

The Hizmet Movement:

A Neo-Ottoman International Conquest?

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Abstract.

The Fethullah Gülen movement or rather the Hizmet movement as his supporters prefer to call it, has grown from being a Turkish religious movement located in Turkey to a transnational movement that has been able to spread almost all over the world.

They are mostly famous because of their educational institutions that have been quite successful wherever they have been established. Being an advocate of interfaith and intercultural dialogue, the movement has focused on bridge-building between different cultures and religions all over the world. I believe this movement deserves more attention in regard to its “recipe” behind its worldwide success and not least when it comes to what their real mission is behind all of their world-wide activities.

I have chosen to focus on the movement in Norway and I have drawn a line to the movement in Turkey. My aim with this thesis is to find out whether the movement has had to change its strategies to be able to get established outside Turkey, in this case in Norway.

My findings indicate that the movement, both in Turkey and in Norway, is trying to establish what I would like to call a “Golden Empire” inspired by the Ottoman Empire and at the same time inspired by the Islamic “Golden Age” which was one of the greatest periods in Islamic history in terms of intellectual activity. To reach its goal of creating a Golden Empire, I argue that the movement aims to raise a “Golden Generation”, which is Gülen’s description of a future generation that is perfected through education and moral and which will have the important task of creating an ideal society and “save” the world from moral and spiritual decay in the future. So behind their dialogue and educational activities, lies the hope of creating a perfect generation that will carry on with the movement’s tasks and ideologies in the future.

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Introduction.

The Gülen movement or rather the *hizmet*¹ movement, as the Turkish preacher Fethullah Gülen and his supporters often prefer to call it², has been able to spread almost all over the world and is well-known for its success especially within the educational sector. Despite the fact that it is a Turkish movement rooted in Islam, it has opened its arms towards the world stressing that in spite of our differences we need to embrace each other and build a peaceful world together.

“We have never “otherlified” (sic!) the minorities or the non-us people [...] we came to realize that others also live, die and cry”³ as one of my informants said. With this concept in mind the movement has had great success in many parts of the world⁴ through the establishment of interreligious and dialogue platforms where peace and coexistence has been their main goal.

In this study, I have focused on the movement in Norway where these “souls of fire” are also slowly starting to become successful.

The study’s research question.

The central goal with this study has been to map out the movement in Norway, as it is the first contribution made on the movement in this country.

My study’s research question is the following: Has the movement had to change its strategies to be able to establish itself outside Turkey, in this case in Norway?

To be able to answer my research question, I have mainly based myself on interviews carried out in Turkey and in Norway.

Earlier studies.

This study is the first contribution on the movement in Norway. However, many other studies have been made about the movement in Turkey and in other countries as well. The book by Yavuz & Esposito (2003a) *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gülen movement* is a quite good and thorough study made on the movement in Turkey, but it includes a couple of chapters on the movement in other countries as well.

¹ Hizmet means rendering services (Bilici 2006: 4).

² Ref: interview with chairman from Mangfoldhuset 17.04.12 in Norway, the vice president of the Journalists and Writers foundation 07.06.12 in Turkey, columnist in Zaman 06.06.12 in Turkey, vice director of the research center at the Journalists and Writers Foundation 12.06.12 in Turkey and Ebaugh 2010:43.

³ Interview with informant from Zaman, 06.06.12 in Turkey.

⁴ See part 4 “From a Turkish to a Global Movement” page 30.

It focuses on Gülen's different "periods" and how he and his supporters develop over time. It also explains thoroughly the educational activities of the movement, the ideas behind education, what it symbolizes to the movement and how Gülen's supporters have propagated these educational activities and ideas both in Turkey and globally.

I believe that the book written by Fethullah Gülen himself, *Towards a Global Civilization of Love & Tolerance* (2006), gives an insight into how Gülen reflects around different aspects related to education, global perspectives and how to reach perfection by becoming an ideal human. The ideal human is the so-called "Golden Generation" Gülen is seeking to raise and in this book he explains what it takes to become an ideal human and that their responsibility is, among other things, to raise consciousness in the world by carrying out good deeds and promote tolerance and dialogue. This book forms a basis for what the movement stands and works for and at the same time it is, as Thomas Michel says, "A call to Muslims to a greater awareness that Islam teaches the need for dialogue [...] and for non-Muslims to understand what Islam really is about" (2006: epilogue).

The book *Muslim world in Transition: Contributions of the Gülen Movement* (2007) includes a collection of studies made on the movement. Emre Demir's study "The Emergence of a Neo-Communitarian Movement in the Turkish Diaspora in Europe: The Strategies of Settlement and Competition of Gülen Movement in France and Germany" looks at the organizational strategies of the movement in France and in Germany. Compared to other Islamic communities in Europe building mosques and emphasizing Islamic education, the movement has chosen to emphasize the importance of a secular education and by that they have been able to establish their schools and activities without attracting too much attention from local authorities.

Demir concludes that the socio-political problems and economic vulnerability of the Turkish Diaspora in Europe has transformed the strategies of the Gülen movement (Demir 2007: 228). Most of the Turks that came to Europe in the 1950-60's were looking for work and were not thinking of settling down in Europe. However, with time many of them did, but they kept in mind that one day they would go back to Turkey. This naturally created issues with regard to their integration and their feeling of belonging. Demir argues that the movement has grabbed this opportunity of feeling "as an outsider" by "stepping into a mediator role willing to enforce the Turkish youth to a transition from the diasporic (stigmatized) condition by reintegrating the Turkish youth to the educational system of the host societies" (Demir 2007: 229).

According to Jonathan Lacey's article "Reflecting on the Gülen Movement's Interfaith Dialogue Work through the Activities of NITECA, A Gülen-Inspired Society Based in Northern Ireland", the movement in Northern Ireland has focused on the violent historical background of Northern Ireland and with that in mind it has focused on peace-building activities through Iftar⁵-dinners with different faith groups and seminars bringing up topics such as how to prevent terrorist attacks. Lacey uses a term I believe fits into the movement's strategies in other countries: "glocalization"- they act locally; but think globally. They seem to adapt Gülen's philosophies to local conditions but at the same time they think of the global impact of their work as well (Lacey 2007:620).

This study is the first academic contribution on the movement in Norway and I hope it will inspire others to make more research on it and at the same time that it will provide the Norwegian society new knowledge and understanding related to the field of religiously inspired movements. As a contribution to the repertoire of studies related to the movement, I hope that it might open up one's ideas around the constitution and pattern of the movement in other countries. In addition it will be a contribution to the field of comparative studies in relation to this movement. By following the movement in different countries, as in this case in Norway, one might find out about new traits related to the movement that one had not discovered before or draw a line that might lead to a common answer behind their activities and mission abroad. I.e. is their mission behind all their peaceful activities abroad a strategy to get more supporters and slowly create a powerful neo-Ottoman Empire led by a "Golden Generation"? Or do they only feel that their mission on this planet is to be a good disciple and carry out good deeds in the society, which in reality is only a personal bonus in order to get closer to God?

I believe that by following up my research and as well carrying out more research related to other subjects within this movement's field, others might want to contribute to crack-up the shell around the movement and reveal other important elements within it.

Theoretical framework.

The hizmet movement is a movement which is difficult to grasp in terms of its organizational structure and how it works. One of my informants even claims that "we are not a movement...we do not move towards anything"⁶.

⁵ Iftar: refers to the evening meal when Muslims break their fast during the Islamic month of Ramadan (Ref: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iftar>).

⁶ Interview with informant from Zaman, 06.06.12 in Turkey.

However, I have chosen to use the social movement theory as a theoretical framework, more specifically resource mobilization theory and framing, to support my analysis. Below, I will shortly present both theories and argue why these theories are the most suitable to answer my research question.

Resource mobilization theory (RMT) emerged around the 1970's, where the RMT's proponents argued that grievances and strain were always going to be present and that one should therefore rather look at *how* social movements emerge at a particular moment and not *why*, as theorists had done earlier (Chesters & Welsh 2011: 7). This theory emphasizes the fact that movements are more likely to blossom when favorable economic conditions allow a flow of necessary resources or when the balance of political power in a society is sufficiently fluid or receptive to allow movements the opportunity to develop (Drakeford 1997: 7). In this context one can say that during Turgut Özal⁷'s leadership, the economic liberalization, Özal's pro-Islamic attitude and the implementation of more democratic reforms made it easier for Muslim movements who had earlier been hushed down by the republic's guardian Kemalist elite, to blossom in terms of using newspapers, internet and other channels to become more visible than they had been before (Ebaugh, 2010; Tank, 2005).

Besides the importance related to the resources which allow a movement to develop, the RMT also focuses on the role of crucial individuals, meaning social movement entrepreneurs who are particularly important in mobilizing available contextual opportunities (Drakeford 1997: 8). When it comes to the social movement entrepreneurs, it is the businessmen who are the main "mobilizing resource" of the movement as they are providing money to the movement's projects and activities. A second and not least important mobilizing entrepreneur is the volunteers in the movement. Besides contributing with their share of money at times, they are the ones to keep the activities alive through endless hours of free work. This is why if human and financial resources are not available to support the goals of the movement, it will eventually collapse or merge with a movement which is more successful in attaining resources (Ebaugh 2010: 7). In conclusion, either favorable economic conditions or a stable political situation in combination with human "mobilizing entrepreneurs" will, according to the RMT, give movements the opportunity to grow and develop. If these conditions are not present, a movement will most likely not be able to develop nor grow.

⁷ Turgut Özal is a politician and the founder of the *Anavatan Partisi* (The Motherland Party) in 1983. Özal was the Prime Minister from 1983-89 and was elected as President from 1983-1993 (Ref: http://snl.no/Turgut_%C3%96zal).

However, the RMT lacks the ability to explain what motivates a movement to mobilize its supporters. Since the 1980's, social movement theorists started to get interested in the role of ideational factors as well, including social interaction, meaning and culture (Wiktorowicz 2004: 15). This is where the study of framing came in. Frames represent interpretive schemata that offer a language and cognitive tools for making sense of experiences and events in the "world out there" (Wiktorowicz 2004: 15). The term "framing" is used to describe a process of meaning construction and according to David Snow and Robert Benford there are three core framing tasks for social movements (Wiktorowicz 2004: 15) : 1) Movements construct frames that diagnose a condition as a problem in need of redress. 2) Movements offer solutions to the problem, including specific tactics and strategies intended to serve as remedies to ameliorate injustice. 3) Movements provide a rationale to motivate support and collective action. Motivational frames are needed to convince potential participants to actually engage in activism (Wiktorowicz 2004: 16). The reason why I have chosen framing as well is because it is frequently used to augment resource mobilization theory as a means of paying attention to the ideational resources that a movement generates. In this sense it is seen as a part of an emerging tool-kit which can be used to interrogate the previously neglected realm of culture (Chesters & Welsh 2011: 82).

I believe that by using the RMT and frame analysis, it will be easier to understand the movement in terms of how they mobilize their resources and what their aims are behind this mobilization. Using framing as a complement to the RMT will contribute to understand the movement's success in terms of expanding themselves globally and what their real goal is apart from building a peaceful society living in harmony.

To support my research question I have looked deeper into the following questions: Do they cooperate with Turkey or other countries? How do they manage to establish these projects and institutions without getting trouble from the Norwegian authorities? Is their goal the same here in Norway as in Turkey?

When it comes to analyzing my findings in the conclusion, I will support my field material by first using the resource mobilization theory (RMT) to find out what sort of resources are mobilized to make the projects and the movement grow. Secondly I will use the framing analysis' three core points that I have mentioned, to find out how, not only human and financial resources are needed to mobilize a movement, but that also cultural, religious, ideational and motivational "resources" are crucial to get a deeper understanding of why and what motivates a movement to keep going on. Based on this, I will implement these theories by first analyzing my findings related to Turkey and then Norway.

At the end of the conclusion I will discuss my findings and conclude whether the movement in Norway has had to change its strategies or not to get established in Norway.

Methodological approaches.

The study is based on fieldwork carried out in Oslo from April to May 2012 and on a two weeks' stay in Istanbul in June 2012. Since this study is new in Norway, I tried to interview people from a wide specter of institutions to be able to understand the movement's structure and activities more thoroughly. Altogether I managed to interview eight people in Norway and four in Turkey. Most of them were "head" persons in the movement or had a high position. The volunteers in the movement also play an important role but I believe that since my research question is stressing the strategies of the movement, it was more suitable to interview the head actors who are more involved in the management of the activities, in their establishment and probably in maintaining contact with the movement in other parts of Norway and elsewhere in the world.

I am using qualitative methodology and I have carried out semi-structured interviews. This means that the topics have been decided ahead of the interviews; however the order of the topics is decided during the interviews (Thagaard 2009: 89). The advantage is that I can follow the informant's story more naturally, but at the same time manage to get the information related to the topics that I have already decided from the start (Thagaard 2009: 89). The interviews were carried out by first asking the interviewees to tell me a bit about their position and what kind of activities they offered through their institutions. This was to get an idea of how their institutions worked, what the specific activities were and not least to map out how the movement works in Norway. After this I started to ask them more personal questions in terms of why it was important to do what they are doing both in Norway and in Turkey, what *hizmet* meant for them and what their visions were for the future in terms of projects and activities.

As a basis to answer my research question, I started to investigate the activities in their home country Turkey and then I continued by doing the same with the movement in Norway. This was to get a more precise and consistent idea of the movement in both countries to be able to see the similarities or differences in relation to how they work and what their goals are. The interviews form an empirical base which, together with the RMT and the three core framing tasks, will contribute to a sustainable analysis towards the answer of my research question.

In terms of getting in touch with my informants, I used the so-called "snowball method".

This implies that one contacts a few persons with the qualifications one is looking for and then asks them to name others having similar qualifications. According to Thagaard, this strategy could be problematic because one might risk that the informants are all persons from the same network (Thagaard 2009: 56). Since I was looking for people within the movement, it was natural that they all belonged to the same network. However, I chose to interview people working within different institutions in Norway to get a more nuanced result.

When it comes to contacting my informants in Turkey, I contacted a professor who has written many studies about the movement who recommended to me some other people that could assist me. By doing this, I came in touch with the Journalists and Writers foundation⁸ which assisted me in finding people dealing with different platforms within the movement.

Challenges during the collecting period.

During my interviews in Norway, there were a couple of my informants who did not speak any English or Norwegian and they had not informed me about this before the interviews. However, they had managed to find an interpreter already by the time I was going to start with the interviews. A fact they did not know, is that my level in Turkish is quite good and that I did not have any trouble in understanding the things that were said.

The reason why I did not interview them in Turkish, even though my Turkish-level is good enough, was that: 1) I did not know that they could neither speak English nor Norwegian before I met them and 2) I had only prepared a Norwegian interview-guide and for that reason I was not prepared to ask the questions in Turkish. A challenge that might emerge in such situations is that if one does not understand/speak the language well enough, the interpreter could leave out or explain what the interviewee is saying in a different matter.

