Deleuze (1990) where disciplinary power is no longer confined to social institutions such as the factory, schools, hospitals, etc. Rather, such institutions broke down in the twentieth century and their disciplinary power extended to people's daily lives. According to M. Brown (2003) while in disciplinary societies the position of people are sought to be fixed in the hierarchy, in control societies mobility, communication and adaptability are emphasized. In control societies workers are controlled through high tech communication devices such as blackberries and email rather than the direct surveillance of managers. Thus, although direct control is decreased, a new form of control which is more intense as it disseminates throughout the whole daily life comes about. Workers may operate in a less structured system but their work time increases continuously. As Deleuze states "in control societies you never finish anything" (1990, p.179). Moreover, in control societies individuals constantly need to better themselves in order to survive in the arduous rivalry promoted by business which is presented as "healthy competition" (ibid.). In order to survive in control societies individuals need to improve themselves constantly and to adapt to changing environments. Drawing on Deleuze's concept of control society, M. Brown (2003) analyses self-help bestseller in

America and argues that there exists a Darwinian discourse of the “survival of the fittest” in the late twentieth century business world. According to her, such books emphasize the importance of continuous self-improvement of individuals and valorize adoptability and flexibility. Workers are expected to adapt to changes quickly while being flexible in terms of skills and work schedules. All these books put the responsible and autonomous individuals at the center of analysis and ignore the structural conditions and limitations in which individuals are embedded.

Richard Sennett (1998), on the other hand, examines how the features of the new economy such as short-term contracts, jobs which are divided into projects, are insecure and employees cannot form long-term relationship with their jobs and their companies, and flexibility affects the character of workers. For instance, through the story of Enrico and Rico – a Mexican American father and son – Sennett traces the effects of the changing form of economy on the characters of individuals. Enrico, who has been working as a blue-collar worker lives in a linear time according to Sennett, where his life is predictable and Enrico feels as the author of his life which gives him self-respect. On the other hand, Sennett argues that his son Rico, working under the new conditions of economy marked with short-term work arrangements, no-long term principle and flexibility lacks such kind of self-respect. Rico is caught up by the uncertainties of the new economy and fears of losing control. His fear is not only about losing his job but rather about the way his actions shape his inner life and character under this new economy. Sennett (1998) notes that this new economy corrodes trust, loyalty, and mutual commitment which are the qualities of character that bind human beings together and provide them a sustainable self (p.25-7). Therefore, people such as Rico experience unease, anxiety and lack of sustainable relations under the conditions of the new economy (1998, p.20).

A. Companies of One: The Responsible Worker

Against the background of these accounts of changing discourses of work, and its effects on the subjectivity construction of workers, I will now analyze the narratives of my respondents about work. Here, I would like to remind that I use subjectivity to define the interior realm of perceptions, affect, thought, desire and fear of individuals, where they construct meanings in their lives and constitute their identities (Ortner, 2005). I argue that subjectivity is not a pre-given entity but is shaped through structural mechanisms. Based on this definition, I claim that in neoliberal work environments subjectivities of employees are constructed as responsible, competitive, ambitious, calculating, planned, organized, self-interested and continuously in need of self improvement. The model worker in such workplaces is defined as an enterprising self, who can make a project of his/her life and give it a specific entrepreneurial form. The self-management or self-governing of employees becomes important in these flexible workplaces where direct control mechanisms are replaced with a new form of control. I suggest that this new form of control is not confined to the workplaces but disseminated throughout the daily lives of employees and enforced through high-tech communication devices.

In this section, I will argue that members of the new middle classes are constructed as responsible employees⁷ in the Istanbul branches of multinational companies. As a result, employees are held solely responsible for their actions and failures without taking into account possible constraints and limitations on their actions (Lemke, 2001; W. Brown, 2003). They become “companies of one” (Read, 2009), and all their problems are turned into a problem of self-care (Lemke, 2001). I will also underline that neoliberal work environments

⁷ Here by claiming that individuals are turned into responsible employees, I refer to the creation of autonomous, moral subjects who are motivated to become hard-workers through their self-governance and who accept the consequences of all their actions in a self-reflexive manner.

have become significant places where we can observe the process of individualization which is a fate rather than a choice, according to Bauman (2003).

Nearly all of my informants mentioned that they are continuously expected to be open to new responsibilities in their jobs. They are expected to integrate new tasks to their work continuously and not to complain about this situation or ask for any extra resources to accomplish these tasks. Besides this, goals that are assigned to them are always above the limits of what they normally should do. Most of my interviewees stated that they actually did the work of two employees because their companies do not want to hire more people. They complained that this situation is unique to the Istanbul branches of multinational companies; in other branches in Europe or the US the same work would be done by more employees, according to my informants. And, all this extra workload comes to be justified through the definition of employees as responsible workers, one of the main tenets of the neoliberal subject which is promoted through the new management discourse. Ayça defines this situation as:

In these companies your responsibility continuously increases. Companies always want to increase your responsibilities and want you to be open to take new responsibilities... It is a very challenging environment. They assigned you ten tasks and when the eleventh task came you should do it with the former ten tasks without asking for any extra resources.

Ayça explained that this situation made her feel exploited and created a state of mind in which she could not stop and relax easily:

I can wake up while I thinking of a correction in accounting. I can see it in my dream. Something comes to my mind, and I can go to the office and check something on Sunday. Because your responsibilities are increased you may not sleep or go to a place and enjoy. You feel stress and rashness. You cannot stop. You cannot sit comfortably, take it easy... It makes you depressed.

The construction of responsible workers has become possible through the self-governing of subjects as Ayça herself goes to the office on Sundays. Nobody forced her to work longer hours, since direct control mechanisms are significantly decreased in workplaces. But, this does not mean that control mechanisms totally disappeared in the neoliberal work environments. Rather, new forms of control which are enforced through high-tech communication devices such as blackberries and e-mail are employed, as Orçun (27), a management consultant in a consultancy company, said:

I separate my work life as before and after Blackberry. Blackberry is a collar. It makes you available for work all the time: when you are with your girlfriend, with family and friends. Therefore, I take as a turning point.

This new form of control is not confined to workplaces but disseminated throughout the daily lives of employees. Embedded in such control mechanisms, employees work upon themselves so as to accomplish certain tasks that are assigned to them. Individuals recognize themselves as responsible subjects and govern their conduct accordingly. Through this way, employees themselves work for longer hours and contribute to their own subordination. For instance, Sertaç also stated that:

In fact, they established such a good system so that the company does not put pressure on anyone, people put pressure on themselves. When I think why I am working so much, there are times when I say am I crazy, but in fact I am doing it to myself. No one forced me to do this. The company does not pressure anyone, does not tell anyone to work like crazy, work for 24 hours. On the contrary, the company emphasizes work-life balance and to work as much as it makes you happy. It is very politically correct when the company says if you work more than this, it is your decision and we will respect it.

But what happens if an employee questions this extra workload? Sertaç describes this situation as:

They position it so good, if you say I work too much and have no time, someone will come and say to you that “hmm...you cannot plan your priorities enough” than you will have an opportunity area for this matter. For instance, this opportunity area can be about time management. They expect you work on this skill in order to develop it. It will stay on you, they give all the work to you and you work like crazy, and when they give you the fifteenth task you say “enough I do not have time”... they say but how can that happen, it means that you cannot plan your priorities. Or if you cannot manage something it is your fault. There is always an opportunity area. Before there were three strengths two opportunity areas in the performance evaluations, and you can see how politically correct they are as you have opportunity are as not a weakness. Now, fortunately they reduce it to one. Whatever you do, you definitely have one opportunity area. It means that you have no escape.

Sertaç’s words demonstrate how employees are seen as responsible individuals, “companies of one” in Read’s (2009) terms, whose failure should be their own responsibility. They are the ones who mismanaged their lives and should be fully responsible for their failures. This condition is not limited to workplaces. Bauman (2003) says in contemporary societies there exists an increasing individualism which has become a fate rather than a choice. Bauman (2003) notes that this individualization puts great responsibility on the individuals: “if they fall ill, it is because they were not resolute and industrious enough in following the health regime. If they stay unemployed, it is because they failed to learn the skills of winning an interview or because they did not try hard enough to find a job...” (p. 47). Thus, according to Bauman (2003), individuals are left alone with whole responsibilities of their choices, successes, happiness and failures.