In example during one of my interviews the interpreter waited too long before he started to translate and was not conscious enough when it came to stopping the interviewee when he felt that he should start translating. However, if there were some words I was not sure about I just asked the interpreter to directly translate the word, but if I saw that the interpreter was in doubt I asked the interviewee to give me a thorough explanation in Turkish.

Another challenge emerged during my fieldwork. I was supposed to meet a few more people in Turkey, however one of them was not able to meet me in the last minute and two of

⁸ The Journalists and Writers Foundation started in 1994 when Gülen met a group of writers and journalists saying that they, as a visible voice in the society, played an important educational role in terms of transforming and shaping the society's ideas especially when it came to dialogue between religions and cultures (Ebaugh 2010: 89).

them were not answering my calls when I arrived. In the first case, I contacted the Journalists and Writers Foundation and asked them whether a person working in another platform than the one's I had already interviewed could meet me in a short notice. Fortunately one of them had time to meet me the next day. A negative point related to the fact that I could not meet the three persons I was supposed to meet, is that they were working outside the Journalists and Writers foundation. If I had a chance to interview them I might have reached a different result or a more nuanced result from my fieldwork in Turkey.

A final point I would like to mention is related to how the informants present themselves during an interview. According to Thagaard (2009: 105) the explanations the informants give could be affected by how they want to present themselves. The informant could want to present him/herself in a good light and the explanations the informant gives could express a wish to make a good impression. Knowing that this thesis is the first contribution on the movement in Norway, it is natural that the movement wants to make a good impression by referring to the positive projects they have started and are thinking to start. However, according to the framing analysis there is always a motivational factor behind one's actions. This thesis could therefore be a tool to promote themselves and their visions in Norway, i.e. by mentioning that they want more Norwegians to participate they might bring this up with the intention of presenting themselves as more neutral, but also having in mind that this is something I and the readers would like to hear. In this regard, one needs to keep this in mind when one is analyzing the field material and at the same time be critical to the answers one has gotten.

Ethics.

The people I interviewed seemed quite comfortable when I asked them my questions and they would even ask if I needed any more information than they had given. The questions I asked were mostly related to questions around their activities, what they are working for, where they got their inspiration from and about their future visions.

When it comes to the issues related to the anonymization of the informants, Thagaard says that methodologically it is correct to present the informant such as he/she appears in the eyes of the researcher. But ethically, it is important to hide her or his identity (Thagaard 2009: 27). I informed my informants that they could choose whether they wanted to be anonymized or not and most of them said that they did not mind if I used their names. I believe it was correct to give them the choice and inform them about their rights as subjects of a research. However I chose to follow Thagaard's advice and follow the principle of confidentiality which implies

that the researcher should anonymize the informants when the results of the research are presented (Thagaard 2009: 27). The reason why I did this is due to the subject's nature and to the recent controversies around Muslim groups/movements that might be perceived as controversial in some environments.

The study's structure.

Part 1 includes the period from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic. Here I explain shortly about Turkey's relation to religion ever since the Ottoman Empire and how it changed after the establishment of the Republic. In Part 2, I present Fethullah Gülen and his inspirational source Said Nursi. Further on I present Fethullah Gülen's ideology and present the most important pillars of his ideas. In Part 3, I start with a historical presentation of the movement in Turkey, further on I present the four most important columns of the movement: the businessmen, the schools, the media institutions and dialogue activities. In Part 4, I start with a short presentation of the movement's presence in other countries before I introduce the movement in Norway by mentioning the platforms and institutions I have got to know through my fieldwork. At the end of this chapter I have divided my research material in two cases, one for each country, which are meant to work as comparative platforms to be able to get a clear perception of how the movements are working in each country and see if there are any similarities or differences. Finally in the conclusion I analyze my results and conclude by answering my thesis' research question.

1: Islam and the state in Turkish history.

To be able to understand Fethullah Gülen's teachings and the way the movement flourished, it is necessary to place him within the context of Turkish history, where the relation between religion and politics has been strained for a long time.

1.1 The Ottoman Empire.

For centuries the Ottomans were a strong imperial polity that claimed Islam as their main source of political legitimacy. They gave Islam pride of place in the empire and built many mosques and religious institutions to represent the preeminence of Islam. The rulers saw themselves as the rulers of the empire, but also the caliph, that is the leader of the Sunni Islamic community (Barkey 2005: 10). Religion during the Ottoman Empire was used as a conciliating cultural and governmental tool which was used to intermediate between the state and the community (Yavuz, 2003a). The Ottomans had to integrate the different religious' communities that were living in the Empire such as Jews and Christians, and at the same time both respect and preserve their local traditions by giving them a certain space of local autonomy. One system they used to have a certain control over these communities was to gather taxes and administer the collectivities (Barkey, 2005). This system was called the *millet* system- a system of the Ottomans that may be defined as a political organization which granted the non-Muslims the right to organize into communities possessing certain delegated powers, under their own ecclesiastical heads (Abu Jaber 1967: 212). Religion became a tool that would help to both control and manage the empire (Barkey, 2005).

1.2 Islam and the state in early modern Turkey.

The mid-nineteenth century reforms of the Ottomans were meant for the preservation of the empire at a time when military defeats were weakening the sultans (Ebaugh 2010: 13).

The *ulema*⁹ perceived the European influence as a factor weakening the state; their argument was that the Ottoman state should accept European scientific and technological expertise but not its social and political institutions and ideologies (Yavuz 2003a: 42).

The ulema perceived Islam as the glue of the Ottoman society and that it should be become the state ideology as well (Yavuz 2003a: 42).

⁹ Ulema: refers to the educated class of Muslim legal scholars engaged in the several fields of Islamic studies. They are best known as the arbiters of sharia law (Ref: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulama>).

Thus, during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1908), the Ottoman Empire started to promote Islamic nationalism (Yavuz 2003a: 43). He pursued his efforts to create a form of Islamic nationalism through several avenues such as an emphasis on the role of Arabic culture in the empire, the retention of leaders of Sufi orders as advisors and investment in the protection and reconstruction of Mecca and Medina. He reactivated and further politicized traditional social networks to form national communal identity (Yavuz 2003a: 44).

Despite this, during his reign there was a group of reformers named the Young Turks, who introduced themselves as forwarding-looking and modern on the basis that they had scientific education and that they were rather influenced and inspired by science and intellect than by religion (Yavuz, 2003a). The Young Turks (1908-1918) had organized themselves politically in the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) (Atasoy 2009: 53) and they were the rational, nationalist predecessors of the *Kemalist*¹⁰ state ideology (Atasoy, 2009). They came to power with the 1908 revolution which forced Sultan Abdülhamid to reinstate the constitution and reopen parliament (Atasoy 2009:53). Even though they were initially loyal to the Muslim-Ottoman unity idea (2009: 53), they slowly developed the rivaling idea of Turkish nationalism, especially after the Ottomans had a number of military failures and lost parts of their territory (Atasoy, 2009).

Under the Young Turks era a number of anthropologists and authors tried to re-write the Turks' history with the aim of designing a "nationalist mythology" (2009: 53), where the interest was often focusing on the Turks before their encounter with Islam (Atasoy, 2009). One of the Young Turk intellectuals, and a sociologist, Ziya Gökalp is often considered the father of Turkish nationalism. He contributed significantly to the project of *Türkçülük* (Turkism) as a viable ideology for building cohesion in the remaining territories of the Ottoman state (Atasoy 2009:54). Gökalp's goal was to Turkify the religion of Islam by making it an element of national culture including: "Our national ideal will be to reach Turkishness" in every aspect of culture as well as in religion (Atasoy 2009: 55). His idea was based on combining so-called modern standards such as science and rationality with the binding cultural value of a more Turkified Islam, resulting in modern Islamic Turkism (Atasoy 2009: 56). Gökalp did therefore never develop an ideology of *Türkçülük* and modernization that completely deleted the Islamic referents (Atasoy 2009: 56).

¹⁰ Kemalist/Kemalism: The ideas of the founder of the Turkish Republic Atatürk are referred to as Kemalism. It is properly symbolized by six principles: are republicanism, statism (in economic policy), populism, laicism, nationalism, and reformism. (Ref: <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0440>)

1.3 Kemalism: A final separation from the Ottoman past.

The future adaptation of Gökalp's thoughts by the founder of the Turkish Republic represents a clear break from previous Ottoman projects of keeping Islam as a glue of the Ottoman/Turkish state and people (Atasoy 2009: 56). From 1913 the CUP started to implement a number of reforms that among others removed the *sharia*¹¹ as the legal system and at the same time religious courts were put under the management of secular courts (Ebaugh, 2010). The ulema got eliminated from the state power and Islam was brought under state control. In 1924 the Caliphate was abolished and the Directorate of Religious Affairs was founded as a state office to take care of Islamic religious affairs and control of Islamic schools was given to the Ministry of Education (Ebaugh 2010: 14). The way was paved for the secularization processes that would be brought about by the founder of the new Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk¹² (1881-1938) (Ebaugh 2010: 14).

The republican elite supporting Atatürk, perceived a complete remodelling of Turkey as necessary to escape from backwardness and expressed reluctance towards all the things that were related to the ancient Ottoman regime (Ebaugh, 2010). They especially disliked religion and religious institutions which were perceived as backward and not something that should make part of a modern society. Atatürk believed that Turkey had to forget its grandiose past and rather follow the Europeans' model (Ebaugh, 2010).

Cultural differences and the substantive autonomy enjoyed by several different cultural communities during the Ottoman Empire were eliminated (Atasoy 2009: 59). The "backward" cultural values such as Islam, were to be forgotten and everything from cleansing the Turkish language, especially from Arabic words (Arabic is the language of the Qur'an), changing the clothing style to a more "western" style to abolishing religious titles such as the *dervish*¹³, were means according to the Kemalists to become more modern and western (Atasoy 2009).

In 1929 Islam, that had been the state religion, was removed from the Constitution and religion was now to be brought under the state, causing the loss of the ulemas' traditional power. Similarly the imams, who had played a significant role in arranging the countryside especially during the war of independence, suddenly had their positions weakened (Tank, 2005).

¹¹ Sharia: Islamic canonical law based on the teachings of the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet (Hadith and Sunna). (Ref: <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/sharia>)

¹² Mustafa Kemal Atatürk: Founder of the Turkish republic and was its first president. (Ref: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mustafa_Kemal_Atat%C3%BCrk)

¹³ Dervish: a member of a Muslim (specifically Sufi) religious order who has taken vows of poverty and austerity. (Ref: <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/dervish?q=dervish>)

Their position had represented a threat to the Kemalists' idea of a secularized Turkey. Now the Anatolian population, which was known for being more conservative in religious terms, were encouraged to embrace a secular identity (Tank, 2005). The Kemalists were now pushing away traditional Islam and emphasized a sort of Turkish nationalism grounded in the pre-Islamic heritage and roots of the Turks. Moreover, the concept of radical secularism was rather supported by the urban educated elite. This caused a division within the country: those who still held on to religion and those who ignored this part and rather focused on adopting western manners (Tank, 2005). Bringing religion under state control led to the politicization of Islam and the growth of competition between secularists and Islamists over control of the state (Tank 2005: 6). The westernization-pressure upon the traditional communities and as well their bonds in terms of religious norms and symbols, made the traditional groups feel that they had an instrument they could use to show that they were against this radical secularization (Tank, 2005). This discontent and feeling of suddenly being an "outsider in their own country" opened up for the emergence of political religious movements that wanted to show that they still had a voice in their country.

1.4 The rise of Islamist parties.

The 1950's represents a turnover in Turkey's political history: among other things the state started to perceive religion as a tool to deal with leftist/communist movements in the country (Yavuz, 2003a) and Turkey shifted to a multi-party political system when the center-right Democratic Party was established (Ebaugh, 2010). As a result of these changes, the reintegration of Islam into public life became quite apparent (Yavuz 2003a: 59).

During the DP's period (1950-1960) secularist policies were loosened up: they started to become more sensitive to Islamic sympathies of the population and believed that, even though Islam was a personal matter it should have its place within the Kemalist state. Following the 1960 coup and the 1961 changes of the Constitution, Islamist groups started to get more space to maneuver in (Tank 2005: 7).

One party that is worth to mention, is the *Refah Partisi* (The Welfare Party- 1983-98) which was led by Necmettin Erbakan. Erbakan was known for being the one who redefined Islam's role in Turkish politics and he was also called "the father of political Islam" in Turkey. He wanted a redefinition of secularism by the fact that people should be allowed to practice religion freely (Ebaugh 2010: 18). His strategy of using a broadly understood religious jargon was well received by the religiously conservative people in Turkey, but at the same time the Kemalists felt that this was threatening their secular system (Ebaugh, 2010).

In 1997 Erbakan's government was obliged to abandon politics and got banished from office for five years and got their party shut down (Ebaugh, 2010).

Further strengthening this new "Muslim elite", was the elected *Anavatan Partisi* (Motherland Party) under the leadership of Turgut Özal who emphasized Islamic education and morality as a force against socialism (Ebaugh 2010: 18). It was during his administration that Turkey moved towards a capitalist economic system and started to introduce democratic reforms (Ebaugh 2010: 19). Through the new economic liberalization and opportunities a new business elite emerged which consisted of provincial businessmen, also known as the "Anatolian Lions" (Tank, 2005). Özal's strategy to build bridges with society was to establish ties with among others Sufi orders and mosque associations, resulting in, as Yavuz says, "the adaptation of traditional networks to a modern urban environment" (Yavuz 2003a: 75).

Another important "adaptation" in the society was that the new spaces created through the deregulation of broadcasting strengthened the Islamic voice that had been hushed down for a long time. Newspapers and TV-channels suddenly gave religion a voice and by that strengthened Islamic groups in Turkey, including Gülen and his supporters (Ebaugh, 2010).

2: Fethullah Gülen and the movement.

2.1 A humble imam from Erzurum.

Fethullah Gülen was born in 1941 in a small village close to Erzurum in Turkey. Erzurum was known for being traditional and culturally conservative and for having a quite pious population (Ebaugh 2010: 23). In this period it was not easy to get an education in Turkey, however Gülen was able to attend a state primary school for three years but after this he had to abandon school. The reason was that his father, who was an imam, was appointed by the state to a mosque in another town. However, Gülen's father started to give lectures to his son because of the lack of secondary schools in the area (Ebaugh, 2010).

Apart from being influenced by his father and family, Gülen was introduced to the writings of Said Nursi by his Sufi teacher Sheikh Muhammed Lütfi Efendi¹⁴. Said Nursi was a preacher who taught that Muslims should not reject modernity, but find inspiration in the sacred texts to engage with it (Ebaugh 2010: 24).