We can argue that the workplace is a significant place where we can observe this process of increasing individualization. As we can see from what Sertaç said, in neoliberal work environments, if employees complain about their workload, it means that they cannot plan their priorities enough. The workload and the structural conditions of work itself are

never questioned and subjected to change as it is the responsible employee who should be criticized and should adjust himself/herself to changing conditions through self-improvement. If one complains about extra workload and lack of time, one is responsible for it; he/she is the one who needs to change through taking trainings about time and priority management. Through applying performance tests companies measure strengths and weaknesses of employees and ask them to work upon their weaknesses, or to put it in a more politically correct way, “opportunity areas.” With such techniques responsible employers are expected to work upon themselves in order to better themselves and adjust themselves to changing conditions.

Ceyda (28), a sales manager in a leading FMCG, also emphasized similar issues in her interview. She stated that although the company seemed to promote work-life balance, at the end of the day with high expectations and too many responsibilities, it became impossible for employees to reach this balance. But similar to what Sertaç stated, Ceyda also underlined that the company put the blame on employees, this imbalance is seen as the employees’ inability to set his/her priorities. At a certain point, the employee also believes that this is her/his fault. For instance, Ceyda told me how in the case of failure she questioned herself:

Interestingly, you question yourself, you ask yourself where I made a mistake...Generally, when I feel unsuccessful, I say I did something wrong, she/he should do something better in order to become successful... There is again introversion, searching in yourself, questioning... But maybe there are external factors lying under this failure, maybe it was your manager, or maybe it was because you did not understand the job... You cannot question. We have already accepted it.

From what Ceyda said, we can see how the discourse of self-reliant, responsible workers has penetrated deeply to the employees. Ceyda constructs herself as a moral subject of her own actions, and therefore, she cannot avoid questioning herself even though she is aware of the fact that not every failure is her guilt. This ethical self formation brings continuous

questioning of the self. Although the subjects are aware of the structural limitations which might have caused their failure, they are not allowed to question them at work.

Additionally, Sertaç mentioned that even in the processes of dismissal companies relied on the self-government of employees. When I talked to Sertaç, he was the factory manager of a leading multinational company and he had been taken in a talent pool for promotion to higher positions. Recently, the company told him that he would not be promoted. The company did not dismiss him but he resigned:

They say ...you will not make it. Take your time, you will not be promoted here, you can stay if you want and continue to work, if you want to leave it is your decision. The company never says something that is politically incorrect. But they know that people who came here are ambitious and would leave in such a situation, and it works for them. Without giving a [severance] package, without [any] cost...

Thus, because employees are competitive and ambitious and they do not want to work in the company where they cannot be promoted, the company can perform the process of dismissal easily. Therefore, it can hire a cheaper work force from fresh graduates and promote other employees to vacant positions. Thanks to the competitive, ambitious workers, the labor cycle is ensured in multinational companies.

Working in multinational companies that recruit graduates from the leading universities in Turkey, my informants were expected to be highly competitive in order to be promoted in these companies. Departing from this point, in the following section, I will elaborate on how my interviewees were turned into competitive workers.

B. The Fittest Survive: Ambitious, Competitive Worker

Nearly all respondents stated that their workplaces are very challenging environments where everybody is competitive and ambitious. Throughout the responses, we can see how individuals are defined as competitive actors in the neoliberal era where “a particular ‘anthropology of man’ as an economic subject” was redefined as a competitive creature, as Foucault notes (Foucault, 2008 cited in Read, 2009). Moreover, from time to time, in some narratives it became nearly impossible to distinguish the workplace from a sort of jungle where only the fittest, strongest survive. Thus, not only in business self-help bestsellers there exists a Darwinian discourse of “survival of the fittest” as Megan Brown (2003) argues, but we can also see it in the narratives of employees. In order to maintain one’s position or to be promoted sometimes too much effort is needed, as Sertaç described the situation of a woman manager in his company:

How they do it, I think it is superhuman, and not very healthy... They leave work earlier to spend time with their children ...they spend time with their children and then they put their children to bed and turn on their computers at 11 o’clock at night. In the middle of night at 11, 12, 1 a.m. they turn on their computers and write messages to us. It is a very bad thing because as managers they should also be role models. When she does such things people under her think that ‘ohh my God, I should also work hard, and be online at 1 am’. Thus, if I turn on my computer at 1 a.m. I will see most of my friends online. It is a very abnormal thing.

From Sertaç’s words, we can grasp the intensity of the competition in multinational companies and observe how work came to be disseminated throughout the whole lives of employees. Burcu (28), a territorial brand manager in a leading FMCG, described a similar competitive working environment:

There is a huge competition in the company and therefore you need to develop yourself continuously. Since only the best can be promoted in such companies, you need to invest in yourself. In order to be a manager you should be able to

manage stress, you should be able to stand long working hours, should get sick less... The ones who can stand stress, do his/her job the best, become survivors...

From what Burcu told me, we can see how the working environment and work is narrated in a Darwinian discourse through emphasizing the issues of survival, adoptability, flexibility and continuous self-improvement. Workers should be flexible in terms of long working hours and adjust themselves to changing conditions through continuous self-development and investment. Additionally, in order to become managers/survivors, workers should act upon their feelings in order to manage stress and upon their bodies in order to get sick less. Thus, illness is also constructed as a private issue of the employee for which he/she should take responsibility.

While most of the interviewees complained about the intensity of competition in multinationals, some of them such as Mine (27), a product manager in of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, understood it as a natural and positive thing:

I love competition. When there is competition you become open to improve yourself. You have the chance to always renew yourself and stay dynamic and improve yourself... You need to be determined... It is very difficult for a calm person to be successful in our sector. Personal relationships come to the fore... it is not a sector where quiet, calm people can hold on...

Although Mine replaced the word “ambition” with a more resonant one “determination” she was actually pointing to the same situation to which other respondents referred as being ambitious. Another, interesting choice of wording was her usage of the word “calm” and “passive” together. According to her the workplace of multinationals is not suitable places for calm and passive individuals. She used these words interchangeably while they actually refer to different things. While her usage can be seen as a simple matter of linguistics, it actually refers to an important point. For instance, many interviewees describe themselves as “crazy”

as opposed to calm, and they also noted that their working environment is composed of crazy people. As Aylin notes:

After a while you look around and see that there is no one around you because no one is working as crazily as you. The ones who are working like crazy are already here. After a while your environment comes to consist of crazy people.

Sertaç also used the word “maniac” in order to explain why he worked so hard.

Additionally, Ayça complained that there was nobody around her who could tell her that this state of mind was actually “madness”:

Maybe if someone said to you that “are you crazy, what you are doing, stop” you will stop and think but everyone is like you everyone has their weekend appointments, everyone is confirming 50 times... You become strange. Working in the private sector for a long time creates a defect in people.

It is interesting how my informants defined themselves as mad, crazy, maniac or people who have defects. At that point, we can ask how they can manage this situation. How can the interviewees be so critical towards their condition but cannot renounce it? I argue that this condition forms cynical subjects. According to Sloterdijk (1988), cynical subjects carry an unhappy consciousness which enables them to recognize the falseness of their condition. However, this does not prevent them from keep on doing things, they are aware of what they are doing but they continue to do it. Therefore, in the narratives above where the informants develop a critical gaze towards their conditions, the cynical attitude prevails. For instance, in the case of Aylin we can also see the cynical attitude. In her interview, Aylin stated that her view towards her life and work has changed profoundly after she worked in the branch of a multinational pharmaceutical company in Africa. After her experience in Africa, she had difficulty in readjusting to her white-collar life in Istanbul. She stated that she started to look differently at her life. Although she desired to work in non-governmental organizations she could not risk her job in the multinational pharmaceutical company and denounce her life

standard. In fact, this state of mind was in sharp contrast with her job. She worked in the Human Resources Department and helped employees to develop their careers, a notion which she does not believe in anymore. Therefore, Aylin leads her life with this awareness and critical gaze which turned her into a cynical subject. During our interview Aylin continuously criticized the practices which she cannot renounce and moreover which she helped others to pursue.

C. Task of Living: Planned and Organized Worker

“Our whole lives are robot stories”

Ayça

Planning and being organized were essential in the lives of my interviewees. Suffering from lack of time, these busy professionals not only planned their work but also their leisure and entertainment. As Yurchak (2003) states his analysis of the Russian business world, these urban professionals engage in the “continuous business of living” through organizing various aspects of their lives (p.75). Obsessed with spending their time efficiently, most of the interviewees stated that they nearly have no unplanned piece of time. Ufuk (28), an IT specialist in a leading technology corporation, stated: “Even my entertainment is scheduled, I even have to plan my entertainment.” Similarly Sertaç noted that he had various calendars and he was continuously planning and organizing:

My next 7-8 weeks are completely programmed. I plan my social life through g-mail calendar and my work life elsewhere...I am constantly between different calendars. There is a constant state of being organized.

And lastly, Mine pointed out how organized she was, and how this was an important cause of her success:

Planning is very important. Everyone can make plans...but what is critical is following it and coming to a conclusion...I am thinking in three stages, making plans, following plans and when you reach results questioning what I gained and what it took from me...you need to make an assessment. Efficiency is very very important...I also make plans in my private life. I have two calendars. One of them is where I write work meetings, follow- ups. I also have a personal calendar; it is about my personal life... I write my personal needs in there, it might be about shopping ...I think that it is impossible to be successful in working life without keeping calendars. It is also valid for private life. It is really difficult to say on the spirit of a moment that, "ohh I just want to meet with my friend" without planning that ...

Planning and organizing are generally seen as inevitable consequences of this busy professional life. Everything should be planned and, as Mine emphasized, planning was not enough, one should also plan effectively and should reach desired results. This condition creates subjects who turn their lives into a planned and organized project which should be under their control. It was highly important for my interviewees that their lives are under their own control. There exists a "control addiction," according to Ayça: people always want the ropes to be in their own hands. "You become weird... You do not leave a thing to chance, there is so much control, there exists an addiction of control." Thus, as Ayata (2002) argues obsession with order constitutes an important feature of the middle-class mentality (p.28). Ayça also defined this situation of being planned and organized, keeping everything under control as "turning into robots." For instance, she told me of an incident in which she and her friend bought a book case from IKEA and shared tasks to install it. "It was just like work" she observed when they successfully accomplished their task and put up the bookcase, they split: "We are like robots just like in the office; our whole life is robot stories." Thus, in their lives everything can easily turn into tasks just like at work.

This obsession with control creates tremendous effects on subjects. Ayça said that she went to therapy in order to get rid of this state of mind, of which control addiction is also a part. Although she said that she felt better; she thought that she would never be able to get over some of the deficiencies of this control obsession such as being able to go to a cinema without making reservation. Yeliz (32), working as a brand manager in a multinational nutrition and foods company, also had experienced similar effects. She wanted everything to be under her control and this situation caused her trouble. In the end, she became very tired as she was not able to stop planning which came to control her life:

I have realized that it gives me too much harm. When you start running your brain, it does not stop, clicking, clicking... you become constantly thinking of something. It is a very tiring thing.

Irmak (37) a marketing manager in an international shipping agency, also suffered from controlling and planning everything. As she stated;

I used to wake my husband up at 6 a.m. and tell him please tell me what you are going to do today, I will do my program according to it. But now I can let it go...Formerly, I had such a problem, for instance if I make a program and it is mistaken, it becomes the most important thing for me in the world. We would go somewhere at 11 and there was traffic so we went there at 11.30. I was surprised that we digressed from the plan. Still in my head I can do this, I will come home and while putting my bag I will press the key of something and while it was working I will put my clothes off, meanwhile I will put potatoes in the water while they are boiling I will open the machine etc...When I was late while returning home, I hold the key in my hands even for one hour in order to open the door immediately and not lose time.

Irmak had panic attacks in a period when she tried to decide whether to send her children to a private school or not. Before this she had intensely felt the responsibility to control and plan everything such as her child, work and house and was overwhelmed with this burden. She stated that at that time she felt that everything was on her shoulders; she was the

only one who handled everything and finally felt inadequate. After seeing to a psychiatrist, nothing much changed in her status; she only accepted things as they were, she said.

This unease, obsession with control produces anxieties and stress for the informants. Moreover, in order to manage their anxieties and stress they practice such things as meditation, yoga, dealing with arts or “returning to nature.” Throughout the interviews a considerable number of respondents said that they were practicing such acts in order to relax and appease their anxieties. As Yeliz stated:

Recently I think a lot about doing something with nature, returning to nature... I want to make picnics; especially I want to have picnics with primitive feelings. I want to touch soil with naked feet...I become happy when I hear the sound of birds... Since people cannot be themselves at work and always act according to their self-interests, nature becomes an escape point for us.

Although such practices create a slight relaxation for subjects they argue that it can also cause stress for them. As they do such practices in their very busy schedules, they also need to plan them. This planning and trying to devote time to such appeasing practices can themselves become a cause of stress for the interviewees. Therefore, their attempts of relaxation through yoga or meditation may also fail. As Burcu states:

Even planning the time for doing sports creates stress for me. Now, I try to go to yoga and in fact attempt to devote a time to it is also a stress. This planning to go to yoga creates stress for me and then I go to yoga and relax...It is all stress.

Yeliz, also pointed out a similar dead-end in her attempt to go to nature and relax. She argued that although she wanted to go to nature and relax she could not do it. During a vocation with her husband, she got bored in the natural environment within one and a half days and returned to Istanbul. She argued that as she got so used to run she do not know how to stop, it felt weird for her. Therefore, although neurotic subjects search for tranquility and pursue certain practices for that purpose, this maybe a failed and paradoxical attempt. As in the case of

Yeliz, they may not escape from the effects of a particular subjectivity easily. Thus, their search for tranquility and appeasement becomes a continuous one which fails to reach its aim.

Also, in some narratives of especially male interviewees, there exists a desire to live under “uncivilized” conditions such as the state of nature. For instance, Orçun mentioned that he was doing sailing in order to escape from modern life:

People who become slaves of modern institutions are not aware of this kind of life. You fish and cook it, struggle with vicious conditions of the sea, distant from the noise of the city...living with your instincts...

Thus, with the practice of sailing Orçun tries to create a realm where he could be free from the operations of power of the modern life. And the practice of sailing provided an escape for white collars from their daily routines. Sertaç also shared this desire of returning to nature and escaping. However he postponed his desire and dreams he said when he had enough savings he would settle in a place that is far from city life and located in the nature, such as Datça or Kaş. But accumulating enough savings and being able to maintain the same life standard they have at work is not easy for my informants. As members of consumer society, they are located in a continuous cycle of consumption which does not act upon the needs of consumers but upon their desires. Such consumption patterns that act upon the desires of subjects may become addictive at some point. Thus, the sphere of consumption becomes another realm for the construction of subjectivities. I will elaborate on this issue later on. For now, what I want to emphasize is that desires of escape and also keeping a certain life standard are at odds with each other. Thus, desires of escape became fantasies for my informants most of the time.

Lastly, I want to emphasize how desires of escape that are marked with the anxieties of keeping the same life standard can also turn into stories of entrepreneurship. For instance, Yeliz stated that she wanted to actualize her desire of returning to nature as such:

This has been done before. I want to buy land somewhere near Istanbul and rent it to other people like me who want to engage with nature, soil. I will divide this

land into pieces and then they can come and do whatever they want. I have such a dream...

D. Human Enterprise: Continuous Self-Improvement

In this section, I will discuss the phenomenon of self-improvement and the ways in which individuals are constructed as subjects who constantly need to work upon themselves through practices of self-improvement. I will argue that the discourse of self-improvement or self-help should not be understood as limited to the workplace but as disseminated throughout the social sphere.

According to Bauman (2003), in the contemporary individualized society, everyone learns how to fight alone in their lives which are full of risks (p.48). In such an order how one lives becomes a matter of how one can cope with systemic risks and contradictions, and this duty becomes individualized (Bauman, 2003, p.47). Thus, in this collection of individuals everyone is left to “the care of purchasable expert services and expertly produced self-help books” (Bauman, 1995, p.174-5) in order to deal with such risks and contradictions. Therefore, the self has become a site for capitalist investment and the individual a “sui generis enterprise,” or “human enterprise,” whose value can be developed by investing money and time in either expert-guided therapy or self therapy (Bauman, 1995, p.175). For Bauman, self-improvement or other activities of the occupation of the self with itself, has become a need in the process of individualization of the society, where everyone is left alone to meet the risks of his/ her own life. As Beck (1992) notes, in this condition “how one lives [has] becomes the biographical solution of systemic contradictions” (p.117).

Also at work, self-improvement is emphasized as an important asset in the survival of employees. For these planned, organized subjects self-improvement has acquired a crucial meaning. After planning and organizing their lives just like a task or project that they can control, they also work upon themselves in order to better themselves. Through self-

improvement employees are expected to “give their lives a specific entrepreneurial form” (Lemke, 2001, p.202). Within a field of knowledge that Thrift calls the “cultural circuit of capital”, employees continuously attempt to improve themselves through employing what Foucault (1988) calls technologies of self through which individuals act upon themselves, their bodies, emotions and actions in order to reach certain virtues such as happiness, perfection and so on. They shape their conduct in line with “how to guides” characterized by survival, according to Salecl (2004). In this particular plane of knowledge, a subject “tr[ies] his or her best to stay alert and be ready to change tack when the wind shifts: never to be left behind or caught napping” (Bauman, 2001, p.23).