As a teenager Gülen was introduced to Nursi reading circles (Ebaugh 2010: 25), also known as *cemaat*¹⁵. These cemaat were established and run by people who shared common ideas and visions. Gülen was inspired by these reading circles to the extent that this led to the establishment of his own circles that were created by his followers later on (Ebaugh, 2010).

In 1958 Gülen was appointed as a preacher by the state. He first started to work in Edirne. In 1966 he was appointed as the official Izmir preacher of the Diyanet¹⁶ and started to work at the Kestanepazarı Qur'an School in Izmir (Yavuz 2003a: 181). Here he guided a core group of students that were both religiously and academically motivated, to raise their own religious community (Yavuz, 2003a). At the school's summer camps, which became a platform of both secular curriculum and religious teaching, Gülen managed to develop a so-called "theology of religious activism" as Yavuz calls it (2003a:181), where he encouraged students to engage in "faith motivated civic activism" (Yavuz 2003a: 181). Later on, this group of students formed the core group of hizmet (Yavuz, 2003a).

¹⁴ Muhammed Lütfi Efendi (1868-1956): Also known as Alvarlı Efe, as he served as imam in Alvar village in Erzurum for 24 years, he was one of the most famous scholars, poets and spiritual persons of Turkey (Gülen 2006: 134).

¹⁵ It is a Turkish form of Islamic self-organization that evolved after the formation of the secular republic in 1923 and the outlawing of the Sufi orders and the abolishment of the classical Islamic educational institutions also known as the madrasas (Ebaugh 2010: 25).

¹⁶ The Presidency of Religious Affairs in Turkey-an official organization giving public service on religious issues (Ref: <http://www.diyamet.gov.tr/english/tanitim.asp?id=3>).

During his period in Izmir he travelled to both coffeehouses and mosques to speak about the intertwined relation between Islam, ethics and science, while often referring to Nursi's ideas (Yavuz, 2003c). For Gülen, as Yavuz explains it "serving God means raising a "perfect youth", who combine spirituality with intellectual training, reason with revelation and mind with heart" (Yavuz 2003a: 20). Gülen did not only preach about typical spiritual issues, he also emphasized the importance of becoming a better human and making the world a better place to live in by engaging himself and encouraging others to do the same (Harrington, 2011).

In the 1970's Gülen's followers, who were usually university students and businessmen, began to establish reading circles around Gülen's teachings. Gülen helped the students to establish "houses of light" or *ışık evler*¹⁷ where they could discuss religious matters and study Islam by using Nursi's writings and Gülen's own teachings. It was during this period that a large number of Gülen's followers slowly started to become more visible through their activities of service they rendered to the community (Ebaugh, 2010).

2.2 Gülen's inspirational source: Bediüzzaman Said Nursi.

Said Nursi (1873-1960) born in the village of Nurs in the eastern Anatolian Bitlis-province, authored several volumes of Qur'anic exegesis known as *Risale-i Nur Külliyatı* (the epistles of light) (Yavuz 2003b: 3). Nursi mostly received his education through his older brother Molla Abdullah before he continued his education through following the *medrese*¹⁸ curricula and by participating in Sufi meetings at the same time (Yavuz, 2003a). Living during the breakdown of the Ottoman state and the newly emerging Turkish Republic, Nursi felt that he had to take part and express himself with regard to the changes his country was going through. In order to understand the shift in Nursi's work and mentality, one needs to look at the transition from the "Old Said" to the "New Said" (Yavuz, 2003b).

The "Old Said" coincided with the efforts to save the Ottoman state from falling apart as a result of the strong ethnic nationalism and at the same time to save Islam from the western modern reasoning which in many cases perceived religion as backward (Bilici, 2006). Because of the growth of materialism, he believed it was impossible to only refer to traditional Islamic theology to answer the skepticism related to Islam (Turner & Horkuc, 2009).

¹⁷ These houses of light were established through the inspiration of the "old" *dershane* of the Nur movement (Ebaugh, 2010). A *dershane* is a Persian word meaning "study house" (dars= studies/homework and khâne=house) where the students of Nursi studied his texts and followed his sermons.

¹⁸ Medrese is an Islamic or Qur'an school (Vogt 2005, 347).

Therefore he saw it as necessary to study modern sciences to complement traditional Muslim theology. Inspired by his new ideas he perceived it as necessary to establish a new education where he created his own method of teaching by integrating religious sciences with modern sciences with the thought in mind that the last-mentioned would justify and empower the truth of religion (Turner & Horkuc, 2009).

The “New Said” arose right after World War I had started. During this period he became a strong supporter of the arising national movement conducted by Atatürk in the 1920’s (Yavuz, 2003a). However, his enthusiasm faded away the moment he became aware of the radically anti-Islamic plans that the new republican leaders intended to implement (Yavuz 2003a: 154). He believed that the minds of the republican reformist elite had been invaded by skepticism and positivist philosophy (Yavuz 2003a: 154).

In order to struggle against this skepticism, he sought to bring God back to society by establishing an Islamic consciousness and a framework of meanings to conduct daily life (Yavuz, 2003a). Nursi’s understanding of Islam was based on his understanding of human nature. Since religion is innate to human nature, he saw the lack of religion as the source of many conflicts and wars (Yavuz 2003a: 157). This idea was further expanded: according to Nursi the source of a man’s issues and conflicts, was due to the lack of presence of God in the public sphere. Bringing God back to the public sphere became Nursi’s main goal and task (Yavuz, 2003a). He also believed that the only solution to struggle against the enemies of Islam such as ignorance and poverty was by working hard and most importantly by getting an education and continuing to believe in God (Yavuz, 2003a).

To be able to establish a society that would turn towards the path of religion again, he imagined a gradual change: first of all he would start the process by raising Muslim consciousness and implementing faith in everyday life again and at the end he would introduce the re-establishment of the sharia¹⁹(Yavuz 2003a: 161). The state, according to Nursi, should be shaped according to the needs of the society (Yavuz, 2003a); the state should in other words be the “servant” of the people (Akyol 2007: 28) and its employees, according to Nursi, do not even need to be Muslims because their duty is to serve the people in accordance with the law (Yavuz 2003a: 162).

He urged his supporters to use new communication technology while serving in God’s name. The Nur-movement started to use, among other things, both newspapers and radio to reach out to the public to fulfill Nursi’s vision through raising religious consciousness by

¹⁹ It must be underlined that the re-establishment of the sharia meant, to him, a law-governed and just society (Yavuz 2003a: 161).

promoting education and reason (Yavuz, 2003b). The importance of the Nur movement's followers' influence on the society, was that they managed to create a "counter public" (Yavuz 2003b: 13) to the republicans' ideology by bringing back religion as a natural part of the society again (Yavuz, 2003a).

After Nursi's death on March 23 in 1960 (Yavuz 2003a: 157), the Nur movement got divided into several branches. One of the main reasons related to this division, was the conflicting relationship between publishers and writers regarding the true signification of Nursi's text (Yavuz, 2003b). The second source of fragmentation was the political affiliation of the movement: the first group known as the *Yeni Asya*, supported Demirel²⁰ and maintained a critical stance towards the 1980 military coup- they decided to campaign against the military's proposed new constitution (Yavuz 2003a: 174). However, two outstanding leaders of the Nur community, Mehmet Kırkinci²¹ and Fethullah Gülen, supported the 1980-coup and the 1982 constitutional amendments²² (Yavuz, 2003a).

The Nurcus who did not support the 1982 constitution, wanted to challenge this through their media groups. *Yeni Asya* adopted this position and made many Nurcu readers angry by the fact that this group was firing up for an eventual clash with the state and urged the group to stop issuing newspapers (Yavuz, 2003a). Military officers visited prominent Nurcus, such as Mehmet Kırkinci, and "convinced" them to support the constitution or risk the closure of Nur dormitories and *dershanes* (Yavuz 2003a: 175). This might explain why Fethullah Gülen also supported the coup and the constitutional amendments. The third major source of division in the movement is marked overall by the ethnic tension in Turkey (Yavuz 2003b: 17).

²⁰ Süleyman Demirel was a Turkish conservative politician; he was the president from 1993-2000. He was the chairman of the *Adalet Partisi* (Justice Party) from 1964 until it got dissolved in 1981. He also established the conservative party *Doğru Yol Partisi* (Right Path Party) in 1987. He was also elected as the Prime Minister in Turkey five times 1965–71, 1975–77, 1977, 1979–80 and 1991–93 (Ref: http://snl.no/S%C3%BCleyman_Demirel).

²¹ Mehmet Kırkinci was born in the village of Güllüce in Erzurum in 1928 and is one of the leading names of the Nur movement. He is the leader of the Nur branch in Erzurum. He has been teaching the *Risale-I Nur* texts of Nursi and Arabic in Erzurum and has written many works by himself as well (Ref: http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mehmet_K%C4%B1rk%C4%B1nc%C4%B1).

²² The 1982 constitution sought to create a more powerful state by shrinking borders of society: it limited political rights and freedoms and put associational life under state supervision resulting in the limitation of the activities of the Nur community (Yavuz 2003a: 174).

2.3 Fethullah Gülen's philosophies:

2.4 Educating a "Golden Generation" and working as a Holy Duty.

Islam for Gülen is mostly based on morality (*kıyilik*) and identity (*kimlik*). He believes that there is a connection between the two and that there is no identity without morality and no morality without Islam (Yavuz 2003a: 192). Since morality translates into identity through conduct and collective action, "acting" and "engaging" in the public and private spheres are parts of building the moral self. "Islam by conduct" (*hizmet-service*) is the key concept of the Gülen movement (Yavuz 2003a: 192).

The main basis of Gülen's teaching bases itself on the idea of living to serve humanity through the principle of "commanding good and forbidding evil" (*amr bi al-ma'ruf wa nahiy 'an al-munkar*). This principle is, according to his point of view, crucial and he believes that a person's final duty should be serving humanity with the aim of satisfying God (Çelik, 2010). A person who does not believe in such an ideal rather puts himself/herself first and sees himself/herself through the guidelines of the society (Çelik, 2010). Gülen believes that the reason behind the lack of moral and escalating conflicts in the world is because humans are becoming more and more materialistic (Yavuz, 2003a). He says:

"Worldly people who are enslaved by their egos live only to fulfill their carnal desires. Never content, they feel no tranquility. But ideal people are always at peace with themselves. They are content and, furthermore, they place their knowledge and understanding at the service of humanity. They courageously devote themselves to ridding the world of injustice and tyranny [...]". (Gülen 2006: 129).

He says here that the modern human's life has been "enslaved by our egos", meaning that we do not care about any others than ourselves anymore and that there is a lack of morality in the society. That is why the so-called "ideal people" place themselves in the service of humanity to fight these issues. Gülen says that "We were sent here to learn and be perfected through education" (Gülen quoted in Aslandoğan & Çetin 2010: 37). Education, in Gülen's point of view, can be characterized as a humane service and is the solution to the three main problems troubling our societies: ignorance, poverty and division. As ignorance is the most serious problem, it is defeated through education. Poverty is removed by working and by having enough capital. Conflicts and separatism are eliminated through unity, dialogue and tolerance (Aslandoğan & Çetin, 2010).

To eliminate these issues in our society and at the same time create a modern Turkey, Gülen emphasizes the role of education in the establishment of a new Islamic consciousness (Yavuz 2003a: 193). Gülen believes that this transformation of society through education should be left in the hands of an elite stressing Turkish history and traditions and at the same time being sensitive to the spirituality of the common people (Yavuz, 2003a). His main aim is therefore to raise a “Golden Generation” (*altın nesil*), which looks up to the glories of the Ottoman-Islamic past but at the same adapts itself to modern conditions (Yavuz, 2003a). Agai also believes that the “Golden Generation” concept can be seen as a counter ideal critical of the Kemalist secular ideal (Agai 2003: 58). This generation embodies Gülen’s major aims: pious Muslims making use of science without adopting materialism and positivism and with a firm Islamic identity that unites them with ordinary people in Turkey (Agai 2003: 58). Gülen therefore believes that modernity and Islam are in harmony and that Muslims should neither reject nor isolate themselves from people having other ideas or religions nor fear scientific and technological development (Schippers 2009: 24). In reference to this he states:

“Avoiding positive sciences fearing that they will lead to atheism naivety, and seeing them as contradictory with religion and faith and as vehicles for the rejection of religion is prejudice and ignorance. Science and technology are beneficial to the degree that they guarantee human happiness and help us attain true humanity. [...] At the beginning of this century, some short-sighted materialists made science into an idol and sacrificed everything to it, while the most famous scientist of the century was criticizing this tendency in a pleasant way by saying: “Science without religion is blind; religion without science is lame.” What would they have said if they saw those of today who are both blind and lame?! (Gülen 2005: 49).”

Through this statement he is insinuating that being ignorant and rejecting science and technology is what is leading to today’s decay. At the same time he emphasizes that it is as important to keep one’s belief. The progress of this world will only be possible through the adoption of modern sciences and by combining it with faith to create a perfect society. Implying that the combination of sciences and faith is a believer’s duty, Gülen perceives the task of teaching as the most important “holy duty”. The teachers have the most important role when it comes to reaching a “Golden Generation” (Agai, 2003). The teachers are the ones to lead pupils to be good and therefore to serve Islam (Agai 2003: 58). Gülen’s message to teachers and prospective teachers was simple: serving your fellow citizens and humanity in general through education is a duty for every responsible human being and fulfills the purpose of our creation. By that, the relatively low-paid, unappreciated and low social status teachers

were recognized as the key builders of the country's future (Aslandođan & Çetin 2010: 40).

Gülen often emphasizes the prophetic saying that the only valuable knowledge in God's sight was the knowledge that benefited humans (Aslandođan & Çetin 2010: 41). By emphasizing that teachers are carrying out the utmost holy duty and that they could be perceived as blessed persons, Gülen managed to convince people to donate the money they would traditionally donate to the mosques to schools (Ağai, 2003). With reference to the Quran, Gülen argued that the whole earth was given to man as a mosque therefore the Muslim community was not in urgent need of mosques but rather schools since knowledge is the only path to deeper religious understanding. This argument has put education right at the center of Islamic activities (Ağai 2003: 59).

2.5 Building bridges between Islam and the West.

Gülen has always been a strong supporter of economic and political integration with the EU. Gülen was actually one of the first Islamic leaders to embrace the idea of an EU membership and at a time when Islamists in general regarded it as a threat to the Turkish security and Islamic culture (Kösebalaban 2003: 176).

The need to create bridges between the Muslim world and the West is one of Gülen's most important pillars. He thinks that since the Turks played a central and spiritual role during the Ottoman Empire, Turkey is now ready to guide the Muslim world through stressing tolerance, dialogue and education (Ebaugh, 2010). To reach a distinctive and great role in the modern world, he advises his supporters to keep the Ottoman heritage in modern Turkey in mind (Ebaugh, 2010). His focus is on the cultural values and practices during the Ottoman Empire: 1) the spirit of dialogue, 2) the fact that the Ottoman state was multilingual, multiethnic and multireligious 3) respect for women and finally 4) the intellectual and cultural rapprochement between the Ottoman society and West begun in the nineteenth century. He advocates using the Ottoman model as a basis for returning the Muslim world to the center of world civilization and for creating productive ties with the West (Ebaugh 2010: 33).