By emphasizing how they need to continuously update and improve themselves at work the interviewees stressed the importance of self-improvement. Most of the interviewees also mentioned that their companies are encouraging this aim through giving various trainings for self-development. Sometimes such trainings are not directly related with their work and some interviewees stated that they had difficulty in understanding why such trainings were offered. For instance, Ulaş stated that he had expected that the trainings which his company gave would be about how to earn more money or sell more. However, he saw that these trainings have different contents:

It was such training: “know yourself, and give value to yourself first, if you are happy then you will inevitably contribute to the company”...It was very weird I was so surprised. When they said things such as forget the company, forget the job, decide whether you really want to do this job or not, it became very weird for me. For instance, there was this segment on “tell me your latest passion” in this training.

Başar expressed a similar surprise with the trainings:

They gave a training in which they said “Close your eyes and imagine your own funeral.” Interestingly, I felt that this training is not related with business because this training which is called COVE, gave the impression that you are working

continuously and it won't work...It says what is in your mind, go after it... you leave the training by saying what is in my mind, not sales, then I should resign. It was that kind of a training.

Sertaç also underlined how his company gives employees trainings such as “company athlete” which is about how to live and have a healthy diet. Interviewees expressed that such trainings create the feeling that the company actually gives importance to them not just as employees but also as humans. In addition to the construction of companies as families, these trainings also contributed to the establishment of an emotional connection between employees and companies.

However, these trainings not only create an “emotional bond” between employees and companies, but also contribute to the formation of subjectivities of employees. These trainings provide a particular plane of knowledge not only about what kind of employees they should be but more importantly about what kinds of people employees should be. Thus, through providing a manner of doing things not only at work but in their whole life companies contribute to the construction of a particular subject, namely the neoliberal subject. Moreover, employees willingly turn themselves into appropriate subjects through learning and performing certain norms that “demarcate everyday practices, disposition, and one's relationship to the self and to the world” (Yurchak, 2003, p.73). Thus, I want to emphasize again that such subjects are not passive agents but active ones who try to gain certain skills, abilities through working upon themselves and form themselves in particular manners (Mahmood, 2001)

In addition to these trainings a considerable numbers of respondents mentioned that they have been following self-help books, especially the ones that focus on business. In her study on self-help books, Heidi Marie Rimke (2000) argues that self-help or self-improvement constitutes a contemporary form of governing citizens (p.62). She notes that the exaltation of the individual over the social by self-help literature conforms with the political

rationalities of neoliberal governmentality (ibid.). In self-help books messages such as “people can exercise control and mastery of themselves and their lives” are given. Such pronouncements create the illusion that everything is up to individuals and if they want they can escape from the limitations and regulations of social relations. Eventually, self-help literature contributes to the creation of the neoliberal subject who is “predictable, calculable, classifiable, self-conscious, responsible, self-regulating and self-determined,” says Rimke (2000, p.63). Also, Rebecca Hazleden (2003), in her study on relationship manuals, contends that such books that constitute a technique of governmentality advocate an individual who is “self-regarding and has mastered the arts of self-knowledge and emotional self- discipline” (p.424).

Mine who said self-improvement and self-investment are the meanings of life expressed that, although after a while self-help books repeat themselves, she believed in their usefulness. For instance, she stated that she is concerned about putting into practice what she learns from such books:

I am reading self-improvement books. For instance, recently I read a book of Malcolm Gladwell called Blink. I benefited from these books a lot. But what is important is not only reading such books but applying what you have read. And even give yourself an “S” (stop) and ask whether you apply what you have read or not.

Thus, through self-improvement books some informants work upon themselves so as to acquire certain virtues through applying practices provided by such books. In a way, they are trying to achieve self-mastery over their lives. They not only follow self-help books but also self-improvement trainings on various topics so as to improve themselves. For instance, Vildan (32), working in the sales department in a division of a food-products multinational company, said that she constantly felt the need to improve or update herself:

I constantly feel needs such as whether my time management is OK; should I take time-management trainings, should I go to its techniques, update it...I previously attended trainings on body language, presentation skills and a training called root-cause analysis...

These quotes above emphasize how self-enterprising subjects work upon themselves in order to better themselves through applying practices of self-improvement such as reading self-help books or taking trainings which fashion rationalities of neoliberal governmentality and contribute to the creation of the neoliberal subjects. They willingly undertake this task and act upon themselves. However, according to Melda (30), a product manager in the marketing department of a multinational pharmaceutical company, this constant need for self-development was related to the fear of losing employment. She argued that since in Turkey there is high unemployment among young adults, she thought that she could be easily replaced with someone else if she did not develop and improve herself continuously. According to Melda, this is why employees felt the need to improve themselves. In order to survive in the new economy where long-term work arrangements have diminished, workers feel the need to improve themselves.

Additionally, employees turn themselves into human capital where not only activities of self-improvement such as taking trainings or reading self-improvement books but also other activities, ranging from getting MBA degrees to going to fitness or facials are perceived as investments which ultimately raise their value in the market. As Read (2009) suggests, in neoliberalism the wage of the worker is redefined as a result of investment in the skills of employees. Therefore, although self-improvement can be related with the fear of losing employment, it indicates a general situation where labor is redefined as human capital whose value can be raised through applying practices of self-improvement that can take various forms.

Most of the respondents believed that self-investment and improvement would enable them to reach higher positions in the organizational pyramid. However, they also stated that only a few people can be employed at the top of the organizational pyramid. Therefore, there exists a great competition in order to reach such positions. Interviewees stated that if they can not attain such positions after a certain age, they have to leave their jobs. For instance, Mine stated that she could not work in the position of brand manager after the age of 40, so she said that she needed to become marketing manager before she turned 40. Mine thought that she would not be able to work at the same tempo as she did now after 40. But since reaching higher positions, such as being a marketing manager in Mine's case, is difficult, the interviewees stated that most of the employees had to leave their jobs. Those who leave their jobs either establish their own companies or open restaurants, etc. Therefore, what we encounter is a very intense but also a short-term working life, as Sennett (1998) argues. It is a working life that starts in the mid-20s of the interviewees and ends in their 40s. Thus, these short-term work arrangements make employees to continuously work upon themselves so as to raise their value in the market, hold in check their anxieties of losing employment and to be promoted to higher positions in the organizational pyramid.

E. Global Workplaces versus Local Ones

Throughout the interviews, nearly all my informants constructed binary oppositions between global workplaces of multinational companies and their Turkish counterparts.⁸ In their narratives they reproduced "West" versus "East" distinction as they all referred to workplaces of multinational companies as modern, professional, impersonal and institutionalized contrary to national companies in the private sector which they considered to be not professional and disciplinary enough, and which operate through patronage relations.

⁸ For a similar finding, see Zeybek (2006).

According to the informants in such companies business is carried out according to a “Turkish mentality” which is not modern, professional and disciplinary. Throughout their narratives, the informants constructed Turkish-ness with reference to an imagined Western identity.

For instance, Seda (38), a senior manager in the risk management department in an international investment bank, mentioned that in Turkish banks such as Akbank or Vakıfbank “people stand up when their bosses come in.” Therefore, for her, in Turkish companies bureaucratic and hierarchical organizational structures prevail just like in the public sector. Moreover, in Turkish companies lobbying or who does what with whom also affects one’s position, Seda said. When I asked why she thought Turkish companies are like that she said “it is because of deficiencies in our egos.” While Seda identified herself with global norms of professionalism and institutionalization, she also constructed the local as not professional or institutionalized enough, from which she distanced herself.

According to most of the respondents, contrary to Turkish companies, multinationals have a corporate culture which is professional, institutionalized, modern, Western and which has flexible organizations. They stated that in multinationals everything works according to specific rules and employees are treated as individuals. As most of the informants said, these companies provided higher salaries, have merit systems, care about the job and not about who’s related with whom, and allow employees to defend their rights. They argued that multinationals are “European” and “civilized” work places. For instance Mete (31), working in a leading automotive company, described Turkish companies in these words:

Turkish companies are less institutionalized and more dependent on persons. It is like Turkish people, I can recognize this as I have also worked in Germany. For instance, in Germany when they say let’s meet at half past three, they meet exactly at half past three. Today I was five minutes late to our interview. When such a thing happens in Germany they say “ohh you are 3-4 minutes late.” There is such a professional mentality in Germany. On the other hand, when you look at Turkish firms they are very lax; they behave in a lax manner.

Thus the discourse of professionalism and institutionalization is what differentiates “them” Germans from “us” Turks.

As the interviews progressed, my informants said things that conflicted with their definition of multinational companies as professional and institutionalized places where impersonal relations prevailed. For instance, most of the interviewees complained about the existence of office politics and the importance of personal relations at work. Nearly all of the respondents emphasized the importance of networking, which referred to the effect of personal relationships at work. They defined networking as constructing personal relationships which are expected to be useful for work. Efe (29), a sales territory manager in a multinational company that produces paper-based consumer products, described networking like this:

For instance, you have a network now but you do not name it as network, because there is no work between you. It is your neighbor. Then, you work in a company and your neighbor has a factory and he is director of purchasing. And because you work in a company you start to see him and now you are not neighbors anymore and it becomes a network and starts to help also about your work... Therefore, this environment that you set up begins to return to you as work.

Based on Efe’s definition, networking starts with friendships which eventually become beneficial for work. Burcu also referred to the expectation of benefit for work while constructing personal relationships:

The reason why you are friends is to do business after a while. However, you cannot separate, you also love to speak and spend time with certain people but in the end it serves you. Nothing is done for the sake of itself. For instance, I am doing E-MBA now, they are also friends but you met most of them for networking.

However, to have a good network is not merely related with the number of people you know, rather who you know is important, Mine says. Most of the interviewees underlined the

importance of building networks with their seniors in order to get promotions in multinationals. For instance, Sertaç underlined that the reason why he could not make it up in the talent pool was his lack of networking.

Some respondents stated that they go to certain places such as luxury restaurants, clubs, etc. in order to build networks. Yeliz, on the other hand, mentioned how she chose her hobbies so as to develop her network and benefit her job:

For instance, for this spring I aim to go to sailing courses. I want to do it in order to have fun and relax but to speak honestly I also consider my network and personal relationships as business life is constructed on networks. This is a very sad fact.

Burcu also underlined how the concern for networking became so dominant at a certain point:

Because there is a particular networking thing, when people go out they also see people from work. They see a particular group of friends at pub, or at yoga, Pilates, at sports. All of them in the end become a total of network. Thus, it becomes a networking about life...

Additionally, most of the respondents stated that they use social network sites on internet such as LinkedIn and Facebook in order to develop their networks.

What this fancy term networking means, is actually the effect of personal relationships on their jobs. The interviewees build friendships with people according to a particular calculation of benefit for their jobs. They try to get closer to their superiors or try to know people who can become beneficial for them about their work. They even choose the locations where they eat or entertain according to their networking considerations. Thus, it can be argued that networking has become another site where the mentality of calculation of benefit and cost prevails.

F. Corporate Culture and Myths of Leadership and Teamwork

Another point that I want to make about the corporate lives of members of the new middle classes is the prevalence of a strong corporate culture in multinational companies and its myths of leadership and teamwork. Having leadership qualities and being eligible for teamwork are considered important traits that one should have in order to work in multinational companies. These terms are mentioned as essential virtues of the employees. Although, today these terms are cited in many places such as in the application for a scholarship or a school, they are strongly emphasized in the workplace of multinational companies. One can see them on the walls in the workplace as my informants stated, or in the vision statements of companies. But what do they actually mean for people? According to the respondents, these two ambiguous terms are actually in contrast with each other. As Burcu puts it:

You will be team players but you will also know how to lead ...sometimes shedding from the team, bringing the team together by saying we should go this direction, but not through crushing them, by taking opinions of everyone and providing commitment...It is not a very easy task...You either have to crash, say shut up, being a player is easy but being in between is difficult...You will make a team to give in-put and at the same time lead the team, direct them to results that you desire...and people will not feel oppressed, as their opinions are not taken on the contrary you need to give the feeling that “I contribute to this common decision and this decision was good.” Besides, a good leadership quality is not an easy thing...

Thus, according to Burcu it is really difficult to implement these two traits, being a leader and a teamworker, together. Employees should work upon their behaviors in order to achieve these two together. They need to shape their actions in particular ways so as to perform both leadership and team player roles. Sertaç also stated that the trait of leadership is highly emphasized in his company:

Leadership is highly important in the company. They gave it so much importance that if you work at that company and have amazing results but they see a problem in your leadership, then you cannot be promoted. They divide leadership into parts such as envisioning, energizing, enabling and executing. You need to envision a better future and sell it to your group and friends and convince everyone and make everyone work for this aim and reach a conclusion. It is a pretty much big deal... Moreover, we talk leadership at every level. There is such a definition of leadership that you might say this needs to be for CEO. It is very very important...

Thus, the virtue of leadership for employees has become something that can be measured and worked upon.

G. Gender and Body at Work

The body has become another site where white collar employees are expected to act upon and try to shape in particular ways in multinational companies. As Foucault (1979a) argues, the body is subjected to operations of power which aims to transform it and give it a certain form. Moreover, according to Bourdieu, the body has become a form of physical capital which can be converted into an economic one and defines one's position in the social space (in Shilling, 1993). Therefore, employees invest in and care for their bodies through interventionary practices, which have become a component of their human capital. As Read (2009) says, in neoliberalism, employees are turned into individuals whose every action from learning a computer software program to whitening their teeth can be seen as investments in their human capital. Moreover, as Ayata (2002) states, a good looking body has become a distinctive feature of middle-class identity.

Nearly all the interviewees mentioned that their appearance or "look" is a crucial aspect of their work. They emphasized that they should always be well-groomed and fit and should dress appropriately and have a "modern" look. The interviewees said they went to

fitness and used various practices to care for their bodies such as getting facial, going to hairdresser, taking vapor baths, etc. Through various forms of intervention, employees are asked to care for the health, beauty and wellness of their bodies. Thus, the body is expected to be cared for both inside and outside, meaning that there exists both a concern for health and proper functioning of the body, and for its appearance (Featherstone, 1991b).

Both men and women interviewees underlined the importance of how they looked at the workplace. For instance, Tolga (37), a territory marketing manager in an international pharmaceutical company, stated that how one looked had a crucial importance at work as one needs to be “presentable.” According to Tolga, being presentable refers to how one looks as well as his/her manners while dealing with customers. In order to be presentable, Tolga went to fitness and took vapor baths. He said that he also paid attention to how his employees looked:

I certainly warn them verbally about this issue. My employees should have painted shoes and ironed shirts. I can understand who takes care of him/herself when there is bad weather... You can check whether he/she enters into the workplace with dirty shoes or protect him/herself and come to work well-groomed even when there is bad weather.

Thus despite every condition such as bad weather, employees are expected to be well-groomed and care for themselves. Although men act upon their bodies to become presentable, it can be argued that women spend more effort and labor to accomplish this task. Thus, gender here becomes an important distinctive element. For instance, Burcu stated that in the marketing departments there is a fashion competition among women:

Marketing departments are heavily composed of women and there is a fashion competition. There is too much concern to care for the body, going to coiffeur, buying dresses etc. Your appearance also reveals your stance. When they hire you or promote you they look at you as a whole. You are not promoted because you dress nicely but it also gives you an image... Actually this a package and your

appearance cannot be separated from this. And all women care about it a lot in companies.

From what Burcu states, we can see that even if there is not a causal relation between the looks of employees and promotion in their jobs, they believe that how they look somehow affects their success. Mine also argued that being well-groomed and thus presentable had a crucial effect in the evaluation of the success of employees. She stated that being presentable was as important as one's work.

We can argue that the bodies of employees also become a site in which they can invest and shape through forms of intervention in order to contribute to their human capital. While Read (2009) gives the example of teeth whitening as an instance of investing in one's human capital, we can also argue that going to fitness, being well-groomed and applying certain dress codes are perceived as investments in human capital.

This unspoken but known effect of the importance of how you look at work also creates anxieties for employees, especially for women. For instance, Yeliz stated that she felt bad when she could not be well-groomed. She said that this expectation is actually very exhausting:

There is a real pressure, you always need to be strong, and always need to be straight, always you wear make-up, your hair and your dress should be appropriate. Therefore, we both need to be good at our jobs and also look good, thin, beautiful and well-groomed...