Believing in God is, according to Gülen, his greatest benefit. He believes that, because of some current untrue portrayals of Islam in the West, it is a Muslim's duty to make sure to change this misconception by showing Islam's real face to the world through public engagement (Çelik, 2010). The world, in Gülen's view, has become a global village and it is therefore neither possible nor realistic to isolate oneself from the rest of the world; it is rather a positive necessity to engage with the world (Çelik, 2010).

In this regard, he urges Muslims to interact with the rest of the world and not be afraid of that their Muslim identity will fade away. He believes that a true Muslim should not fear this if he or she is honest in his or her belief (Çelik, 2010). In relation to this, Gülen rejects the old binary formulation of geographical boundaries as *dar al-Islam* (the abode of Islam) and *dar al-harb* (the abode of war) (Çelik 2010: 66). Gülen rather uses an integrationist concept of *dar al-hizmet* (the abode of service to humanity) (Çelik 2010: 66). Gülen believes that the West is *dar al-hizmet* and that it has more Muslim characteristics than the originally Muslim countries because he believes that the West, among other things, is more advanced and democratic, and that it has engaged itself in both exploration and analysis to achieve scientific and high-tech development (Çelik, 2010). With this in mind, he cannot understand how a true Muslim could oppose itself to the West, as it has acquired its success by pursuing and acting upon the universal laws of creation required and established by God himself (Çelik, 2010).

2.6 Interfaith and intercultural dialogue: A key to peace in the world.

Gülen is convinced that establishing dialogue and building peace and security are part and parcel of the proper expression of an Islamic way of life, as it is prescribed by the Qur'an as "the better way". Gülen sees this as an inspiration to start dialogue with people. It is also his point of reference for serving both society and humanity at large (Çelik 2010: 118).

As mentioned, Gülen also has his inspiration from the interreligious relationships that existed during the Ottoman Empire where Christian, Muslims and Jews lived side by side. Many Turkish Sufi masters who supported interreligious tolerance promoted these ideas which Gülen later on studied and got influenced by, especially in terms of dialogue among faith communities (Ebaugh, 2010). Gülen believes that Islam should rather function as a bridge-building religion between people and other religions (Çelik, 2010). His interest for dialogue with the western or Judeo-Christian world is also related to his appreciation of western modernity, democracy and scientific progress and his conviction that the Muslim world should assume these elements as well (Park, 2007). He therefore says that:

"Islam, Christianity and Judaism all come from the same root, have almost the same essentials and are nourished from the same source. Although they have lived as rival religions for centuries, the common points between them and their shared responsibility to build a happy world for all the creatures of God make interfaith dialogue among them necessary. [...] this dialogue will develop as a necessary process, and the followers of all religions will find ways to come closer and assist each other" (Gülen quoted in Weller 2010: 98).

Concepts such as love and mercy are key concepts in Gülen's teachings. He even calls tolerance and dialogue for "the two roses of the emerald hills" (Gülen 2006: 50), emphasizing their importance by stating that:

[...] "peace is of utmost importance in Islam and that by that one should not ill-judge or slander the ties that are being established between various groups in the name of love, dialogue and tolerance" (Gülen 2006: 50).

Gülen repeatedly sets both tolerance and forgiveness as central Islamic values that are anchored in humbleness. People who believe that they are better than others will never be able to participate nor engage in true dialogue (Ebaugh, 2010). Gülen showed his own humbleness by meeting Pope John Paul II in Rome in 1998, and he has also met with the Patriarch Barthelomeus, the head of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul, the former chief Rabbi of Turkey's Jewish community David Aseo and with other high profile Jewish and Christian figures (Park 2007: 57).

However, he was criticized by a group of young Islamists who argued that he should not have humiliated himself by going to the Vatican and meeting the Pope. Gülen responded by saying that humility is an attribute of Muslims and that dialogue with people of other religious traditions is an integral part of Islam (Ebaugh 2010: 38). Gülen stresses that Muslims are required to believe "...in what is sent to you and what was sent before you..."²³ By establishing a belief in former prophets and revelations, Islam establishes the foundation of interfaith dialogue (Kayaoğlu 2007: 524).

Gülen urges people to commit themselves to dialogue and to try to forget past issues and rather focus on commonalities. Dialogue is usually defined as a discussion between a couple or more people that have come together to talk about issues with the goal of coming to a solution and establishing bonds, however Gülen has expanded this definition stating that successful dialogue is now a result of mutual acknowledgment and taking each other's values and background into consideration (Çelik, 2010).

²³ Quran (2:4).

3: The Hizmet movement.

The reason why I have chosen to call the movement “hizmet” movement and not the Gülen movement is because some of the people I interviewed said that Gülen himself never refers to the movement as the Gülen movement. As Ebaugh (2010: 43) points out, Gülen prefers the movement to be called “volunteers service” or hizmet.

3.1 Short historical background.

In the period between 1966-1983, Gülen used the Kestanepazarı Qur’an School to tutor a spiritually oriented and intellectually motivated core group of students (Yavuz 2003a: 181). The core group of the movement started to get established in these summer camps. This is where this group formed both a powerful spiritual network and brotherhood, where their intention was to bring back Muslim values back into the public sphere (Yavuz, 2003a). This first generation of Gülen-followers were the ones who fixed the Islamic values of responsibility and committing one’s time to the common good of the Muslim populace. Gülen inspired this group through the life of the Prophet and the great architects of the Ottoman state. The Ottomans were, according to Gülen, admirable because they believed in liberal religious reasoning. With the Ottomans’ greatness in mind he believed that in order to become a great nation again, one would have to bring God back into the public sphere (Yavuz, 2003a).

The movement did not participate in active politics, but through the foundation of their own institutions and through their followers’ support they managed to get access to media, schools and universities, and other public spaces. As a consequence of both limited financial means and state oppression in Turkey, the informal networking of the movement was crucial in the progress and activities of the movement (Yavuz, 2003a). During the military coup in March 1971, Gülen got arrested for his religious activities (Çelik, 2010). This involvement was presented as he violated article 163, which criminalizes “unwanted” religious expression and association. Gülen spent seven months in jail before he got acquitted (Yavuz 2003a: 183).

In the period between 1983-1997, the movement became less centralized because of its expansion to other areas in Turkey. In addition, in the 1980’s the political environment in Turkey became more liberal especially in relation to the market policies and the economy. In this period the hizmet movement implemented the “Golden Generation”-vision by using new political, judicial and financial opportunity spaces (Yavuz, 2003a). In cooperation with Turgut Özal, Gülen tried to change Turkey’s former rigid system into a more just and liberal financial system (Çelik, 2010).

An aspect of Özal's liberalization was his encouragement of a role for Islam in public life. Özal understood that Islam was the source of belief system and values of most Turkish citizens and that it was excluded from the public sphere (Çetin 2011: 42). That is why the movement was now more than ever able to establish close bonds with the state and at the same time become more incorporated in media and cultural activities. The fact that the movement became more involved in such activities turned it into a more professional movement which started to create, among others, new broadcasting companies and foundations (Yavuz, 2003a).

The most important change in Turkey after 1983 was related to the educational sphere. Privatizing educational institutions opened them up to competition and through this the hizmet movement saw the opportunity to found an improved educational system (Yavuz, 2003a). In the same period Gülen encouraged people to start engaging themselves in cultural activities, media and finance to establish a strong and assertive Turkey. At the same time Gülen had developed a more universal language by stressing coexistence and dialogue with other cultures (Yavuz, 2003a). This in fact opened up the horizons of the movement by embracing other members of the Turkish society and later on global citizens.

Starting from the 1990's to 2001 the movement started to become a more global movement and at the same time Gülen moved permanently to the USA in 2001. In the 90's a mixture of, among others, financial modifications in Turkey and the breakdown of Soviet Union transformed Gülen's direction towards a more internationalized vision, where he stressed dialogue activities across borders and international academic meetings. He both visited and received leading figures from all over the world including religious leaders such as the Pope. At this point, the core vision of the movement was based on mutual comprehension and dialogue both in Turkey and all over the world. The movement moved from being involved around specific matters in Turkey to embracing world-wide issues (Çelik, 2010).

3.2 The movement's four columns²⁴:

3.3 Businessmen: The success of the hizmet-inspired activities and projects is to a large extent due to the large numbers of businessmen, volunteers and professionals coming from different Turkish cities and rural areas who spend most of their time and efforts to establish a project or activity they believed in (Ebaugh, 2010).

²⁴ The leader of the Norwegian businessman association used this term (interview the 07.05.12 in Norway). I believe it is a suitable term to refer to the main factors or pillars of the movement.

This network of local businessmen and professionals emerged within the *cemaat*²⁵ where again there were founded smaller groups named *sohbet*²⁶ which required no formal association. The *sohbet* structure was urged by Gülen as a medium for those who were inspired by him to gather and discuss how his ideas could be useful to the Turkish society (Ebaugh, 2010). The meetings that were held during the *sohbets* were used for the socialization and networking among businessmen and i.e. potential customers. Their conversations were characterized by Gülen's philosophies and visions, and of how they could implement these visions into a real project and how they would sponsor them. Here is where, among others, the businessmen play a financial supporting role in relation to the projects (Ebaugh & Koç, 2007).

In almost every Anatolian city, Gülen's sympathizers have established local businessmen associations. Among these local institutions, they have also established two national businessmen associations: TUSKON (Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey) and ISHAD (Business Life Cooperation Association) (Uygur 2007: 186). These associations work as NGO's and aim to provide suitable atmosphere for gathering Turkish private business sector together and stress the importance of cooperation and ethics. They arrange business trips all over the world to seek new opportunities for Turkish entrepreneurs (Uygur 2007: 186). The businessmen are the core financial source financing the numerous activities and institutions of the movement. They perceive it as a responsibility, also in the religious sense, to contribute to these institutions (Uygur, 2007).

The movement does get help from many volunteers as well, however the businessmen are the "fuel" which keeps the movement rolling. This is also emphasized by the leader of the Norwegian businessmen association who told me that:

"What keeps the movement alive are individual businessmen who are performing their duty for the society. This is fixed in the Islamic value: the Prophet says that "if your neighbor is sleeping hungry and you are full, then you are not one of us". [...] One of my tasks is to gather businessmen, reach out to them with this message and to tell them about their duties in the society we are living in".²⁷

²⁵ A *cemaat* is a form of Islamic self-organization that evolved after the formation of the secular republic in 1923 and the outlawing of Sufi orders and abolishment of the medreses (Ebaugh 2010:25).

²⁶ *Sohbet* are small groups that consist of people who meet regularly to read Qur'anic commentary, the prophetic tradition and Muslim scholars, to share ideas and needs (Ebaugh 2010: 47). It is usually organized according to the participants' occupation (teachers, businessmen...). This is to facilitate commonalities among *sohbet* meeting participants so that they can socialize better and network with each other (Ebaugh & Koç 2007: 548).

²⁷ Interview with the leader of the Norwegian businessmen association, 07.05.12 in Norway.

3.4 Media: Due to the political opening of the system and new financial opportunities in the 1980's, the movement established a tight bond with state institutions and started to become more visible and active especially in media and cultural activities (Yavuz, 2003c).

The movement's first magazine, *Sızıntı*, launched in the early 80's, is a popular publication directed towards a lay audience and intended to promote discussion and learning about science. It aims to foster interest in science and to demonstrate that rational scientific enquiry and religious faith are not incompatible. *Sızıntı*, was joined several years later by the English publication *Fountain*, edited in Istanbul and printed in New Jersey and aimed at fostering a general interest in religion and spirituality (Barton 2007: 657).

As the columnist I interviewed in Turkey told me, it was a member of the movement who bought out the daily newspaper *Zaman* in 1986²⁸. *Zaman* is unique among Turkish newspapers in that it is published in 35 different countries and in 10 languages (Ülker & Arslan, 2012). Moreover the *Zaman* newspaper was the first Turkish newspaper to be available free through the internet (Yavuz 2003a: 191). Today *Zaman* is the largest newspaper in Turkey. The newspaper only becomes religiously motivated on Fridays, where they spare a whole page for Fethullah Gülen²⁹. Being established in 1986 *Zaman*, unlike other newspapers at that time, it was one of the most neutral newspapers and was perceived as objective and comprehensive. In addition, it was a newspaper that was not politically affiliated (Barton, 2007).

The hizmet movement also launched a national television channel in 1993, known as *Samanyolu*. This initiative represented a financial gamble at a time when private television programming was dominated by tabloid reporting and poor entertainment. *Samanyolu* set out to provide non-sectarian, largely secular content of a high standard (Barton 2007: 660). In compared to other Turkish TV-channels *Samanyolu* focuses more on making family-oriented programs and at the same time it also includes inter-cultural and-faith dialogue programs (Ebaugh, 2010). One of its most popular programs was "Kimse yok mu?"³⁰, a reality program that aired following the 2004 earthquake outside Istanbul. As a result the non-profit organization, Kimse Yok Mu, was established to distribute money for the earthquake disaster and others around the country and the globe (Ebaugh 2010: 87).

In addition to these large media outlets, the movement also established radio stations such as *Dünya* and BURÇ, and different magazines containing different subjects (Yavuz, 2003a).

²⁸ Interview with columnist in *Zaman*, 06.06.12 in Turkey.

²⁹ Interview with columnist in *Zaman*, 06.06.12 in Turkey.

³⁰ Is anybody there?

3.5 Dialogue: One of the most important features of Gülen and the movement, as it has been explained, is dialogue. One of the movement's main "tools" of interfaith and intercultural dialogue is the Abant Platform of the Gülen-inspired Journalists and Writers Foundation, which also sponsors the Intercultural Dialogue Platform and the Dialogue Eurasia platform (Park, 2007). The Journalists and Writers Foundation started in 1994 when Gülen met a group of writers and journalists saying that they, as a visible voice in the society, played an important educational role in terms of transforming and shaping the society's ideas especially when it came to dialogue between religions and cultures (Ebaugh, 2010).

The escalating tensions within different groups in Turkey and the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina were what triggered Gülen's insistence and emphasis on that dialogue was more needed than ever in both Turkey and in the rest of the world (Ebaugh, 2010). The core of the platform is the Abant platform which has organized semi-annual workshops on social issues in Turkey, Europe, the USA and the Middle East. The Intercultural Dialogue Platform focuses on increasing understanding between different religious, ethnic and cultural groups. The Dialogue Eurasia Platform has worked with mostly former Soviet Republics to forge cultural ties (Uğur 2007: 156). In addition as I was told, the Journalists and Writers Foundation established a Women's Platform in 2009. They are doing parallel activities with the foundation, but they are also focusing more on family and women issues in Turkey³¹.

Another big and important contribution for dialogue is the annual Turkish Language Olympics³² organized by the International Turkish Education Association (TÜRKÇEDER). I will base myself on what I have seen and what has been told me to explain this event shortly. The Turkish Language Olympics started in Turkey approximately 10 years ago and has ever since grown and has now about 100 countries participating in it. It is all about children learning to know each other's culture, background and religion. Like my informant³³ working for the Language and Cultural Festival³⁴ in Norway told me, is that they want to teach children and give them a basis to learn to know others when they are still young. She said that it is important to do this, so that they will not get the same prejudices the older generations have carried with them through several years.

They teach Norwegian children Turkish and teach them how to recite and sing famous Turkish songs and poems. They also teach them Turkish folkdance.

³¹ Interview with vice secretary general of the women's platform in the Journalists and Writers' Foundation, 05.06.12 in Turkey.

³² <http://www.turkceolimpiyatları.org/>

³³ Interview voluntary teacher and voluntary at the Language and Culture Festival, 23.05.12 in Norway.

³⁴ <http://sprakogkultur.no/>

There were also other contributions from other cultures at the festival as well, and the Turkish children “switched” roles by singing Norwegian songs and reciting Norwegian poems, as well as dancing Norwegian folkdance. When the final winner is picked out, he/she will be sent to Turkey to participate in the large annual event of the Turkish Language Olympics. At the Olympics in Turkey, my informant told me that they have set up stands for all the countries participating so that the children can visit the stands and get to know the other children’s country³⁵.

3.6 Educational Institutions: One of the main contributions of the movement are the hizmet-inspired schools that exist in Turkey and in approximately 100 countries in the world, located in five different continents. The goal of these schools is the creation of scientifically competitive generations who will also be faithful believers and loyal citizens (Ebaugh 2010: 97). The schools are usually established through the perception that there is a need for one of these schools and it is the businessmen who take the initiative to carry out the project by starting fundraisings in addition to that they provide large sums themselves (Ebaugh, 2010).

The hizmet schools ‘curriculum does not emphasize Islam or any other religion, but rather ethical and moral values. Since Gülen’s perception of Islam is basically based on doing good deeds and respecting others, the people behind these schools perceive themselves as faithful to Islam since they provide both ethical and moral guidance to the students. As mentioned, instead of preaching about Islam or another religion, the teachers rather want to be good role models for the students in relation to moral conduct and teaching them to be a good person and respecting others (Ebaugh, 2010). It is, according to Ebaugh (2010: 98), “the cadre of dedicated teachers that is the major hallmark of the hizmet-schools and the major factor that explains their success”.

Besides having many schools in Turkey, the hizmet-schools are most numerous in the countries of the former Soviet Union as well as in former Ottoman provinces such as in the Balkans and Central Asian countries. The schools are also to be found in the USA and in Western Europe, especially in the countries where they have a large Turkish community such as in France, Germany and the Netherlands. In the recent years these schools have also been established in African countries and in South Asia (Ebaugh 2010: 101).

³⁵ Interview voluntary teacher and voluntary at the Language and Culture Festival, 23.05.12 in Norway.

4: From a Turkish to a global movement.

4.1 The movement's presence in other countries:

As mentioned above, the movement is to be seen in many part of the world today. I.e. the movement based in Northern Ireland established NITECA in 2004 and among its goals were to help Turkish people living in Northern Ireland to get integrated (Lacey, 2007).

The movement has a strong focus on interfaith and intercultural dialogue. By hosting Ramadan dinners (Iftar) and sharing it with people living in Northern Ireland, they are able to make connections with the local people and share their cultures with each other over a meal. NITECA also proposed that to establish “dialogue classes” that could be implemented into the curriculum with the aim of teaching people to live together (Lacey, 2007). This idea would be beneficial for the people in Northern Ireland, especially with regard to the violent past Northern Ireland has gone through. NITECA largely bases itself on the ideas and objectives around Gülen’s ideology; however they adapt their methods and ideas to local situations (Lacey, 2007).

The Philippines also provides an example of countries’ struggling with religious tensions, in this case the fighting between Muslims and Christians. The “Moro”³⁶ Muslims are in minority on the Philippines and historically they were the ones to fight against Spanish colonialism (Kalyoncu, 2007). The contribution of the Gülen movement in the Philippines, as Thomas Mitchell describes it, has created “peace islands (meaning the schools of the hizmet movement) in the sea of conflict”, pointing to the fact that the schools bring together both Christians and Muslims students in a peaceful atmosphere, whose fathers have been fighting each other because of their religious beliefs (Kalyoncu 2007: 605).

Central Asian countries gained their independence in 1991 and during this transitional period, people needed to re-identify their values as their values had been defined under the Soviet system without any successful result (Keles 2007: 362). As an example here I will refer to the movement in Kyrgyzistan. Kyrgyz schools were opened by Turkish entrepreneurs during this transitional period, where local people felt that in terms of values they could relate themselves more to the Turkic-Islamic values (Keles, 2007). The fact that the Kyrgyz people could relate itself more to the Turks, resulted in that both many high schools and universities were opened. The Sebat schools spend a lot of effort to develop the student’s character and thousands of Kyrgyz students have obtained a higher education (Keles, 2007).

³⁶ The word “moro” comes from Spanish and is used as a common word especially to designate Arabs or people who are Muslim.

The education given in these schools open up the country towards becoming more democratized and globalized: the students get to start from another basis than their parents by being met with democratic practices and on the “global” terms they get in touch with foreign teachers (mainly Turkish), attend international Olympics abroad, use internet and learn other languages. The movement in Kyrgyzstan has managed, among others, with its schools to open up a world for the new generations in Kyrgyzstan making them more globalized by meeting students from other parts of the world and giving them an opportunity the former generations might not have had (Keles, 2007).

4.2 CASE 1- Norway:

First of all, it has to be said that the movement in Norway is a relatively “young” movement which is still developing and seems to be having many projects they want to share with the Norwegian society. The movement started approximately ten years ago. However, some supporters of the movement have been living in Norway for a while; they had either come as labor migrants or were children of labor migrants. The movement has already established a few institutions in Norway, both in Oslo, Drammen, Trondheim and in Stavanger. The movement’s activities are bigger in Oslo, so I have chosen to focus on the movement in Oslo:

4.3 Mangfoldhuset³⁷ (The house of diversity): As the name implies, this house or center is meant to gather people to have intercultural and interfaith meetings. Mangfoldhuset is a volunteer organization that was established in 2009 and which has from the start cooperated with EVID³⁸. However, Mangfoldhuset was not only interested in having interfaith dialogue and meetings, they wanted to appeal to a broader public and that is how their idea of Mangfoldhuset emerged³⁹. When it comes to interfaith activities, they organize Iftar-dinners where they invite people from the entire social strata. In addition, Mangfoldhuset has also invited different scholars and well-known Norwegians to panel meetings⁴⁰, to discuss the hizmet-movement and topics related to coexistence, dialogue, faith and social issues in Norway and in the world. They also cooperate with the women’s group (EBRU) and with a couple of educational institutions (OKUF and DKUF) also established by the hizmet movement. They are also contributing to the annual event “Språk og kulturfestivalen”.

³⁷ <http://mangfoldhuset.no/index.php>

³⁸ En Verden i Dialog (A World in Dialogue) is an idealistic organization, founded in Trondheim in 2004. EVID aims at increasing respect and understanding across religious borders and works towards establishing common meeting arenas for Christians, Jews and Muslims (Ref. interview with chairman at Mangfoldhuset 17.04.12 and <http://www.evid.no/trondheim/index.t-om.oss-historie.html>).

³⁹ Interview with chairman at Mangfoldhuset, 17.04.12 in Norway.

⁴⁰ Reference to my own presence during a couple of the panel meetings.

4.4 OKUF and DKUF (Oslo Kultur og Utdanningsforening & Drammen Kultur og Utdanningsforening- Oslo Cultural and Educational Association & Drammen Cultural and Educational Association): OKUF was established for the first time in 2001 by the name AKUF (Anatolsk Kultur og Utdanningsforening-Anatolian Cultural and Educational Association) with the aim of helping children with homework and other educational issues. In 2003 they changed their name to OKUF⁴¹. Their activities became broader as the association became bigger. They started with cultural travels to different countries and small escapades where both the parents and the children can participate together and establish relations to other children and parents. Both OKUF and DKUF⁴² focus on education and culture, with the aim of integrating children and youth into the educational system no matter what cultural or social background they may have. In regard to this, they are working to develop important projects with the aim of supporting children's and youth's social integration⁴³. Most of the teachers working there are volunteers and mostly students who spend a lot of their time on the children. The former administrative chief of OKUF who is now leading DKUF said that many people give money to both associations as a "charity", because they see how successful both are and they are interested in maintaining and contributing to the activities⁴⁴.

The businessman supporting the Montessori school⁴⁵ project states that "ethic and morals are like bread and water to people" and one of the aims of these associations is to teach children about good morals and ethics (explaining the dangers related to drugs, alcohol and how one should behave in the society) such as Gülen emphasizes⁴⁶.

4.5 EBRU Kvinneforening⁴⁷ (EBRU Women's Association): EBRU women's association is a quite new association that started in 2010. It is an association which is meant to be a dialogue platform between women from different cultures. The initiative was started by a group of Turkish housewives and women working that saw a need to have this sort of initiative, especially in Drammen where there is a high percentage of immigrants, mostly with a Turkish background⁴⁸. They organize social and cultural escapades (such as visiting museums, organizing picnics and travels), seminars and meetings, especially for those women who are kept outside of the society.

⁴¹ About OKUF: <http://www.okuf.no/about.php?content=historie>

⁴² About DKUF: <http://www.prizma.no/omoss.php>

⁴³ About OKUF: <http://www.okuf.no/about.php?content=historie>

⁴⁴ Interview the 13.05.12 in Norway.

⁴⁵ More information on the school in page 34.

⁴⁶ Interview the 07.05.12 in Norway.

⁴⁷ About EBRU:

<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=227499084025139&set=vb.100002951463281&type=3&theater>

⁴⁸ Interview with public relations representative in EBRU, 13.05.12 in Norway.

Their aim is especially meant for immigrant women in the sense that they want to encourage them to get more out in the society and become more active. However, this group has also interested Norwegian women who have, according to my informant, slowly started to participate. Their activities range from having cooking courses and preparing food for special events, organizing reading meetings where they chose either a book, an article or a newspaper to discuss issues that are relevant today, organize trips abroad and escapades in Norway, picnics, events for children such as taking them to an amusement park. In addition they organize a Turkish food and handcrafts kermes (a fair)⁴⁹ both in Drammen and in Oslo each year.

4.6 Zaman Iskandinavya⁵⁰: Zaman Iskandinavya started in Norway in 2007; however their main office is in Denmark. It all actually started through Frankfurt, where the newspaper had been established for many years ago and was doing quite well. Zaman had a small office in Oslo where they were buying newspapers from Frankfurt and selling them to the subscribers that were living in Norway.⁵¹ Zaman only came each Thursday with a magazine called “Ailem”⁵². The journalists working for Zaman in Norway noticed a greater interest growing among the people who were asking why such newspaper had not been established in Norway. People said that the news from Germany were good, but that these news were not helping them much since they were living in Norway. Then, Zaman tried to publish their own daily newspaper in Norway, but because of the high costs they only publish it once a week. The newspaper has become quite popular among the Turkish-speaking population in Norway⁵³. The news in Zaman Iskandinavya bases itself on happenings in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. The newspaper contains political news round-ups from the Scandinavian countries, some international news, and a section only dealing with family issues, health and women. A page in the newspaper is always left to Fethullah Gülen who talks about spiritual and day to day issues.

4.7 Språk og Kulturfestivalen (The Language and Culture Festival): The language and culture festival was organized for the first time in Oslo in 2009 at the University in Oslo⁵⁴.

⁴⁹About the Kermes in Oslo and Drammen: http://www.bydel-grunerlokka.oslo.kommune.no/enhet_for_mangfold_og_integrering/article162689-16686.html
<http://www.tyrkiskorg.no/tag/kermes-i-oslo/>
http://www.tyrkiskorg.no/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/DM_Kermes2012.pdf

⁵⁰ Zaman Iskandinavya webpage: <http://iskandinavya.zaman.com.tr/iskandinavya/mainAction.action>

⁵¹ Interview with head of Zaman, 27.04.12 in Norway.

⁵²“My family”- A magazine dealing with women issues and issues within the family.

⁵³ Interview with head of Zaman, 27.04.12 in Norway.

⁵⁴ Information from a booklet I received about the festival.

Both this year and last year's festival were organized at Oslo Konserthus⁵⁵ because of the growing interest and the growing number of people showing up. Their main goal is to gather people with different backgrounds to get to know each other and embrace each other's differences. The festival is organized by volunteers, where especially the volunteer teachers have one of the biggest roles. Their role is to prepare the children who are going to participate at the festival, by teaching them Turkish/Norwegian songs, poems and folklore dance. Everyone who participates will have to perform some of the above-mentioned acts in another language than their own, meaning that the Norwegian children perform the Turkish acts while the Turkish children perform the Norwegian acts. Every year in June, the same festival is organized in Turkey, where each winner from the different countries that are participating in the competition, is sent to Turkey to compete in the final⁵⁶.

The festival in Norway also hands over awards to different prominent persons they feel are good role models for the future generations in Norway, such as people contributing to dialogue in the Norwegian society⁵⁷. This year's (2012) award receiving persons were among others the leader of the Antiracism Centre, Kari Helene Partapuoli for her "work directed towards dialogue and coexistence" and the business-giant Olav Thon⁵⁸ for having foundations that support voluntary work, community action and Norwegian nature. The prize given to Olav Thon was handed over by another special guest, the vice president of the Turkish Parliament Prof. Dr. Mehmet Sağlam.⁵⁹

4.8 Montessori school: The establishment of the Montessori school has been a hard process with some misunderstandings related to the ambitions behind this school. It was DKUF that had the initiative to start this project, but in the media there were suspicions related to the establishment of this school because they believed it might be a hidden Muslim school⁶⁰. However, the school has already been approved by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training⁶¹ and has supposedly already started or is going to start this autumn. My informant, who has been involved in the Montessori project, told me that they have sent in an application to get a Montessori kindergarten as well. He says that they chose Montessori quite consciously, even though they are Muslims⁶².

⁵⁵ About the festival in Oslo Konserthus webpage: <http://www.oslokonserthus.no/action/displayArticle?aid=3794>

⁵⁶ Interview with voluntary teacher and voluntary organizer of the festival, 23.05.12 in Norway.