From what Yeliz mentions we can see how working women are running after an illusionary image of women as being strong, well-groomed, thin, and beautiful. The promotion of this image is not limited to workplaces, yet workplaces become significant places where we can observe how employees act upon themselves in order to adopt this image. As Ayça states:

There is a struggle with the body. You should look good and be well-groomed. Also you should dress properly. If you don't dress properly they will call you "paçoz", it will also affect your career... You should be good-looking, smiling, fresh. You should do sports but also finish things before deadlines.

Even the attempts to comply with this illusionary image create continuous anxieties; failure may create tremendous effects for my informants. For instance, Irmak felt such effects when she could not lose weight after she gave birth:

I gained too much weight in the first year and I could not lose weight as I was breastfeeding. You try to wear something but nothing fits you. Then I became crazy. I woke up by saying "I should lose weight" and slept by saying the same thing. I felt that I wanted to be erased, I did not want anyone to see me. I did not want to go out on weekends, or see my friends...

We can also see the importance of gender in the narratives of working white-collar mothers. Only three of my interviewees were working white-collar mothers. Although I tried to reach more mothers I could not do since many said that they were too busy and could not talk with me. This also indicates how working white collar mothers are stuck between their roles as employees, mothers and spouses. Contrary to the prevalent discourse among the middle classes on sexual equality and companionship in marriage according to which "men should be equally responsible and active in the management of household affairs" (Ayata, 2002, p. 33), married women interviewees underlined that they are the ones in charge of domestic work as well as the care of their children. With the help of their cleaning ladies and nannies married white collar women were dealing with these tasks. As Seda stated men usually do not help their wives and most of the women at work complain about it. Irmak, who struggled with accomplishing her roles as mother, white-collar worker and wife said the following:

Women are assigned an unwritten duty. Women are doing laundry, women are dealing with the kitchen, when there is a child it is also completely the responsibility of women.

When Irmak had a child, she tried to be both what she perceived as a good mother and also a successful employee who did not fall behind because she had a child. She hired a nanny but this also created anxiety for her as she was afraid that the nanny would overtake her role as a mother. She lived anxieties about fulfilling her role as mother. She perceived the time that she spent at work as stolen from her child. She continuously felt that she was not a good mother and this situation created obsessions for her:

I have lots of obsessive memories. For instance, I left my breast milk to the baby-sitter and told her to give the milk to Merve at five o'clock and do not look at her face when giving the milk. She asked why and I said "she might think that you are her mother." Then I come to work and call her and ask her whether she looked in her face.

Irmak was trying to accomplish an impossible task which is her own perception of being a good mother, good employee and a good wife at the same time. In the end, she came to a point where she felt that she was not a good mother, employee and a wife and had panic attacks. She said that she was broken into pieces at that time, felt that she was not enough for everything; she could not catch up with everything :

...the doctor told me that "you do not have to be the best, get rid off the obsession with being the best. You could not be the best spouse, best mother, best employee, best manager, and best friend. You will leave all 'best's"... This was a very correct diagnosis for me because I am like this, I always have to be the best. Why am I so ambitious? This ambition of being the best still has not disappeared.

Also in the case of Irmak we see that she acted in a field where a particular type of working white collar mother was defined. Seda described this woman in the following terms:

You are expected to be an intelligent and organized mother... It is not welcomed if you talk with the baby-sitter every 10 minutes at work. An intelligent mother governs her nanny, her house, her food, her child. They see it like this.

Thus, the informants are marked with his/her anxieties and insecurities. They try to appease their anxieties, for instance Aysel (32), a group brand manager in a leading FMCG, told me that she put cameras in her house in order to control whether the nanny acted according to what she instructed. Although she found this situation to be weird, cameras served to reduce her anxieties.

Finally, I want mention how children may also turn into a project for white collar mothers. Some of my interviewees stated that they had high expectations from their children: they want their children to go the best schools, get the best education, enter into best jobs, know too many languages and have certain hobbies. These new middle class mothers pursued children-centric lives, as Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu (2008) call it, and attempted to shape the lives of their children in particular ways just like a project. For instance, Irmak told me that she encouraged her child to go to private courses in order to have hobbies:

First, I took Merve to ballet course. She went to this course for a year. Then I asked her “Merve do you want to continue this course,” she said “No”. Then the following year I sent her to tennis. She played tennis for a year and then she did not want it anymore. And this year she is going to chess course. But I want her to also play a musical instrument and engage in at least one sport.

What Irmak said displays that children are raised in particular manners and their hobbies and skills become a concern for white collar mothers, which can be worked upon through sending them to private courses. All this concern for education and hobbies makes children expensive projects since the tuition of private elementary schools can be as high as private universities in Istanbul.

IV. Keeping Life Standards: Consumption, Materialistic Lives

In this section, I want to analyze how individuals are turned into “subjects of consumption” (Miller and Rose, 2008, p.115). Consumption has become another site where autonomous, self-regulating individuals seek self-actualization and gain personal happiness through choice in the consumer society (Rose, 1990). In the narratives of respondents the importance of having a certain lifestyle which refers to “individuality, self-expression and stylistic self-consciousness” (Featherstone, 1991a, p.83) is strongly emphasized. The global norms of consumption and the new middle class lifestyle have a crucial importance for the interviewees even if they also said that this lifestyle did not bring them happiness. The narratives of the interviewees coming from traditional middle classes show that they were promised this comfortable life if they would study and work hard enough. Thus, when they achieved it to a certain extent, they wanted to continue working in order to keep their standards of living. However, in the narratives of informants we can also observe that reaching a certain life standard never becomes enough for them. At a certain point, not what they own or consume becomes satisfactory for them. As Bauman (2001) states “arrive is no joy at all” in the consumer society (p.10). On the contrary, the never-ending characteristics of consumption produce its appeal for the subjects.

According to Bauman (2001), in the consumer society, consumption becomes its own purpose and it is not about satisfying needs anymore but about desire which is “a much more volatile and ephemeral, evasive and capricious and essentially non-referential phenomenon: a self-begotten and self-perpetuating motive” (p.13). It is “the consuming desire of consuming” which constructs the appeal of consumer society (ibid.). Bauman (2001) suggests that in the consumer society the rationality of consumer society is actually built upon irrational human desires. Contemporary capitalism acts upon the irrational plane of consumers’ desires which will never be satisfied and completed and always ready to start afresh, notes Bauman (2001).

Thus, it is not about what you consume, but the continuous act of consuming in the consumer society. As Bauman says (2001), “it is the hunting not the hare, that people call happiness” (p.24). Moreover, this continuous hunting becomes addictive.

Most of my informants underlined that pursuing certain life standards is highly important for them. They stated that they work so hard in order to pursue certain consumption practices which gave them a sense of belonging to the new middle classes. Moreover, consumption became a sphere for my informants where they seek self-actualization and happiness. In the consumer society, where never-ending consumption acts upon the irrational realm of desire, happiness “is invested in the endless becoming of the unitary subject through turning oneself into a commodity and thereby owning the means to consume. It is a pleasure endlessly displaced and postponed, glimpsed in the snatches of holidays, acquisitions as though it were life” (Walkerdine, 2003, p.247). This centrality and importance of consumption where happiness is searched, constructs materialistic lives, as Ayça stated:

We live materialistic lives. We try to be happy through spending money and buying things. But buying new clothes do not bring happiness; it just gives you a temporary satisfaction. Now I have I have clothes that will be enough for me for at least three years in my closet and I do not remember why I bought them.

Sertaç also underlined the importance of engaging in certain consumption practices and keeping his life standards. Sertaç described the life standards that he reached by working to be above the general standards in Turkey. He stated that keeping this nearly luxury living standard became the main reason why he worked so much. However, he was also aware that consumption was not related with needs but never-ending desires. He saw his relation with practices of consumption as something that capitalism dictated on him:

It fascinates you with the sweet sides of life and makes you get used to it, then you work like crazy in order to live this life. You might have a lover but there is always a more beautiful women or handsome man. For this reason people spend

money like crazy for cosmetics and companies like us made huge profits. There is always the condition of selling dreams. Everybody sells dreams to each other and other people run after this dream. But nobody can stop as when you reached the dream then you say ohh they made a better version of this car, I need to buy it... There exists a continuous condition of running. In fact in order to be happy you do not need a better car or a bigger house. I have a house... and I do not need a bigger one. That's why I told myself that I need to stop running after them but it is hard to stop. It is a dilemma and everyone lives it. But it is about a problem that is related with the system.