⁵⁷ <http://sprakogkultur.no/>

⁵⁸ Short introduction of Olav Thon: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olav_Thon

⁵⁹ Ref. to the prize awards: <http://www.dinlokavis.no/artikkel.php?aid=19774&ssoAction=getAuthId>

⁶⁰ Ref. to hidden Muslim school: <http://dt.no/nyheter/fordekt-muslimsk-skole-1.5815140>

⁶¹ Ref. to approval of school: <http://dt.no/nyheter/privatskole-godkjent-1.6046826>

⁶² Interview with leader for the Norwegian businessmen association, 07.05.2012 in Norway.

Knowledge is very important and to be able to get the best out of it is important to look at the values and the functions of the school. He thinks that Maria Montessori's⁶³ methods are fantastic: it gives the opportunity for individuals to develop themselves on an individual basis. The school's idea was based on a contribution to the society, not only to the Turkish community, but for the people living in Drammen no matter what background they may have. The teachers are going to consist of Montessori-educated teachers and most of the teachers will be Norwegian. It will be a full-time school, but the extra classes the movement provides will still continue. He says that they will use the project in Drammen as a pilot-project and spread it to Oslo if it works out well⁶⁴.

4.9 “Integration work and bridge- building in the Norwegian society”.

Through an explanation of Gülen's ideologies and his world-wide projects around the world, it is quite clear that peaceful coexistence between different cultures and religions is a core value in the movement and for Gülen himself. I have interviewed people holding different “positions” in the movement to get an idea of what they are doing in Norway. Dialogue and integration seem to be the main needs in Norway. The chairman of Mangfoldhuset said:

“We have this (dialogue) experience from Turkey during the Ottoman Empire, because it was a culturally rich empire. But after the coup in Turkey, these things started to fall apart, but with dialogue they started to get to know each other again. Norway does not have this kind of experience; there was very little immigration before the 1950's. I cannot say that I come from Turkey if I am supposed to live here in Norway; I have to learn how to live in a new place. [...] but there are many who do not know this and they have to be taught this.”⁶⁵

What he is implying here is that since Norway has not had the same experience with a multicultural society until quite late in history, Norway does not have the same experience in establishing a “natural” dialogue-sphere with other cultures. At the same time, he also sees the issue in that some immigrants do not feel that they belong here, by not “settling” completely down and saying that “this is my country”. The goal or the so-called “need” according to him is: “To create room for everyone and get to know each other. It is easier to trust each other if

⁶³ Maria Montessori was an Italian doctor and teacher. Based on the research and studies she made she developed the Montessori-method. This method aims at stimulating children's own volunteer activities while the teacher stays in the background (Ref: http://snl.no/Maria_Montessori)

⁶⁴ Interview the 07.05.12 in Norway.

⁶⁵ Interview with the chairman of Mangfoldhuset, 17.04.12 in Norway.

one get to know each other”.⁶⁶ So what is needed is a mutual understanding between Norwegians and people with a different ethnic background, to get to understand the issues from both sides and try to solve them. Another important point is when he says that if he is supposed to live here, he needs to learn how to live here. Gülen recommends that his followers respect the habits and traditions of the people who receive them (Balçı 2003: 161-162). This is also a point that has been mentioned by most of my informants here in Norway. The leader of the Norwegian Businessmen association said that:

“The movement says that you must not be afraid of making part of the society and getting integrated in the society. A society will respect individuals who, among other things, respect the laws. In this occasion we have meetings and seminars where we talk about their duties (as Norwegian citizens)”⁶⁷.

DKUF’s leader, who is also a former leading person in the establishment of OKUF, says that:

“What can I do so that everyone in the world will be better? When I came to Norway I got out from my Turkish citizenship, because I wanted to improve the conditions in Norway and I did this in spite of that I am originally Turkish. This is the basis in *hizmet* [...]”.⁶⁸

My informant from EBRU also emphasized this:

“We are always advising them to be more with Norwegians and learn the language better to be a part of the society. We are trying to motivate them to understand that they are here now and they have to live according to the Norwegian rules and ways of life [...] make them a part of Norway”.⁶⁹

Gülen emphasizes that Muslims who live in a non-Muslim society, have to obey the *lex loci*⁷⁰, to respect other’s right and be just and has to disregard discussions of *dar al-harb* and *dar al-Islam* (Demir 2007: 226). That is why the conceptualization and practical use of the term *dar al-hizmet* seems to be a “practical solution” offered by Gülen (Demir 2007: 227). The concept of *dar al-hizmet* makes it easier to settle in a non-Muslim society, because settling in a “country of service” is not against Islam; on the contrary, it is encouraged to render one’s services in western countries.

⁶⁶ Interview with chairman of Mangfoldhuset, 17.04.12 in Norway.

⁶⁷ Interview with leader for the Norwegian businessmen association, 07.05.2012 in Norway.

⁶⁸ Interview with manager of DKUF, 13.05.12 in Norway.

⁶⁹ Interview with public relations representative in EBRU, 13.05.12 in Norway.

⁷⁰ *Lex loci* is from Latin and means “the law of the place” (Ref: <http://lexloci.net/>).

My informants told me that the movement does not have any bonds to Turkey or to other countries. According to them, they are operating on national basis with the explanation that “one cannot use the Turkish system; it is completely different and would not fit in here in Norway”. They can get inspiration from each other, but no more than that. I believe this could be related to the *lex loci* concept stressed by Gülen, which emphasizes that when one is settled in a country one should focus to establish bonds to it and not to one’s own home country. Besides the fact that being a part of the society is important, where does this drive to work for people and establish dialogue projects come from? Apart from basing themselves on Gülen’s ideologies, it seems to be a pure personal religious “duty” to encourage people to make part of the society. When I asked one of the volunteer teachers in OKUF about his inspiration he said:

“Seeing it from a Norwegian perspective I am working with charity, I am a “soul of fire” engaging in the society, but at the same time I am a practicing Muslim who wants to serve the people; it is like serving the Lord [...] we have Gülen’s vision that if you live in a country, you will serve the country in the best way”.⁷¹

The chairman of Mangfoldhuset and the leader of the businessmen association also emphasized this:

“Everything is written in the Qur’an when it comes to how we can be good people and serve humanity. If you serve the society then you have a big heart, and then it (the heart) is big enough to serve God. [...] You rather want others to have a good life. It is a Sufi thought”.⁷²

“My faith tells me I have to contribute [...] Hizmet is a faith and faith is hizmet”.⁷³

For both Gülen and his followers being a good Muslim is contributing, it has to be a natural part of one’s faith; at the same time as one is contributing and serving the society one is serving God. Gülen suggests that one’s ultimate goal should be seeking God’s pleasure by serving humanity (Çelik 2010: 53-54). One way to serve humanity is to “build an exemplary society” as one of my informants said. He also added that:

“Norway is a big opportunity for us. It is important because it is a new nation; Norway has not colonized any countries and there are not many prejudices against it. Norway could be a land of opportunities to start a dialogue in.

⁷¹ Interview with voluntary teacher in OKUF, 31.05.12 in Norway.

⁷² Interview with the chairman of Mangfoldhuset, 17.04.12 in Norway.

⁷³ Interview with the leader of the Norwegian businessmen association, 07.05.12 in Norway.

Most people accept Norway and I want to avail myself of the opportunity Norway has given to me. I want to feel that I have done my duty here, even though I am not ethnically Norwegian".⁷⁴

An exemplary society starts by talking and understanding each other until one hopefully reaches peaceful coexistence. In this regard, the movement's seeks to both take care of the Turkish diaspora living in Norway and at the same time include the rest of the Norwegian society to be able to reach an all-encompassing result. One has to start from some point and certainly the easiest is to reach and to be in touch with one's own community and start working from there and expand it further on.

An example is the Language and Culture festival. The interest and knowledge related to this event seems to be based on spreading the word and knowing who to contact. My informant⁷⁵ told me that some of the children participating at the extra homework classes spread the word to other children that may find it exciting to participate in such event. If there is a certain interest, the parents of these other children are invited to a dinner or a meeting where the festival's organizers explain to them what the project is about. Another important step to get more children to participate in the festival is to know who to contact. In terms of this festival, the movement contacted the music school in Drammen thinking that the children there already had an interest for music. They first had a thorough meeting with the music teacher and the teacher started to spread the word among her/his students. This is how the festival grew bigger and bigger in terms of participants. This event in itself has created dialogue through the program and the contact both the parents and the children have achieved by participating. One of the volunteers helping the children to learn the songs and poems says:

"The parents have been positive, they did not know that Turkish people were so hospitable and kind [...] Art and music have a reconciling effect, everyone feels the same when they hear music [...] This is a children's project and it contributes in a way so that the new generation will get a different point of view in how the world is and how much a human is worth, without looking at humans based on their color and culture [...] A new generation will have been taught how to get to know other people and to be open to others".⁷⁶

This festival is meant as an "educating" and conciliating project, where both the Norwegian and Turkish children learn to know more about each other.

⁷⁴ Interview with the leader of the Norwegian businessmen association the 07.05.12 in Norway.

⁷⁵ Interview with volunteer teacher and volunteer during the Language and Culture Festival, 23.05.12 in Norway.

⁷⁶ Interview with volunteer teacher and volunteer during the Language and Culture Festival, 23.05.12 in Norway.

Learning and knowledge is the key to understanding and the only source that will defeat poverty, ignorance and division according to Gülen. One of the main tools in order to get knowledge is education. In this regard the leader of the businessmen association expresses his concern about the low educational level among some immigrant groups in Norway, including the Turkish group. He says “Drammen has had a great need; the educational level has been especially low among Turks”⁷⁷. This concern is also shared by one of the volunteer teachers:

“The mentality of many Turks is to make money and move; they should rather engage themselves in the society. [...] There is also a great difference between the educated and more “religious” people. Those who take an education are rather secularized and they are not able to become role models for others because of this “division”. Therefore we have had seminars where we have invited highly educated Turks, who have talked to parents who have children struggling at school. [...] We experience that the children we are tutoring are taking more initiative in general after they started with our extra classes, i.e. they talk more Norwegian to their parents if they (parents) do not speak very well”.⁷⁸

By educating oneself one will easier become a part of the society. These two factors go hand in hand and it seems that this is the movement’s main task: to educate and teach people to become more integrated in order to become a resource for the society.

“One has to participate in today’s society. It is a part of Islam. The first message (of the Prophet) was “Read! Read in God’s name, he created man in the best way”. In other words study the human, since He created him in the best way. There is nothing better. We must study humans. If one does not study, one will not know much about humans. If one studies humans and identify their needs, one will be able to identify their thoughts, cultures etc. All of this needs education”.⁷⁹

By starting to give extra classes to children from the Turkish community, they managed to attract children with other backgrounds as well. Still, there are very few Norwegians participating⁸⁰. One way to understand this is that it is easier to use the Turkish community as a platform for the further ambitions of the movement, especially because of the cultural references. Maybe getting more Norwegians is not the real ambition of this movement? However, it is true that when having to deal with Turkish children and adults or with other minorities, it is often easier to have the same or similar background and

⁷⁷ Interview the 07.05.12 in Norway.

⁷⁸ Interview with volunteer teacher in OKUF, 31.05.12 in Norway.

⁷⁹ Interview with the leader of the Norwegian businessmen association, 07.05.12 in Norway.

⁸⁰ Interview with volunteer teacher in OKUF, 31.05.12 in Norway.

values as them in order to make the mutual understanding easier. As two of my informants say:

“We are not an alternative for the education (here in Norway) but we can contribute in areas where Norwegian authorities cannot. It could be difficult for Norwegian authorities to reach out to a Turkish family and try to fix things there [...] what the movement does is to create self-confidence among people. The movement works in a way that people feel that they are being listened to and understood. And of course, they feel a sort of belonging (the Turkish community)”.⁸¹

“By offering an alternative way of thinking and being role models, it has led to that the weakest ones have managed to find the courage and say “if they can do it, then we can also do it” [...] the majority of the first generation of immigrants is often skeptical to integration models and such. So it is important to work within, so that i.e. a Turkish group can take care of the Turkish community and make them understand things instead of a Norwegian to begin with”.⁸²

The women’s group has been trying to do the same only for women: setting a good example, encouraging women to get more out and socialize, and giving them some extra confidence:

“Before EBRU there were women who were scared to enter the Norwegian society [...] Now we are trying to solve this problem [...] Many have said that if they did not know about them (EBRU), they would just have stayed home. They have gotten wider perspectives now [...]”.⁸³

In this sense the movement is a “helping hand” to the Norwegian society. They claim that the work they are doing could sometimes become difficult for an ethnic Norwegian because of the cultural codes and language. They could seem to form an alternative “integration model” by helping the Norwegian society in areas where Norwegians themselves might lack the competence needed. However, many of my informants have stated that these projects are Norwegian and not Turkish, because in the end they will transfer them to the Norwegian society. As the leader of the businessmen association and the manager of DKUF say:

“I believe that in ten years, Norwegian authorities will take the concept from us and continue building upon it. Because this concept has no religion, even though Muslims are behind it.”⁸⁴

⁸¹ Interview with the leader of the Norwegian businessmen association, 07.05.12 in Norway.

⁸² Interview with voluntary teacher in OKUF, 31.05.12 in Norway.

⁸³ Interview with public relations representative in EBRU, 13.05.12 in Norway.

⁸⁴ Interview 07.05.12 in Norway.

“The Turks who have had this idea will end up in second place and let Norwegians manage it. It is natural that ethnic Norwegians take over and work for the same purpose when they get to know what we work for”.⁸⁵

These statements might again base themselves on the *lex loci*-concept of Gülen or might on the other hand serve as a strategy to gain confidence from Norwegian authorities in order to be able to continue with similar projects. The movement will naturally be interested in expanding their projects and by handing them over to Norwegian authorities they will be able to start with other projects. To transfer these projects to Norwegians, they will need to be trusted.

Finally the reason behind all of these projects, both educational and social projects, seems to have one aim: creating more openness in the Norwegian society between Norwegians and minorities. Even though they start by contacting their own community and create projects where Norwegians might still be a minority, their aim is, according to them, to get more Norwegians to participate and make them understand what they are working for. All of my informants have the same interest and say it repeatedly that they really would like to see more Norwegians engaging themselves in their projects in order to create a wider dialogue and understanding from both sides. As the chairman of Mangfoldhuset says:

“We do not offer a concrete thing. The service is to create room for dialogue and prevent marginalization, create room for coexistence and prevent conflict. As Gülen says “create an island of love”, a city would be too large, but (one should) rather start with an island”.⁸⁶

4.10 CASE 2- Turkey: “The re-establishment of a modern Millet system in Turkey?”

Being a Turkish movement established in Turkey, the movement has gone through different historical and socio-political experiences and has by that turned out to become a different movement than the one in Norway. Other needs and issues have shaped the movement in Turkey. Like the vice secretary general of the women’s platform in the JWF⁸⁷ said to me, is that one has to understand the historical background of Turkey to understand why there is such need for dialogue in Turkey as well:

⁸⁵ Interview with the manager of DKUF, 13.05.12 in Norway.

⁸⁶ Interview with chairman of Mangfoldhuset, 17.04.12 in Norway.

⁸⁷ Journalists and Writers Foundation.

“It might seem strange, but Turkey has the need for dialogue, especially when you take into account the historical background of the Turkish Republic. This geography, was a geography of empire. A lot of religions, cultures, ethnicities and so on were living together. After a period of time nation-states came. Nations became visible. Many nations came together to make their own state and Turkey was one of the countries that took this idea. However, this “Turkification” process did not work out well in Turkey; it led to other problems which we are experiencing today. Kurdish people, Armenians, religions...all of them suffered from different problems. All of them were so-called Turkish people, but they were fighting because of so-called ideologies. Many people died because of this. And dialogue in this sense is an important step”.⁸⁸

The vice president of the JWF is also of the same opinion and explains that:

“Turkey is a divided country or diverse country [...] The last 50 years we have faced military coup d'états, each one of them divided the society especially the intellectuals. Because of this journalists and intellectuals were not coming together anymore. That is why Gülen said that this foundation is to bring together all the prominent scholars, intellectuals and journalists to discuss the main problems of Turkey [...] Still we are facing the Kurdish issue, where more than 40 000 have been killed in the conflict”.⁸⁹

In relation to the issues explained to me above, I remembered what one of my informants in Norway said that “media is very important, it creates today’s prejudices [...] a headline can save or kill people”⁹⁰. Seeing the divisions among the different journalists and academicians in Turkey, Gülen established the JWF⁹¹ to make journalists and scholars come together and discuss the issues facing Turkey on a high level. Since the media holds such a strong power within a society, it was necessary to establish such a platform; it was necessary to gather people with different opinions that, on a daily basis, influenced the society in their own way through their columns, opinions and debates.

Knowing the fact that Turkey’s history has been characterized by both religious and ethnic conflicts, the JWF’s hope is that the different cultures in Turkey will be able to live side by side, like they once did during the Ottoman Empire. The vice president of the JWF says in this regard that:

⁸⁸ Interview with the vice secretary general of the women’s platform in the JWF, 05.06.12 in Turkey.

⁸⁹ Interview with the vice president of the JWF, 07.06.12 in Turkey.

⁹⁰ Interview with the leader of the Norwegian businessmen association, 07.05.12 in Norway.

⁹¹ The JWF is the only institution with direct linkage to Fethullah Gülen. He is the honorary president there (ref: the vice secretary of the women’s platform).

“We know that during the Ottoman time, the sultan used to have dinner in the first part of Ramadan with Muslim leaders. In the second part of Ramadan, he had his iftar with other religions. It was part of our tradition”.⁹²

When referring to the Ottoman Empire, I believe my informant refers to the way the Ottomans administrated and managed their empire by letting the other religious communities living within the empire have certain autonomy, although they were subject to the empire. The core of the Ottoman version of indirect rule vis-à-vis different confessional communities was known as the *millet* system (Barkey 2005: 15). Islamic law and its practice dictated a relationship between a Muslim state and non-Muslim “Peoples of the Book”. According to this pact, the non-Muslims would be protected and could practice their own affairs provided they recognized the superiority of Islam (Barkey 2005: 16). In this way the, the non-Muslims and Muslims were able to live side by side.

After the Republic was established in 1923 by Atatürk, the state adopted the concept of secularism, inspired by the French which sought a break with the political, social, religious and cultural symbols of the old regime (Tank 2005: 6). Through this form of secularism, the Kemalists sought to destroy the political legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire rooted in Islam (Tank 2005: 6). Like Pinar Tank says secularization imposed from above had the effect of alienating society from the state, with the result that the concept of secular no longer denoted just the separation of state and religion; it became a designation for the ruling group (Tank 2005: 7). The state did the opposite of “Turkifying” the society which had been based on, among other things, Islamic values and coexistence; it rather alienated the society from the state and this in itself started to create divisions. In my point of view, the JWF is aiming to “recreate” a similar system of coexistence as they had during the Ottoman Empire, where people had the freedom to openly practice their religion and still live side by side:

“The basic idea behind the foundation is the sustainability of dialogue efforts. We first started with basic issues in Turkey such as the Kurdish issue, the Alevi issue. The Abant Platform organized a couple of meetings (i.e. addressing constitutional reforms), that were addressing certain problems in Turkey and trying to find a solution from very different angles. I think this is what makes us original or unique in that sense. We don’t have a point of view [...] We just create the grounds for talk [...] the channels of communication- we are trying to keep them open.

⁹² Interview the 07.06.12 in Turkey.

Talking is important and we try to get solutions in a multidimensional and diverse effort”.⁹³

Like in Norway, he says that they have created an open basis or platform in order to make people come together and share their points of views. They are trying to “bring back the society” to the people by bringing people together and creating an understanding of the differences and the richness this is for Turkey as a country:

“It is basically a call for a better world and we are not trying to convert people, but to convert the attitude towards each other. It is not easy to assess the results, but I think that most of these are accepted by the mainstream people in Turkey. The Turkish society is much less tense than 20 years ago. We are more ready to embrace each other”.⁹⁴

Media is, as mentioned, a great source of power which shapes and influences the people in the society. One of the core “tools” of this movement in Turkey is the way they use media to reach out to people to promote their ideas. Since the JWF has access to many prominent scholars and not least journalists, it makes the task of promoting the movement’s ideas much easier. When I asked my informant how they promoted their message regarding dialogue he said:

“We try to create awareness with those meetings [...] And after the meetings, if we reach a final declaration we share it with the media and we don’t always reach it because we have different ideas [...] But once we have it, we share it with the media and the media gives us access to the people. And some of our programs are broadcasted live [...]”.⁹⁵

The primary target group of the JWF is according to the vice president of the JWF, mainly prominent journalists, academics and writers⁹⁶, but as the vice director of the research center said, they use the media to reach ordinary people⁹⁷. The power of the media network around the hizmet movement is so strong that it even has affected some important policies in Turkey, even though as the movement says, it is an apolitical movement. The JWF is just one of them, but also the *Zaman* newspaper has served, and still does, as a voice for the movement in Turkey.

⁹³ Interview with the vice director of the research center of the JWF, 12.06.12 in Turkey.

⁹⁴ Interview the 12.06.12 in Turkey.

⁹⁵ Interview with the vice director of the research center of the JWF, 12.06.12 in Turkey.

⁹⁶ Interview with the vice president of the JWF, 07.06.12 in Turkey.

⁹⁷ Interview the vice director of the research center of the JWF, 12.06.12 in Turkey.

The newspaper became quite popular, mostly because of the different news and perspectives they published and that they promoted a concept people could recognize themselves in⁹⁸. Like the columnist in *Zaman* says:

“We have never “otherlified”(sic!) the minorities or the non-us people. [...] This is once again because of the philosophy of Gülen, that we came to realize that others also live, die and cry”.⁹⁹

He adds that the newspaper is selling really well in the Kurdish areas in Turkey, because they are sensitive to minority issues. He also believes that they are the most read newspaper among Armenians, Assyrians and the Greek community. On the policy issues they have always supported the rights of the minorities. He says that “They found in us a sincere voice that speaks justice and coexistence”¹⁰⁰. The movement in Turkey seems to try to remove the “*otherlification*” that has emerged being framed around the secularist idea of the “elite group”, which the mainstream population might not have recognized itself with.

Another force behind the *Zaman* newspaper is that it has changed by time and through following the needs of their supporters. I.e. in the 1980’s they realized that most of their readers were newcomers to the city and that they had problems to enroll themselves in the city. At that time the newspaper functioned as a guide for how to manage in a city. The *Zaman* newspaper has been involved in several similar projects and created as the columnist calls it: “an own network through *Zaman*”¹⁰¹. Another contribution, which also touches upon a “political issue”, is the contribution to the literacy rate in the country. They mostly go to Anatolian villages and to the south-east of Turkey and give people newspapers and say that they just have to start to read. This is, according to the columnist, improving the life standard of the general society. He says that:

“Before us, religious women did not read anything. Now they are reading newspapers, learning how to deal with their children and so on, and they realize that they should have gone to the university. So, they start to encourage their daughters to go to the university”.¹⁰²

Enhancing the level of education in a country is certainly important both for the individual itself and the society.

⁹⁸ Interview with columnist in *Zaman*, 06.06.12 in Turkey

⁹⁹ Interview with columnist in *Zaman*, 06.06.12 in Turkey

¹⁰⁰ Interview with columnist in *Zaman*, 06.06.12 in Turkey

¹⁰¹ Interview with columnist in *Zaman*, 06.06.12 in Turkey

¹⁰² Interview with columnist in *Zaman*, 06.06.12 in Turkey

As the hizmet movement and Gülen himself have stated: the only way to defeat problems within a society is through getting an education to be able to understand the realities. So, by continuing with their dialogue projects as well as their involvement with the entire society, this might bring back a so-called “modern millet-system” to Turkey.

To summarize, both the movement in Norway and in Turkey are promoting dialogue in line with the needs of both countries. The movement in Norway has focused more on the integration and inclusion of immigrants. It seems like they perceive themselves as “a lending hand” in terms of bridge-building between Norwegians and immigrants. However, for now the movement rather seems to attract more people from the Turkish community than anything else. Whether this is a coincidence or some sort of strategy to reach a goal set within the frames of the movement’s ideology, is debatable. In Turkey the movement has focused on bridge-building between the different ethnic and religious groups. Focusing on issues that have been and still are sensitive in Turkey places the movement in a strong and beneficial position towards the groups that have been affected by these issues, such as the Kurds. Using the power of media, the movement is able to appeal to this “outsider” segment of the society and create its own small “Ottoman Empire” by uniting different religious and ethnic groups.

5. Conclusion.

The hizmet movement has slowly become a “globe trotter” since it first started with its activities in Turkey. Many people are curious about how it is possible that this movement, with its roots from Turkey, has become this big and not least this successful both in Turkey and globally. To find more about their “recipe of success”, I have chosen to ask the following research question: Has the hizmet movement had to change its strategies to be able to establish itself in another country, in this case in Norway?

Being an advocate of interfaith and intercultural dialogue, Gülen managed to establish one of the largest dialogue platforms in Turkey by using journalists and writers as “human resources” to promote the movement’s dialogue message. Besides the importance related to the resources which allow a movement to develop, the RMT¹⁰³ also focuses on the role of crucial individuals, meaning social movement entrepreneurs who are particularly important in mobilizing available contextual opportunities (Drakeford 1997: 8).

The movement was able through both financial resources donated by businessmen but as well through the strong human resources such as the journalists and writers, to start a dialogue platform, namely the Journalists and Writers Foundation (JWF). The JWF has four main human and financial resources: a publishing house with books about Fethullah Gülen, a board of trustees which help them with money or material resources in general, sponsorships and volunteers¹⁰⁴. If human and financial resources are not available to support the goals of the movement it will, according to the RMT eventually collapse or merge with a movement which is more successful in attaining resources (Ebaugh 2010: 7). The resources that are being mobilized by the JWF can partly explain the great success this dialogue platform has had.

Beyond these dialogue activities, the movement’s main success in Turkey is thanks to the power behind media. Having the best-selling newspaper in Turkey, owning several broadcasting and radio channels the movement has been able to promote its views and its activities. The newspaper *Zaman* is the best-selling newspaper in Turkey and this is according to one of my informants because they have quite neutral news and that they are “minority friendly”. He said that in the Kurdish areas, they are the most read newspaper because of their sensibility to minority issues¹⁰⁵. The movement sees the need for dialogue, especially in the Kurdish areas, and addressing minority issues in their newspaper is a good strategy to obtain

¹⁰³ Resource mobilization theory.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with vice director of the research center, 12.06.12 in Turkey.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with columnist in *Zaman*, 06.06.12 in Turkey.

sympathy and support from people that might feel that their voice is not heard. The newspaper is mobilized as a useful resource to propagate the movement's visions and at the same time obtain a strong position by both addressing minority issues and everyday issues people can relate themselves to.

Also the establishment of schools in Turkey, even though these schools are not "branded" with the Gülen-name, is also a good business for the movement both financially and spiritually. The RMT focuses on crucial individuals as a mobilizing force behind a movement's growth (Drakeford, 1997) and when it comes to the schools it is the businessmen who are the main source behind the establishment of these schools. There are also volunteers who start fundraisings to get some extra financial support.

By building schools the movement finds a solution to the problems of our times by using education as a tool to struggle against poverty, ignorance and division. According to the framing analysis a movement will first diagnose a problem, which in this case are reasons such as poverty and division, and then offer a solution to it (Wiktorowicz, 2004). The solution here, according to Gülen, is to use education as a tool to defeat these issues. The third and not least one of most important points of framing is that movements need to provide a rationale to motivate support and collective action (Wiktorowicz 2004: 16).

So what is the motivation behind the success of these schools in secular Turkey? How does Gülen motivate his followers to "collectively" contribute to the further establishments of these schools? Social movements' frames are often elaborated in reference to elements which form part of the institutionalized culture of a given people. In that context, religion plays a very important role (Della Porta & Diani 2006: 84). The notion of the "Golden Generation" is Gülen's description of a future generation that is educated in all respects and that forms the basis for the perfect future, the "Golden Age"¹⁰⁶ (Agai 2003: 57). The followers of Gülen are the ideal humans to carry on the task to raise a Golden Generation that will solve the future's issues. They perceive this task as a holy duty. The teacher has the most important role in this society and their role is to lead pupils to be good and therefore to serve Islam (Agai 2003: 58). By raising good children who learn to be good and do good things for others they will, according to the hizmet followers, unconsciously be serving Islam as serving humanity equals the service to God.

¹⁰⁶ The Golden Age was a period of unrivaled intellectual activity in all fields: science, technology, and (as a result of intensive study of the Islamic faith) literature - particularly biography, history, and linguistics (Ref: http://www.islamicweb.com/history/hist_golden.htm).

So by knowing that the teacher-role is blessed and that their aim is to raise a perfect generation that will be unconsciously and of course at times consciously serving Islam is a motivational factor for the movement to open more schools to build up a Golden Empire led by a Golden Generation in Turkey.

But what about the motivational factors behind the establishment of the JWF and what are the real mobilizing factors behind the success of the *Zaman* newspaper?

The JWF offers a solution to unite Turkey as a country again, by including different religious and ethnic groups to join their dialogue platform and try to solve the ongoing issues in Turkey. The Ottoman past is mentioned as a historical and cultural reference which, among other things, motivates the movement to establish interfaith meetings with other religious groups in Turkey¹⁰⁷. Gülen believes that the fact that the Turks played an important and religious role during the Ottomans means that Turkey should now be ready to lead the Muslim world in terms of dialogue, tolerance and education. He therefore urges his followers to focus on the major values and customs of the Ottomans (Ebaugh, 2010).