What is interesting not only in Sertaç's words but also in the narratives of others who work in sales or marketing departments is that, as a requirement of their jobs, they are expected to know and furthermore produce the consumer. For instance, Efe defined selling like this:

Even though you do not have such a need I produce this need through asking various questions to you and then I make you say "yes actually this was my need." After this I show you that with my product I can satisfy this need and you buy the product. The language of selling is always the same. Even if you do not need a tie I say with this shirt this tie goes well and you buy the tie even, if you do not need it. You never can beat your ego...

Therefore, most of the informants who work in the sales and marketing departments actually know exactly how individuals are turned into consumers and how the act of consuming is not related with satisfying needs anymore but with desires or in Efe's words the "ego." However, these individuals who work in order to produce consumers, themselves turn into consumers.

In their transformation into consumers, the informants learned to engage in certain consumption patterns. Most of the informants said how there existed an accepted norm regarding how to spend their leisure time and where to go during their holidays:

All of these people go to Otto or Babylon if there is jazz. Also Novo is full of such people. Young people go to Roxy and also Nu Pera is their resort. Every Friday, Saturday “we are at Nu.” If you stay at home on Fridays or Saturdays then you must be joking... When I started to stop this habit my friends were surprised, I say I do not want to go out and it was weird for them as they asked “Are you sick” or even there were people who called me stupid because of this.

Ayça thus emphasized that engaging in certain consumption patterns have become important in her social environment. Moreover if one fails or does not want to adopt oneself to such norms then one is questioned. Thus, this situation brings similar consumption patterns as “if you go to holiday you should go to either Çeşme or Bodrum,” notes Ulaş, and also similar life standards which also give a sense of belonging to the new middle class, for the subjects. For instance, Yeliz described how she chose the places she went to either for eating or for sports as:

If there is a place called B with the same features as A, I chose B where most of the people like me are going. I feel myself better when I go to such places because I feel myself as belonging here and as I see that I can afford such places.

Thus, complying with certain norms of consumption gives subjects a sense of belonging to a particular class which they enjoy to be a part of. However, the process of complying with such norms of consumption and life is also a never completed process. Even though Sertaç was aware of this situation he wanted first to reach a certain amount of savings and then leave the game:

I am at least aware. Now I am playing according to the rules of the game and I will continue for a while, and when I have enough savings I will go into a calmer and slower life.

Sertaç was aware of this condition as he stated that he was running like crazy but in fact it is not necessary for him to be happy, on the contrary he needs to slow down. Again, a cynical attitude becomes significant. However, what will be enough and when it will be

enough for Sertaç to reach this point when consumer society acts upon the irrational realm, desires of subjects? It can be argued that in such cases a slow and calm life, probably in a natural setting becomes a phantasy for subjects. Until reaching this phantasy, a cynical attitude prevails which gives them an unhappy consciousness but also the ability to continue to work despite their awareness and criticalness. But this awareness usually does not become a motivating force for them to renounce the life they pursue. Moreover, having a calm life also has a price tag as Sertaç said: “when I have enough savings I will go into a calmer life.”

We can also observe a similar cynical attitude in Aylin’s narrative. Aylin started to earn money and enjoyed a certain life standard which she did not have before. She described how her consumption patterns changed like this:

...if you have two pair of shoes it became five pairs or six pairs. When before you went to Taksim and drink your beer at a pub now you go to Nişantaşı. If you look at the activity that you have done is the same, drinking beer, but while you spent 10 liras for this activity before, now you spend 100 liras...Therefore, the money you earned changes your life standard and you never become satisfied with the money you earned and say “Thank God I am earning good money.”

Yet, this awareness does not become a force for subverting the norms of consumer society, rather it forms a cynical attitude as Aylin suggests:

Now I am talking like this but I will never leave this lifestandard and therefore, I will never leave my job. If you come ten years later I could also be telling you the same things but still working...

Because Aylin was afraid that she could not keep her life standards and consumption patterns if she left her company, she could not pursue her desire to work in civil society organizations. She made this decision in a particular plane of knowledge where leaving one’s job in a multinational company was defined as unacceptable:

“Go when you come back you do something, if you would not be happy there you come back and find another job here”... Nobody says this. Rather they say “But how are you going to find a job? You will never enter into a company like Pfizer you could never enjoy such opportunities”.

Ulaş also argued that their jobs and income brought a certain life standard which they got used to easily and could not renounce. However, he also said since employees do not have savings that can protect this life standard, “I am wondering what will happen if the company does not pay our salary one month.” Thus, protecting this life standard always requires a certain labor and is marked with insecurities for its consumers.

Irmak underlined that even though she did not want to work in the future “and take a breath for a period of time” for the sake of her life standards which she wants to enjoy and also transmit to her child, she cannot take such a break. However, she described her life standards as not suitable for saving money but for continuously consuming:

I think like this, if I have more money, than I will immediately start to live accordingly, if I have more than that, then I will also live according to it. This does not have an end. It goes like this.

Ayça also argued that certain consumption practices created its slaves. She said that consumption carries a crucial importance for people around her:

You go shopping, drink and eat continuously... You go to holidays abroad with your friends and with the remaining money you pay your mortgage. Eventually, the money finishes. Life is passing like this and you are a hamster running through the wheel. My soul is not satisfied.

As consumption acts upon the desires of subjects, it is represented as a realm for self-satisfaction. However, as desires always start afresh, this satisfaction never comes. Through taking a critical attitude towards this never-ending consumption cycle and the materialistic life it brought, Ayça decided to change her life. Although in other cases there was a cynical

attitude of “I know but I still do,” Ayça’s case can be taken as a resistance. As she already developed a critical gaze towards her life, when another opportunity arose, Ayça decided to leave her job and the life she pursued.

Except for Ayça, most of the interviewees cite consumption patterns and keeping a certain life standard as one of the reasons why they could not leave their jobs and the life it brought, which they admitted did not bring them happiness.

V. Conclusion

In this chapter, I showed how the subjectivities of some members of the new middle classes in Istanbul are shaped as rational, responsible, competitive, calculating and individualized persons who need to improve themselves continuously in the spheres of education, workplaces of global production and consumption. In the narratives of my informants, education was emphasized as the primary sphere where they are interpellated as successful students who should be responsible, rational and more importantly competitive in order to become “winners” in the education race. Education is presented as the first step in the construction of a comfortable, happy life. In this plan for a comfortable life, through acting upon themselves and submitting themselves to various disciplinary mechanisms, informants became the winners of this education race which also brought about their subjection.

After entering into desirable departments in leading universities, through turning their education into human capital, informants entered into multinational companies which they defined as professional, modern and institutionalized workplaces contrary to their perceptions of Turkish national companies. In the workplaces of multinational companies, informants are turned into responsible, competitive, organized workers who need to continuously improve themselves. Nearly all the interviewees talked about virtues such as being responsible, competitive, organized and planned, characteristics expected from them in order to survive in

multinational companies. In the narratives of most of the informants, the importance of the self-governing of subjects came to the fore. Eventually, they have shaped a homo-entrepreneur, who is a responsible subject and who controls, plans his/her life as a project and tries to be efficient all the time. But the formation of homo-entrepreneurs also has its costs. For instance, in the cases of some interviewees a cynical attitude prevailed. In such cases informants who developed an awareness and critical gaze towards their lives could not renounce the practices they continuously criticized and thus formed cynical subjects. Moreover, the informants were also marked with anxieties, insecurities and stress which they tried to manage through practices such as yoga, meditation, returning to the nature, etc. However, in some instances such activities themselves also become causes of stress. Thus, the informants' search for appeasement and tranquility becomes a continuous one which fails to reach its aim.

Lastly, I discussed consumption as another site in which autonomous, self-regulating individuals who seek self-actualization and gain personal happiness through choice in the consumer society are constructed. I underlined how keeping certain lifestyles became crucial for subjects. Moreover, I also emphasized the never-ending characteristics of consumption and the materialistic life it brought as some interviewees put it. Yet, most of the interviewees mentioned their consumption practices and life standards as the main reasons why they cannot renounce the practices they continuously criticize.

CONCLUSION

I usually think individualistically... For me solidarity is something through which [I] can benefit. I want solidarity because I want other people to help me. It works for my interests. But I do not believe that solidarity as such exists. Always in the act of helping there lies a benefit... I think TEKEL workers are right in defending their own rights. But what will I do for them? Nothing! Because it does not work for my benefit. What will happen to those people, will they become miserable? I don't care! I believe most people don't care either... We are all concerned with our own self-interests. I am just honest and can voice these things.

Orhan

As an answer to my question of what he thinks about the TEKEL (the former government monopoly of tobacco products) workers' strike, Orhan (27), working as a management consultant in a leading consultancy company, gave the answer above. His words give us an idea about how the production of subjectivities under neoliberalism along the line of values such as self-interest, competition, responsibility and autonomy curtails social ideals such as collective action and solidarity. The members of the new middle classes in Turkey are not only indifferent to collective actions by and the solidarity within different classes but also are unable to form any collective action and sense of solidarity among themselves. This, I argue, is the most important consequence of the formation of neoliberal subjectivities. The reigning ideals of self-interest, individualism and competition, which form particular subjectivities, obscure any sense of the collective under neoliberalism. Therefore, any collective transformation of the conditions of existence gradually becomes impossible to imagine under neoliberalism (Read, 2009). Read (2009) argues that "it is...this sense of possibility that the present seems to be lacking; it is difficult to imagine let alone enact a future other than a future dominated by interest and the destructive vicissitudes of competition" (p.36). In order to imagine that "another world is possible," we should meet neoliberalism on its terrain "of the production of subjectivity" according to Read (ibid.).

In this study, I tried to examine this terrain of the production of subjectivity and argued that subjectivities of highly educated and well-paid white collar employees in Istanbul are produced in particular ways in the spheres of education, work and consumption. In the first chapter, I conceptualized neoliberalism as a form of governmentality where a particular manner of doing things is provided and a particular form of subject, namely the neoliberal subject is fashioned. I argued that the neoliberal subject is a rational, competitive, autonomous, calculating actor who is responsible for him/herself, able to meet his/her own needs and pursue his/her own ambitions and desires, and needs to continuously improve him/herself. The neoliberal subject came to fore through a particular extension of the economy and market into society where social relations have come to be embedded in the economy.

As I did not perceive subject formation as a mechanistic process, in the first chapter I discussed the problem of the subject and subject-formation. Benefiting from various theoretical approaches, I suggested that the formation of subjects should be understood through the paradoxical process of subjectivation, in which individuals who are embedded in productive power relations turn themselves into particular subjects through acting upon themselves with technologies of self and engaging in performative acts in a particular system of norms, and ensure their submission.

In this theoretical chapter, lastly, I defined the new middle classes as highly-educated, salaried urban professionals who engage in various consumption practices. In this thesis, I focused on one segment of this new middle classes who are white collar employees in the Istanbul offices of multinational companies. I argued that this new segment of the middle class has emerged parallel to the development of neoliberalism in Turkey since the 1980s. This small segment of the population was brought about as a result of new alignments and polarizations within the traditional middle class.

Departing from this theoretical framework, in the second chapter of this thesis, where I analyzed my qualitative fieldwork, I tried to address how in the spheres of education, work and consumption members of the new middle class are turned into subjects of neoliberalism. I suggested that the spheres of education, work and consumption intersect in the creation of an ideal subject who is a rational, competitive, autonomous, calculating and responsible individual. First, I traced this subject formation in the sphere of education. I argued that members of the new middle classes are formed as rational, atomized, responsible and competitive individuals in the sphere of education and they submit themselves to disciplinary practices so as to become the “winners” of the highly competitive education system in Turkey. I showed that they pursue a particular plan for education and life where being a successful student and entering into desirable departments of leading universities in Turkey, which becomes a preparatory ground for corporate careers, are presented as necessary to attain a comfortable life style.

I focused on multinational companies’ offices, which are perceived as professional, modern, institutionalized and disciplinary workplaces compared to their Turkish counterparts, as a second sphere where the subjectivities of members of the new middle classes are formed as responsible, competitive and organized employees who need to improve themselves continuously. Following the sociology of organizations, I suggested that in these neoliberal work environments a new management discourse prevails which is based on workers’ self-government and which employs a new form of control disseminated throughout the daily lives of employees and enforced through high tech communication devices. This new language of work, I argued, promotes the enterprising self who is an autonomous, self-regulating and productive self who is expected to give his/her life a specific entrepreneurial form and work upon his/her behavior, feelings and appearance. In these neoliberal work environments the body has also become a site which white collar employees are expected to act upon and try to

shape in particular manners. I suggested that gender is a distinctive factor in the narratives of the interviewees with respect to the relation that women form with their bodies, the traditional division of labor in their so-called modern marriages, and their role as working mothers.

And lastly, I elaborated on the sphere of consumption. I showed that in the consumer society where consumption acts upon the consumer's irrational realm of desires, the subjectivities of members of the new middle classes are formed as autonomous and self-regulating individuals who seek self-actualization and personal happiness through choice. I highlighted the importance of pursuing certain consumption practices and life standards for members of the new middle classes. As consumption becomes central in the new middle classes' search for happiness in life, it constructs materialistic lives, I argued.

Throughout this study, I claimed that the neoliberal subjects are actually fragile subjects whose reproduction of themselves is possible at a cost. I underlined that the cynical attitude prevails among members of the new middle class in that although they are critical of their workplace and consumption practices, they still continue to pursue these practices. Moreover, I also claimed that they are marked with anxieties, insecurities and stress which they tried to manage through practices such meditation, yoga, engaging in the arts or returning to nature.

The importance that members of the new middle class attributed to control, and their anxieties and insecurities contribute to the effacement of the public in the phase of an ever-expanding private which is isolated and exclusionary. The new middle classes' concern with security and control creates a demand and spurs the growth of gated communities, surveillance technologies and security industries. Therefore, they gradually constructed more isolated lives from which members of other socio economic groups are excluded. This condition brings "a spatially and socially shrinking city, a bloating of the private sphere," in Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu's terms (2008, p.31).

I. Suggestions for further Research

This thesis does not constitute a representative study, and therefore, its findings on neoliberal subjectivity cannot readily be generalized to the entire new middle classes in Turkey. The new middle classes in Turkey are a heterogeneous group that also includes high-level white collar employees in the national corporate sector and perhaps also self-employed professionals in Istanbul, and other metropolitan and industrial cities in Turkey. My sample of interviewees on the other hand was confined to white collar managerial employees in multinational company offices in Istanbul. Moreover, I did not have an opportunity to interview members of the new middle class working in different sectors such as advertising, media and entertainment in multinational or national companies. The processes of subjectivity construction may have different aspects for those segments of the new middle classes. Therefore, there is need for further research with larger and more representative samples on the subjectivity construction of these different segments of the new middle class in Turkey. The findings of my exploratory study can hopefully be of use in the future for designing and conducting research that would include these different segments of the new middle class in Turkey, and thus also form a ground for comparative analysis.

On the other hand, although this is not a representative study some of the findings can be generalized to other segments of the new middle classes as they have similar educational backgrounds, work as urban professionals, pursue similar consumption patterns and have same residential choices such as gated communities. Moreover, members of the new middle classes working in the national corporate sector also experience similar management practices and labor control techniques in which they shape themselves in particular ways, as the new language of management has also disseminated to the national companies. Therefore, the findings of this study can be projected particularly on this segment of the new middle classes working in the national corporate sector. Nevertheless, there must be some segments of the

new middle class such as those working in advertisement, media and entertainment sectors, as I pointed out above, who purposely might reject these consumption patterns and residential choices. Thus, their cases might show differences and may require further research.

Finally, I want to mention that not only the subjectivities of members of the new middle class are shaped in particular ways under neoliberalism. Also the subjectivities of other segments of the society are shaped in a manner appropriate to neoliberalism. For instance, in poverty alleviation programs such as micro-credit, the poor are addressed as rational, autonomous and responsible individuals who should acquire entrepreneurial qualities (Rankin, 2001).⁹ Rankin (2001) says the following in her study of poor, rural women that receive micro-credit in Nepal:

The subjectivity of rational economic woman constituted in the microcredit model reflects a change... in the specification of subjects of development from “smaller farmer” beneficiaries with social rights...to women with responsibilities to themselves and their families. When poor women are constructed as responsible clients in this way, the onus for development falls squarely on their shoulders, and their citizenship manifests not through entitlement but throughout the “free” exercise of individual choice (p.29).

Thus, under neoliberalism not only new middle class subjectivities, but also the subjectivities of other groups such as the poor are formed as rational, responsible and autonomous individuals who should be responsible for the betterment of their own conditions. Therefore, other social groups are also sought to be turned into neoliberal subjects, which in turn trivializes ideals of the welfare state such as social rights. Thus, there is need for further research in Turkey on the process of subjectivity formation of other population groups such as the poor or women under the rule of neoliberalism.

⁹ In the Turkish case, Ayşe Buğra criticizes the increasingly popular micro-credit schemes of the Turkish Grameen Bank by pointing out that entrepreneurship is one of the most scarce resources which is highly unlikely to be available among poor and little educated women. See Buğra (2007).

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