As mentioned, movements provide a rationale to motivate support and collective action (Wiktorowicz 2004: 16). The fact that Gülen mentions the Ottoman Empire as one of the greatest periods in Turkish history and that one should work to achieve a more tolerant society in relation to religions and ethnicities, is a motivation for his followers. This motivation to establish dialogue and build peace are also, as Gülen says, a part of the proper expression of an Islamic way of life, as it is prescribed by the Qur'an as "the better way" (Çelik, 2010). By emphasizing that establishing dialogue is a proper expression of an Islamic way of life his followers connect their activities to a pure religious duty. A couple of my informants said:

"We have a saying of the prophet Mohammed- "service to humanity, service to God". When we serve humanity it is just to please God. [...] this is one of the principles of Gülen"¹⁰⁸

"I am doing something for the people and I am not expecting anything from them. I am expecting everything from God. You are not doing a favor for something; you are doing a favor for God"¹⁰⁹

The spiritual motivation, as it is urged by Gülen, is a great motivational factor for the movement to continue with its work and is at the same time a strategy by Gülen to mobilize his followers constantly, as serving humanity is always needed and it is a way of getting closer to God through each service.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with vice secretary general of the women's platform in the JWF, 05.06.12 in Turkey.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with vice president of the JWF, 07.06.12 in Turkey.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with vice director of the research center in the JWF, 12.06.12 in Turkey.

What about the *Zaman* newspaper? Even though my informant says that they are popular because of their neutral news, one must think that even if they claim to be neutral they still do affect a lot of people under their “neutral surface” by writing about topics that might touch someone’s soul, such as the Kurdish case. A motivational factor behind this newspaper is to get as many readers as possible and by choosing to be “minority friendly” they appeal to a larger segment of the society, and at the same time the movement is able to spread its personal thoughts in relation to policies, social issues, religion and family issues.

Still, how did *Zaman* grow this big and receive this much support? According to Benford and Snow, frames should be credible and salient by i.e. touching upon meaningful and important aspects of people’s lives and show a high narrative fidelity (Della Porta & Diani 2006: 81) and collective action becomes possible at the point at which mobilizing messages are integrated with some cultural component from the population to which they are addressed (Della Porta & Diani 2006: 82). By using these points as a strategy, the *Zaman* newspaper is able to reach parts of Turkey’s population that does not get this support elsewhere and by addressing every day issues such as family life, education and religion, it becomes an all-encompassing newspaper appealing to the majority of the Turkish society. They know that by using a little bit of “human touch” they will have a broad appeal and the movement will obtain a strong position.

What about the movement in Norway? Is it possible to implement an Ottoman coexistence model or build up a Golden Empire in Norway or do they have to change their strategies to be able to grow and expand their movement here?

Like in Turkey, the movement has established a couple of dialogue platforms: one women’s platform and a dialogue platform. The movement operates as in Turkey when it comes to the mobilization of resources they use to establish their institutions. The movement in Norway is also surrounded by a group of businessmen who contribute with money and a number of volunteers which keep the activities rolling. Since many of the activities are quite new, the volunteers play a big role through the fact that they spend a lot of their spare time on making the activities work and grow.

The Language and Culture Festival (LFC) promotes the most important message of the movement namely, dialogue. The human resources mobilized behind this event are the children who participate. Besides the fact that they are learning about other cultures and coexistence, they are mobilized by the movement to promote Gülen’s dialogue message. As in Turkey, the movement might have the aim to raise a Golden Generation through this festival by teaching the children the movement’s visions of peace and coexistence and giving them

the task of promoting the movement's message regarding dialogue in the future. By creating a Golden Generation that promotes intercultural and interfaith dialogue, the movement will have reached its goal and little by little as these activities spread all over the country, the movement will have created a Golden Empire in Norway.

What about the women's platform, what is their motivation? The women's platform was established by a group of Turkish girlfriends who perceived it as an issue that some immigrant women felt isolated from the Norwegian society. They believed it was necessary to activate them and socialize them more with Norwegians. However they have so far mostly attracted Turkish women, even though my informant from the platform says that they want more Norwegians to participate¹¹⁰. Strategically it is easier to start to work through their own community because as I have mentioned collective action becomes possible at the point at which mobilizing messages are integrated with some cultural component from the population to which they are addressed (Della Porta & Diani 2006: 82). By having the same cultural and religious background, it is easier to create a bond of trust and mutual understanding.

What is the motivational factor behind the mobilization of these women and why is integration so important for the movement? As mentioned, social movements' frames are often elaborated in reference to elements which form part of the institutionalized culture of a given people. In that context religion plays an important role (Della Porta & Diani 2006: 84). In line with the framing analysis, the women have diagnosed an issue and found a solution, and as mentioned one of the most important points of framing is that movements need to provide a rationale to motivate support and collective action (Wiktorowicz 2004: 16) and in this context it is religion.

Gülen states that the West is *dar al-hizmet* and that it is more Muslim than the Muslim geographical countries (Çelik 2010: 66). Therefore it should be one's duty as a devout Muslim to want to take part of a Western society that has attained its supremacy through following and obeying the universally applicable laws of creation ordained and created by God (Çelik 2010: 67). With this in mind, the mobilization of the Turkish women who are participating in the women's platform is perceived as a holy duty by the women of the movement, as integrating in a western country is to take part of a country which is obeying the laws of creation ordained and created by God. The women become "good" Muslims by taking part of the society and the movement's women fulfill their duties in accordance to Gülen's visions and thoughts. Motivated by the fact that they are, according to Gülen's

¹¹⁰ Interview with public relations representative in EBRU, 13.05.12 in Norway.

teachings, carrying out a holy task the movement's women continue to mobilize the other women.

The newspaper *Zaman* has also become an “integrating” factor for the Turkish-speaking communities. Newcomers, old generations or people struggling with Norwegian get the opportunity to follow the political and social developments in Norway and in the other Scandinavian countries. To solve the language-issue, *Zaman* believed it would be useful to get established in Norway. *Zaman* is using a cultural frame through the Turkish language and thereby appealing to parts of the Turkish speaking community in Norway. A bond is created by the fact that *Zaman* is creating a small “sphere” reminding people of their native country and at the same time the newspaper is useful by the fact that it is publishing news about Norway. By being “minority friendly” as *Zaman* in Turkey, or rather in this case “Turkish-friendly”, the movement is motivated by the fact that they have a good chance to get a significant number of readers in Norway who will also be reading news through the movement's own perspective. As in Turkey, *Zaman* becomes religiously motivated on Fridays where it reserves a couple of pages for the *hoca*¹¹¹'s thoughts and visions. So, whether they want it or not, the newspaper cannot be said to be representative of a so-called neutral newspaper. By propagating Gülen's thoughts on Fridays, the newspaper is no longer neutral because it is, somehow, promoting the ideas of the movement in Norway as well.

When it comes to education, the movement has established extra homework classes for children through OKUF and DKUF. The movement felt that there was a great need, especially in regard to children with an immigrant background. Most of the children participating are Turkish and as with the women, it is easier to mobilize the children through the use of cultural “frames” or references. Well-educated children will in the eyes of the movement form part of the future Golden Generation. This is a motivational factor for the movement as teaching is a holy task and reaching the Golden Age is their utmost goal. They also teach the children that they are now living in Norway and should invest more in this country by i.e. taking an education. The movement has also taught the parents that they should invest more in Norway instead of in Turkey, as their children are Norwegian and should be a resource for the country they are living in. This is an interesting point as Gülen states:

“Islam does not need the state to survive but rather needs educated and financially rich communities to flourish” (Çelik 2010: 67)

¹¹¹ Hoca or Hocaefendi means master or higher religious authority. Gülen's followers often refer to him by using this term (Schippers 2009: 20).

In a sense the movement sees it as beneficial for the “flourishing” of Islam to integrate the children by stressing the importance of education and at the same time influence the parents to affect their children to get an education and invest more in Norway as they are living here. It is of course positive for the Norwegian society to get a qualified future generation and that their parents see the importance of “settling” more down in Norway for the sake of their children. Through the parents and children, the movement is mobilizing people to work for their personal religious goals. According to Gülen, “acting” and “engaging” in the public and private sphere are part of building the moral self. Hizmet, or “Islam by conduct”, is the movement’s key concept (Yavuz 2003a: 192). By acting in line with the principles of Gülen, in this case “acting through Islam”, Islam will flourish in the society. So the motivation behind investing efforts in both the Turkish children’s education and their parents’ financial investment in Norway is that it will, according to Gülen, create the perfect basis for the flourishing of Islam. This is, according to framing, a rationale to motivate support and collective action (Wiktorowicz 2004: 16) by the followers of the movement.

An interesting fact I would like to point out is that the institutions, besides the *Zaman* newspaper, are according to several of my informants Norwegian institutions and not Turkish. My informant from the women’s platform says that they are trying to do everything in Norwegian, such as the food courses they offer and respect the rules here in Norway. They do also want to become more involved with Norwegians in order to make these institutions Norwegian¹¹². In the homework classes, my informant also told me that “there are mostly Turkish children but our goal is to get more Norwegians to participate”¹¹³ and even the times I have been invited to dialogue meetings all of the participants have been Turkish¹¹⁴. During their dialogue meetings, should not there be people from all strata to make sense? Their plan, according to them, is to hand over their projects to Norwegians. What does it really mean when they say that they are not Turkish institutions, but Norwegian and that they want to hand over their projects to Norwegians?

Strategically it seems less suspicious to engage with Norwegians and say that they want to hand over their projects to them at the end. Probably they might do it and the project will seem to be owned by Norwegians. But in the end this movement is interested in expanding their activities, as the more they “serve” society by establishing positive institutions, the more they will be serving and getting closer to God. Therefore, it would be difficult for the same

¹¹² Interview with public relations representative in EBRU, 13.05.12 in Norway.

¹¹³ Interview with voluntary teacher, 31.05.12 in Norway.

¹¹⁴ Dialogue meeting with an American human rights attorney the 30/04/12 and with a Norwegian writer and historian the 24/05/12- both in Norway.

people to keep working on the same project for 30 years. In the end, they would need local people, in this case Norwegians, to take over so that they can move towards their next project. According to the RMT, movements that do not have human nor financial resources available to support the goals of the movement will eventually collapse (Ebaugh 2010: 7). So by mobilizing potential “participants” or at least people who can take over their projects, the movement will according to this theory have more chances to survive and expand itself further on.

To conclude, it is clear that the movement’s activities both in Turkey and Norway have a common denominator: education and dialogue. The movement in both countries uses businessmen and volunteers as their main “capital” to start new projects. Both in Turkey and in Norway, the movement follows the visions of Gülen such as creating a Golden Generation that will carry on with the main ideas of the movement. Through media the movement is able to promote their visions and through the strategy of being sensitive towards minority issues in Turkey the movement is able to appeal to a part of the country which is in need of some positive attention. By doing this, the movement is able to get a broader support by including people from all strata in Turkey. This on the other hand enforces the newspaper *Zaman* and not least the position of the movement in Turkey.

In Norway, the *Zaman* newspaper only directs its attention towards the Turkish speaking communities. In a sense, this isolates the newspaper by the fact that it only encompasses one group. It is known that the newspaper exists in several languages such as in German¹¹⁵, Dutch¹¹⁶, Turkmen¹¹⁷, Azeri¹¹⁸, Russian¹¹⁹, French¹²⁰ and English¹²¹. Thus, I believe that if the movement really would like to become Norwegian, they would also have had that in mind when it comes to their newspaper. This is also a point I have referred to in regard to the dialogue platforms and extra school classes. It might also be a mere coincidence that they have not been able to attract enough Norwegians to join their activities. However, I believe that with the force this movement has when it comes to mobilizing a large number of people and resources, it would not be difficult to attract more Norwegians. Since Gülen makes reference to the greatness of the Ottoman past and that the Turks should now perceive themselves as the people to lead the Muslim world towards dialogue, education and tolerance,

¹¹⁵ German: <http://avusturya.zaman.com.tr/at/mainAction.action>

¹¹⁶ Dutch: <http://www.zamanbenelux.com/benelux/mainAction.action?sectionId=335>

¹¹⁷ Turkmen: <http://zamantr.com/tm/mainAction.action>

¹¹⁸ Azeri: <http://www.zaman.az/az/mainAction.action>

¹¹⁹ Russian: <http://kz.zaman.com.tr/kz/mainAction.action>

¹²⁰ French: <http://www.zamanfrance.fr/>

¹²¹ English: <http://www.todayszaman.com/>

it might seem that the focus is rather on the mobilization of the Turkish speaking communities. In addition, to enforce their statement about that they are a Norwegian movement, they say that they do not have any organizational bonds to Turkey or other countries. However, they do mention that they are in touch with people from the movement in other countries to share ideas. Both my informant from *Zaman*, EBRU and the leader of DKUF say that they came to Norway because they were contacted by people from the movement in Norway saying that they needed them¹²². This shows that the movement, somehow, is cooperating with people from the movement in other countries and that the movement might not be as local as they claim.

In my perception the movement in Norway remains a Turkish movement for the time being, but with the years they might attract more Norwegians if that is their sincere goal.

When it comes to my research question, I believe that in terms of their strategies used to establish institutions and spread their activities, the movement is operating similarly to the movement in Turkey. They seem to be engaged in building bridges with the Norwegian society, but in practice it seems that there are more Turks than anything else that are participating in their activities. The movement probably perceives it as strategically beneficial to build their “empire” through their own community because of the cultural frames I have mentioned. However, this does not change the strategies of the movement, but rather the basis it has to start from since it is operating in another country. Though it must be mentioned that if they hand over their projects to Norwegians in the future to be able to spread their activities further on in Norway, this will be a change in the way they operate and thus a change within their strategies.

¹²² Interview with head of *Zaman* 27.04.12 in Norway, public relations representative in EBRU 13.05.12 in Norway and leader of DKUF 13.05.12 in Norway.

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*(Footnote 54: Information about the festival at the university in Oslo in 2009 is in a booklet I got)

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Norway:

Chairman of Mangfoldhuset: 17.04.12

Head of Zaman in Norway: 27.04.12

Leader of the Norwegian Businessmen Association and involved in the Montessori project:
07.05.12

Public relations representative in EBRU: 13.05.12

Manager of DKUF: 13.05.12

Volunteer teacher and volunteer at the Language and Culture Festival: 23.05.12

Member of the board in DKUF and EBRU: 24.05.12

Volunteer teacher in OKUF: 31.05.12

Turkey:

Vice secretary general of the women's platform in the Journalists and Writers' Foundation:
05.06.12

Columnist in Zaman: 06.06.12

Vice president in the JWF: 07.06.12

Vice director of the research center in the JWF: 12.06.12

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English: <http://www.todayszaman.com/>